



DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION IN SCOUTING

WOSM's Position Paper

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Diversity and Inclusion
May 2017

World Scout Bureau
Global Support Centre
Kuala Lumpur

Suite 3, Level 17
Menara Sentral Vista
150 Jalan Sultan Abdul Samad
Brickfields
50470 Kuala Lumpur, MALAYSIA

Tel.: + 60 3 2276 9000
Fax: + 60 3 2276 9089

worldbureau@scout.org
scout.org

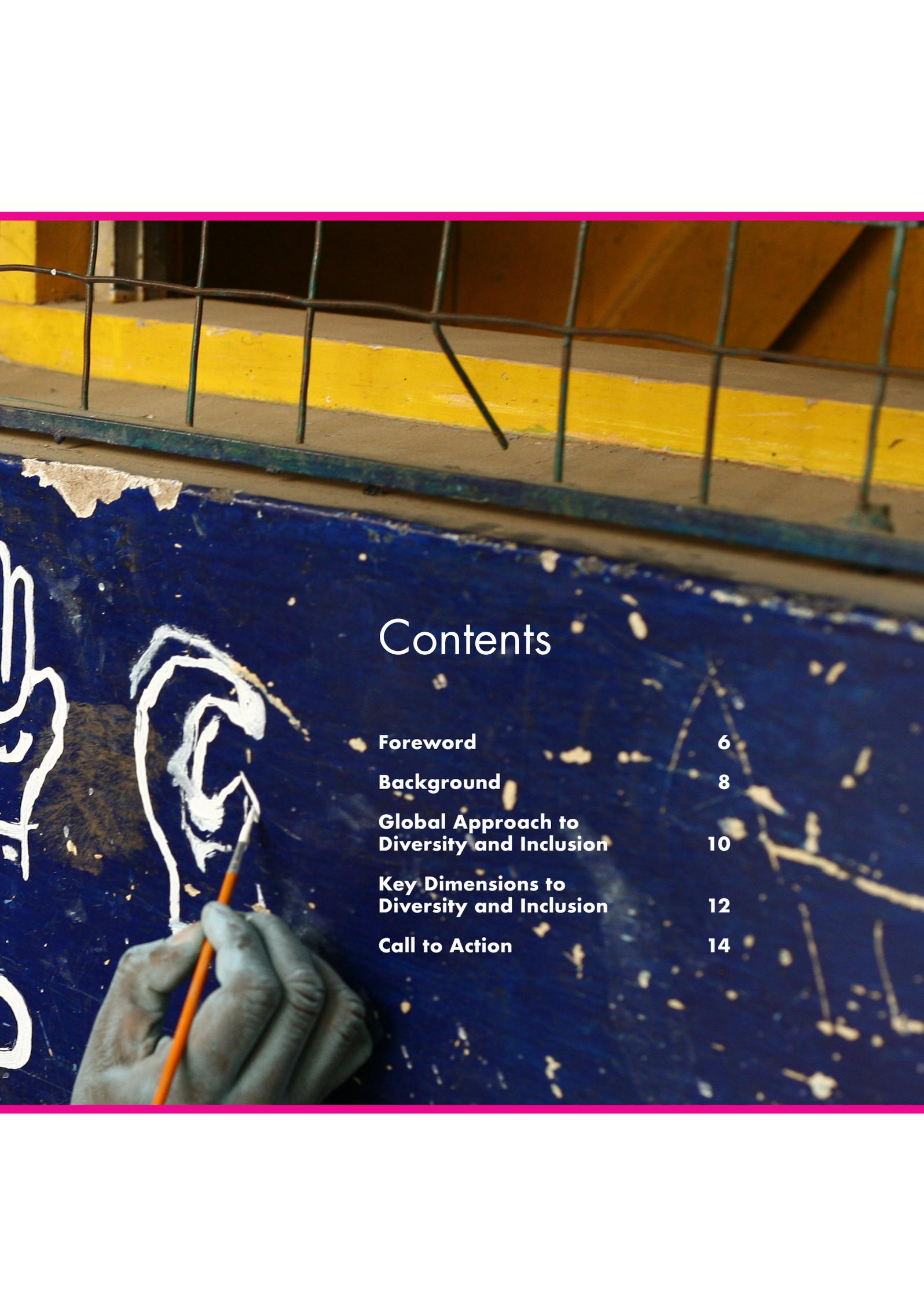
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Photos by: Fredrik Sahlström
Jean-Pierre Pouteau,
Nuno Perestrelo, Yoshi Shimizu,
Victor Ortega.

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Foreword

The Scout Movement aims to help young people to achieve and develop their full physical, intellectual, emotional, social and spiritual potential so that they are empowered to be responsible, active global citizens, who contribute to the creation of a better world.

From the very beginning, the Scout Movement has been managing diversity issues, which has included gender, social class, race and nationality. Over the last 110 years, Scouting has adapted to meet the evolving needs, expectations and aspirations of young people in different social contexts.

It has enabled young people and adults to understand and acquire the knowledge and competencies to face the realities of living in an intercultural and multicultural world, where we need to respect and value difference.

Scouting is an inclusive, values-based Movement and its membership is open to all young people and adults who accept our fundamental values. In today's context, it is even more important to ensure that young people and adults are equipped to live in an increasingly diverse world.

Respecting and valuing the diversity of the communities in which Scouting operates ensures that we maximise the potential of all young people and adults, by creating greater and better learning opportunities.

The World Organization of the Scout Movement (WOSM) continues its work towards ensuring that Scouting is open and accessible to all, better reflecting the composition of different communities and societies, and actively including all. We want to make Scouting more meaningful in today's world by welcoming everyone.



The main aim of this document is to be used as a reference for supporting National Scout Organizations in implementing national policies and strategies on Diversity and Inclusion. This document is also suitable to be shared with other stakeholders and external partners.



Background

Diversity and Inclusion is one of WOSM's Strategic Priorities. Over the years, WOSM has made efforts to make Scouting inclusive by valuing the diversity of local and national communities.

The following decisions of the World Scout Conference reinforce this perspective:

1977-19 Charter of Human Rights:

WOSM reaffirms its support for the Charter of Human Rights of the United Nations. (1948 UN Declaration of Human Rights: The UN Declaration of Human Rights states in Article 2 that "Everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration, without distinction of any kind.")

1990-16 Convention on the Rights of the Child:

WOSM expresses its support for the provisions of the Convention on the Rights of the Child and encourages all National Scout Organizations (NSO) to promote its dissemination among adults and children. (1989 UN Convention on the Rights of the Child: Requests States to ensure the rights set in the convention to every child without discrimination of any kind and to take all the appropriate measures to protect the child from all forms of discrimination.)

1993-13 Intercultural Education:

The World Scout Conference invites all NSOs to review their Youth Programme to reinforce the dimension of intercultural education and make their organisation even more open to all individuals and all communities without exception, promoting equality and respect of differences.

1999-04 Policy on Girls and Boys, Women and Men within the Scout Movement:

WOSM adopted a Policy that ensures equal opportunities to girls and boys, women and men. (Conference Document N° 9)

2005-24 Inter-religious dialogue and Spiritual Dimension:

The Conference recognises the importance of the many religions within our Movement and recommends actions for inter-religious dialogue and development of the spiritual dimension.

2014-12 Scouting and Human Rights:

The Conference reaffirms that Scouting is a Movement that does not discriminate on any grounds of Human Rights. (Conference Document n° 12)



Global Approach to Diversity and Inclusion

In a globalised world where local communities are diverse and reflect the mix of world societies, it is increasingly important to understand, respect and value individuals' differences. This requires the Movement to be prepared to deal with different needs, requirements and aspirations in order to accept and be inclusive of all youth members and adults.

Several definitions and perspectives on Diversity and Inclusion have been adopted in Scouting.

"Diversity is about individuals having the right to make their voices heard in Scouting. It means that we respect and can handle the actual differences that exist between people. It means that all these different people with different backgrounds, knowledge, experience, and values are looked after and are encouraged to contribute to the evolution of Scouting in all areas."

European Scout Region
Diversity & Inclusion Priority Group
March 2015

“Diversity refers to the variety and difference of the people among themselves... It is considered that the differences between people are an opportunity of the enrichment of society... In a context where we recognise the value of diversity, the process of inclusion is vital to the development and enrichment of practices equitable and accessible to all.”

Diversity and Inclusion in the
Interamerican Scout Region
January 2016

WOSM uses the following definitions as a basis for shaping its approach to Diversity and Inclusion.

The concept of **diversity** encompasses recognising people as individuals, understanding that each one of us is unique, and respecting our individual differences. Recognising diversity in Scouting involves valuing and having regard for everyone, and using those differences to create cohesive and diverse local, national and global communities.

Diversity forms part of the principles and values of Scouting and is a core component of the key policies and guidelines of WOSM. Scouting strongly opposes all forms of prejudice and discrimination of any kind that could threaten a person’s rights and freedoms, which are stated in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Encouraging diversity in Scouting promotes respect for different ideas and perspectives as well as an understanding of differences that can impact others.

A key aspiration is that the membership of the Movement completely reflects the diversity of young people and adults within the national and local communities where Scout groups exist. Recognising and encouraging diversity within Scouting is important as it brings different and unique opinions, and thus strengthens the capacity of the Scout Movement.

Inclusion implies valuing the diversity of individuals, giving equal access and opportunities to all and having each person involved and participating in activities to the greatest extent possible.

The Scout Movement aims to be inclusive to all young people and adults. For young people, it is achieved through the Youth Programme, which creates the right learning environment so that every young person can be involved as well as participate actively and develop the competencies needed to play an active role in their communities. For adults in Scouting, it is reflected through their recruitment, training, support and retention as well as giving equal access to opportunities and allowing the personal development of adults.



The Movement has grown internationally because of its ability to recognise and nurture diversity, and to be inclusive of every young person and adult who supports Scouting throughout the world. It is essential to develop and improve national youth programmes and delivery methods so that they are inclusive by design, and not just by adaptation.



Key Dimensions to Diversity and Inclusion

Working in an inclusive way demands changes – organisational and individual. While aiming to reach all segments of societies, it is important to consider and act upon the organisational structures, values and practices of NSOs throughout the world.

1. RECOGNITION OF SHARED VALUES AND HUMAN RIGHTS

As an educational Movement, Scouting's mission is to contribute to the education of children and young people on fundamental values of dignity, solidarity, tolerance, respect and equality, to create a society that respects and promotes Human Rights.

Scouting provides children and young people with a self-progressive system of education, and thus enables the development of one's identity (Duty to Self). As part of this development, everyone has the right to freely adhere to spiritual principles² (Duty to God), which helps in understanding and respecting other people's religions and beliefs.

Scouting promotes respect to others as unique individuals (Duty to Others), and therefore leads to the development of society with recognition and respect for the dignity of humanity and for the integrity of the natural world.

² As stated in the Article 18 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, "Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion..."

2. YOUTH PROGRAMMES - INCLUSIVE BY DESIGN

Diversity and Inclusion is essential for the implementation of national Youth Programmes, enabling Scouting to meet the needs and interests of all young people, both today and in the near future, through meaningful learning opportunities.³

By having a membership which is diverse, young people and adults' learning experiences are maximised, enabling Scouting to achieve the goal of creating a better world.

Youth Programmes must be designed with the necessary flexibility to adapt to each society while recognising diversity⁴ (i.e. cultural, social, political and economic dimensions) as an educational tool.

Diversity and Inclusion is a key element in the different areas of personal growth, thus enabling a holistic education of young people, providing them with the opportunity to develop values and competencies to be active global citizens.

3. DIVERSITY OF ADULTS WHO SUPPORT SCOUTING

Through the support and management provided to all adults, Scouting reinforces the need to be inclusive of all members and celebrate the diversity of its membership – adults and young people.

Diversity and Inclusion is present throughout the entire adult life cycle⁵. For example, NSO recruitment strategies need to take into consideration the diversity of adults within each community. A special effort needs to be made to develop specific approaches and tools to attract and recruit members from specific segments of societies (e.g. groups that are underrepresented in membership) and to respond to the expectations and interest of all adults.

Training and support systems also need to be designed to be appropriate for all adults by taking into consideration and valuing the differences of individual members. It is also fundamental that Diversity and Inclusion is a core component of national training curricula.

4. GOOD GOVERNANCE PRACTICES

It is vital to note the importance of good governance and leadership practices so that diversity and inclusion efforts may succeed.

NSOs also have a responsibility to ensure that Diversity and Inclusion is an integral component of Strategic Plans.⁶ This ensures that work in this area is included as a priority in all that is being done, and that effective mechanisms to monitor and assess progress are in place.

It is also important to identify changes related to the functioning of the organisational structures, particularly looking at committees and other support structures to ensure its membership reflects the composition of the national and local communities (e.g. different cultures, faiths and beliefs, gender, socio-economic status, and many others).

It is fundamental that the composition of NSOs' governing bodies and decision-making processes are inclusive.



⁴As Recognising Diversity within each society also means recognising its challenges and needs. On September 2015, countries adopted the UN Sustainable Development Goals, (<http://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/sustainable-development-goals/>) a set of goals to end poverty, protect the planet, and ensure prosperity for all. Taking this into account and keeping in mind our goal of creating a better world, these goals ground our work on Diversity and Inclusion, especially Goal 5 (Gender Equality), Goal 10 (Reduced Inequalities) and Goal 16 (Peace, justice and strong institutions).

⁵World Adults in Scouting Policy, 2011. (<https://www.scout.org/adults-in-scouting-policy>)

⁶WOSM adopted Diversity and Inclusion as one of the six strategic priorities towards Vision 2023.



A Call to Action

NSOs are encouraged to review their strategies on diversity and inclusion, and wherever possible, work in close collaboration with states, local authorities, specialist organisations and other relevant stakeholders. This will be a great first step forward towards raising Scouting's profile and ensuring that the Movement in each country is truly open, accessible and inclusive of all people.



This can be achieved, particularly by:

- promoting and defending Human Rights and strongly opposing all forms of prejudice and discrimination
- defining and prioritising specific aspects of diversity within the country to promote access to Scouting and include all young people and adults
- recognising, understanding and valuing the individual differences of members of local communities and all societies
- renewing national Youth Programme so that they become inclusive by design and not by adaptation
- developing inclusive adult management systems, processes and practices - encompassing recruitment, performance and decisions for the future
- promoting Diversity and Inclusion at local, national, regional and global levels through training, activities, networks that will improve the competencies of all adults
- changing organisational methodologies, strategies and structures to ensure they respect diversity and are inclusive



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World Scout Bureau
Global Support Centre
Kuala Lumpur

Suite 3, Level 17
Menara Sentral Vista
150 Jalan Sultan Abdul Samad
Brickfields
50470 Kuala Lumpur, MALAYSIA

Tel.: + 60 3 2276 9000
Fax: + 60 3 2276 9089

worldbureau@scout.org
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