

Presentation on Educational Methods
39th World Scout Conference, Brazil, Tuesday 11 January, 2011
John May, Chairman of the Educational Methods Committee, 2008-2011

Dear friends,

I am very pleased to be here with you today to provide you with some information on the work of the Educational Methods Committee in the last triennium.



During the last two and a half years we have reviewed our ways of working, in addition to building on the achievements in different areas of educational methods in recent years.

We started by setting our work within the three areas developed by the World Scout Committee.

We also recognised that there are areas of work in educational methods that are the responsibility of NSOs, which has been helpful in identifying the support that can be provided.

We recognised that:



Each NSO has a responsibility to develop a Youth Programme, based on the fundamental principles of Scouting, that meets the needs of young people in each particular country and provide training and support to the adults in Scouting to deliver the Programme.

Some NSOs are working at the cutting edge of Youth Programme and their support to adults and these NSOs are "setting the trends for the future" and it is important to find opportunities for them to share this knowledge, experience and innovation with others.

Some NSOs are struggling to provide a quality Youth Programme and sufficient adults to provide even a basic Scout experience to young people.



We also recognised that our World Scout Youth Events, in addition to being fantastic experiences for young people, are opportunities for research, innovation and sharing of good practices. We have been working closely with the organisers of recent past and current World Events to see how these can be used for innovations and capacity development as these events provide excellent opportunities for sharing ideas and good practices between NSOs and across Regions.

We are looking forward to working with the host National Scout Organizations of future world events to see their innovations and work with them to develop Scouting.

This is also an area that we hope to develop further in the future.

So we are fully supportive of the consultancy approach, where NSOs will be helped to identify their own particular needs and offer support in areas of experience and expertise.

I would like to focus this short input on a few key areas of the work that we have been doing, particularly those that have Resolutions drafted for the Conference.

The first is on



Youth Involvement – which has been on our agenda for a very, very long time.

At the last World Scout Conference there was a Resolution to develop a vision and strategy on Youth Involvement. We set up a small group to work on this and the results are set out in Conference Document 14.

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We have developed a Vision,



Young people are empowered to develop their capacities for making decisions that affect their lives; and engage in decision-making in the groups and institutions in which they are involved, so that they actively contribute to creating a better world.

It is important to note three key aspects of this statement:



1. it focuses on the personal development of young people, empowering them to develop their capacities for making decisions
2. it has an institutional aspect, engaging in groups and institutions
3. it is not Scout specific

So the vision on youth involvement that we are presenting to you for adoption at the Conference seeks to help our membership be involved in making decisions that affect them, from the time that they start Scouting and developing this as they move through the Movement.



And hopefully, this will attract more young people to Scouting as they will see it as an opportunity to be listened to, to have their say, to be taken seriously, to make decisions, to discuss and debate issues with others, to listen to others, to contribute to life in small and large groups and to be able to use these skills outside Scouting in the wider world.

To achieve this vision we have developed a framework for a strategy, building on the three areas of youth involvement that have been around in recent years – youth involvement in the unit, in the community and institutionally.

We recognise that there are a number of different elements that are helpful in maximising Scouting's ability to involve young people fully in decision-making.

We need to help young people develop skills through their participation in the Youth Programme;

We need to make sure that youth involvement is included in our policies and structures

We need to offer young people the opportunity to use these skills in the wider community



We can only do this if our leadership believes in the importance of involving young people in the decisions that affect them, in a way appropriate to their age and experience and recognising that it is a capacity that needs to be developed, so our attitudes are important too.

The framework sets out results, which I hope we can achieve as a Movement by 2020, and we can develop tools, share good practices and make changes within WOSM to support this.

But this only tells part of the story. I had the pleasure and privilege of being in the World Scout Youth Forum last week in Blumenau.

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- I saw young people debate very constructively on the recommendations on Youth Involvement which will be presented to the conference this morning
- I witnessed great presentations and displays by young people during the exhibitions, a demonstration of the social impact that the Movement has had on the society. Yes, given the opportunity they can change this World.
- Many young people today have been accorded positions of responsibility at various levels notably International Commissioners in many countries as represented at the 11th WSYF
- I also had the privilege to see young people initiate discussions and dialogue during the open forum, draw conclusions and make proposals for the future. A clear indication that young people are capable of paddling their canoe with the adults as mentors



Volunteers in Scouting

The other key area of work that I would like to focus on this morning is Volunteering and the support that we give to Adults in Scouting.



The World Adult Resources Policy was adopted many years ago and many NSOs have found this a very useful framework on which to base the support to their volunteers and staff in Scouting.

In the intervening years there have been other policies developed and adopted that impact on the World Adult Resources Policy. Work has taken place during the last triennium to reaffirm that the content of the policy is still valid, and does make a difference where it is used, so the new areas could be integrated e.g.

- the importance of areas such as recruiting adults to Scouting, and to retain them
- the need to provide quality training and support in a way that is accessible to our volunteers
- the need to ensure that all adults who are recruited are suitable to work with young people and that they are fully aware of their responsibilities.



It is very important that Scouting is an organisation that provides good quality support to its volunteer leaders so that adults who choose to donate some of their time volunteering for Scouting will feel valued, supported, recognised and have opportunities to take part in activities which motivate them and the opportunities to make friends.



Our Conference comes at the start of a very important year – 2011 is the year when we celebrate the International Year of the Volunteer, plus 10 and it is also the European Year of Volunteering.

We are happy to acknowledge the presence of Mr. Marco van der REE representing United Nation Volunteer programme.

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Ten years ago, the International Year of the Volunteer sought to recognise the tremendous effort of volunteers all around the world and the significant impact that this has on the lives of communities and individuals. Many governments set up new initiatives to encourage more people to volunteer and I know that Scouting embraced this in very many countries too.

Volunteering is at the heart of Scouting and it is very important that we recognise this, value it and cherish it.

To support your own celebrations, you are invited to have a look in your purple USB key, there is a special folder related to the IYV+10, with resources from UNV and International Federation of Red Cross.



There is also a set of 13 posters available in our 5 languages and a Diploma of Recognition which you can duplicate and offer to your adult volunteers during this year, please don't hesitate to use this material massively or your own one.

Volunteers have a choice – they can choose to spend their free time in Scouting or they can choose to spend their time with many, many other organisations, which have similar claims and can offer similar opportunities.



It is very important in Scouting that we take volunteering seriously; that we value our volunteers, that we provide support and training and that we recognise the contributions that they make - so that Scouting becomes the organisation of choice for many more adults and that those who do currently volunteer stay with us for longer.

Examples of resources developed in this area will be found also in your USB key but I'm sure the hidden part of our common iceberg is what you developed and hope we will collectively benefit from them.



So, over the last triennium we have been taking forward the initiatives that were already developed, we have been exploring and experimenting with new ways of working and there has been some development work too.



To achieve this work we have relied on a very small group of people. We know that there are many exciting developments in NSOs and we need to find better ways of sharing experiences and good practices, not just within Regional structures but also but across a wider playing field.

We know that NSOs want to provide quality Scouting for young people so we fully support the consultancy approach so that NSOs are helped to identify their needs and get support to develop Scouting and NSOs that have experience can be provided with more opportunities to engage in



We look forward to working with you to develop Scouting to meet the needs of young people today and further inspiring and motivating our volunteers so that we can attract more

Thank you.