TB001 - The educational proposal

This ToolBox handout is designed to help you develop the educational proposal of your association. This is the first step in the Renewed Approach to Programme process. Based on the Mission of Scouting, adopted by the World Scout Conference in Durban, 1999, your proposal should be reviewed every few years to ensure that it is still relevant and attractive.

Concept

An educational proposal enables you to explain to a given community how a Scout association meets the educational needs of young people, in accordance with the mission, purpose, principles and method of the Movement.

The educational proposal of a National Scout Association is what it offers to provide to the young people in the society in which it operates.

Objectives

- To introduce the Movement and what it offers young people to parents and the community, and to make a clear commitment towards them.
- To express the Movement's mission and goals, so that educational objectives can be set.
- To encourage adult leaders to offer young people an attractive programme and to be committed to a certain style of educational relationship with them.

Content

- An analysis of the main needs and aspirations of young people, as well as the opportunities and threats which confront them in their daily lives.
- Scouting's response: the general educational goals that the association proposes; the qualities that a young person can be expected to have acquired by the time he or she leaves the Movement.
- The type of youth programme and services offered by the association in order to reach these goals; the type of relationship proposed between young people and adults.

How to develop an educational proposal

There are several steps which can be identified when developing an educational proposal.

1. Referring to the mission of Scouting

In July 1999, the 35th World Scout Conference (Durban, South Africa) adopted a mission statement for Scouting. The statement, which is based on WOSM's Constitution, is intended to reaffirm Scouting's role in today's world. The adoption of the statement has been a key step forward in WOSM's work on the development of a Strategy for Scouting.

The mission of Scouting

The mission of Scouting is to contribute to the education of young people, through a value system based on the Scout promise and Law, to help build a better world where people are self-fulfilled as individuals and play a constructive role in society.

This is achieved by

- involving them throughout their formative years in a non-formal education process
- using a specific method that makes each individual the principal agent in his or her development as a self-reliant, supportive, responsible and committed person
- assisting them to establish a value system based upon spiritual, social and personal principles as expressed in the Promise and Law.

(see diagram 1 on page 2)

Challenges

National Scout Associations have to identify the key conditions, or challenges, required to achieve the mission and to examine how these challenges can be met in order to make our mission a reality. In Durban, such challenges were brought

Diagram 1 - Explanation of the mission statement

The diagram shows the mission statement with annotations:

- What are we trying to do → mission
- We are not the only influence on young people → contribute
- Not just academic, a life long process → education
- What we believe and stand for → value system
- Together with others
- A personal dimension: having achieved one's full potential → self-fulfilled
- Local, national and international → society
- Open to all = boys and girls → young people
- Expressing the values on which Scouting is based → Promise and Law
- better people = a better world → better world
- A social dimension: active and supportive → constructive role

The mission of Scouting is to contribute to the education of young people, through a value system based on the Scout Promise and Law, to help build a better world where people are self-fulfilled as individuals and play a constructive role in society

out during working group sessions:

- **Relevance**: meeting the needs and aspirations of young people;
- **Complementary nature**: making a distinctive contribution to the education of young people, in particular through the Scout Method;
- **Membership**: reaching out to more young people;
- **Adults**: attracting and retaining the adults we need;
- **Relationships and partnerships**: working with others to better serve young people;
- **Unity**: pursuing a common purpose at all levels.

2. Making a situation analysis

The challenges involved in achieving the mission need to be compared to reality at all levels of the Movement. In other words, if we agree on the mission and if we agree on the broad conditions needed for its successful implementation, what are the major issues that we face that create obstacles to achieving the mission?

This work has to be done by the leadership of each national association in order to develop or review their educational proposal.

However, It is important to involve as many levels of the association as possible in discussing, formulating and adopting the educational proposal. National and district meetings, as well as leader training courses or workshops, provide ideal opportunities to share views and make proposals.

The booklet "Achieving the mission of Scouting" edited by the World Scout Bureau, and downloadable from the website (http://www.scout.org), explain how to organise a workshop at district or national level to discuss the challenges required to achieve the mission. The outcomes of such workshops can be used to draft or review the educational proposal.

The following ideas and questions, extracted from that booklet may serve as guidelines for that analysis.

a. Relevance

To achieve its mission, we believe that Scouting today must ensure that:

What it offers young people reflects their needs and aspirations in the society in which they live, and attracts and retains their interest over a sufficient period of time, especially adolescence, to advance their personal development

Key issues

- The critical importance of understanding the needs and aspirations of young people, girls and boys, of different ages in their society, and of how societal changes affect young people;
- the need to adapt Scouting's educational proposal to the needs of young people in a particular society and to market a youth programme that is suited to each age range, based on this proposal;
- an emphasis on Scouting's educational provision for the adolescent age range (as opposed to provision for younger children), especially in societies where adolescents have specific needs that the Scout Method can help meet.

Some questions to consider

- What is the total membership in each age section of your association?
  - compared to 10 years ago, is the membership of each age range section increasing or decreasing?
  - Has the average age of a youth member in your association changed significantly during the same period?
  - in particular, how has the number/ratio of youth members in the adolescent age range changed during the same period?
  - What reasons can you identify for the above changes?
- When was the current youth programme of each age section of your association introduced?
  - if a thorough review and update has not

taken place for some time (e.g. ten years or more), what reasons and obstacles have prevented this from happening (e.g. are there aspects of the youth programme that are considered as being "unchangeable")?

- if your association has developed a culture of traditions over time (e.g. ceremonies, rituals, etc.) has the educational values of these been examined?

- In your opinion, how have young people in the different age groups changed since the current youth programme was introduced?
  - How could your association verify these perceptions (e.g. through surveys, research, etc.)?
  - to what extent are your findings linked to changes taking place in your society, directly or indirectly?
  - in what ways have these changes affected young people, positively or negatively, in terms of their physical, intellectual, emotional, social and spiritual development?
  - what new needs and aspirations can you identify among young people today in each age group?
  - in what ways does your association's current youth programme respond, or not respond, to these needs and aspirations?
  - if there are difficulties in responding to these needs and aspirations, are they related to the design, delivery or implementation of the youth programme?
  - what other needs and aspirations do you anticipate in the years to come?
  - how will your association respond to these emerging needs in a timely and effective way?

- How do young people in your country perceive the relevance of Scouting and what your association offers to them in today's society?
  - do young people, especially adolescents, find the image of your association a positive and attractive one?
  - do your youth members find the activities that they are offered, and the experience that they have of Scouting, to be worthwhile?

b. Complementary nature

To achieve its mission, we believe that Scouting today must ensure that:

As a non-formal educational movement, it complements the contribution of other agents such as the family, school and religious institutions, without replacing them or duplicating their efforts, by making its specific contribution to the integral development of young people through the use of a unique method which is clearly understood and implemented.

Key issues

- The need for all adults in the Movement to understand the important difference between *education* (the development of the abilities of the mind and the development of attitudes) and *instruction* (imparting knowledge, skills and attitudes from the instructor directly to the young person);

- ensuring an understanding of the *elements of the Scout Method* (Scout Promise and Law, learning by doing, the patrol or team system, the symbolic framework, personal progression, nature, and adult support)) as an *educational system*: an interdependent group of elements interacting and forming a unified and integrated whole;

- helping adult leaders to make *appropriate use of the elements of the Scout Method and the dynamics of Scouting in action* in working effectively with young people;

- recognition, both within the movement and externally, that Scouting is *non-formal* in the sense that it is organised and structured, with a clearly defined purpose, principles and method that emphasise creativity, resourcefulness and personal involvement rather than the transmission of knowledge. Thus Scouting makes a distinctive kind of contribution to the education of young people that complements that of other educational agents.

Some questions to consider

- What institutions in your society try to help young people to develop in one way or another (e.g. your own association, school, religious institutions, clubs, family, or others)? You may find the chart on the page following the questions useful in responding to the following questions:
  - what does each of these institutions set out to do in terms of the physical, intellectual, emotional, social and spiritual development of young people?
  - what methods or approaches does each institution use to achieve what it sets ou to do?
  - how effective do you consider the contribution of each of these institutions is in terms of what they set out to achieve?

- How would you describe the specific "niche" that your association fills in this spectrum of educational provision?
  - in what ways do you consider that your association really offers young people opportunities in the various areas of development that other institutions are not designed to deal with?
  - what makes your association's contribution to the personal development of young people unique, in comparison to other institutions?

Contribution of various institutions to the development of young people

		Family	School	Religious Institutions (church)	Clubs, or other	SCOUTING
Physical	What? How? How effective?					
Intellectual	What? How? How effective?					
Emotionnal	What? How? How effective?					
Social	What? How? How effective?					
Spiritual	What? How? How effective?					

- In what ways do you consider that your association is replicating the contributions being made by other institutions (i.e. offering the same things in similar ways?
- In what ways do you consider that your association is substituting itself for what other institutions should be doing but are not doing?
- What do you think that young people find in Scouting that they cannot find elsewhere, if anything? What could this imply about what you currently offer?
- To what extent, both within and outside your association,is Scouting perceived as an educational movement, as opposed to a purely recreational or service organisation?
- To what extent do unit leaders have access to educational materials (produced by your association, by the World Scout Bureau headquarters or its Regional Offices, or by external sources) in order to help them to improve the quality of the educational experience in the unit?
- What happens within your association to ensure that unit leaders have a thorough understanding of the Scout Method? To what extent do

you consider that the Scout Method is really used effectively in the local units?
- To what extent are unit leaders in your asociation able to distinguish between their role as a Scout leader and any other role that they may fulfil in other areas of their lives (e.g. parent, teacher, religious instructor, public authority, etc.) and act accordingly?

c. Membership

To achieve its mission, we believe that Scouting today must ensure that:

it strives towards opening its membership to those young people in society not previously served and provides equal treatment and opportunities to all its members.

Key issues

- an educational proposal that reflects the needs and aspirations of all young people in the society;
- a willingness on the part of the national Scout association to reach out to all young people in that society, to break down the existing barriers that, for whatever reason, exclude some;

- a commitment by the national Scout association to provide equal treatment and opportunities for all members regardless of gender, socio-cultural background or other factors, and a commitment to redress as quickly as possible any imbalance of gender, socio-cultural background, age, etc., that currently exists.

Some questions to consider

- Is scouting readily accessible to all young people in your society?
- Where are your Scout groups located?
  - do they exist in the entire territory of your country?
  - are they adequately represented in urban and rural areas?
  - do they serve the various socio-economic groups (lower, middle and upper classes)?
  - do they cover all segments of your society (e.g. ethnic/migrants communities, etc.)?
- How is your membership distributed among the various age sections?
- If membership of your association includes both boys and girls, are both genders equally represented? If not, what are the reasons?
  - are there any differences in the gender mix between urban and rural areas, socio-economic groups and age sections? If so, why?
- What is the penetration rate of your association, i.e. the proportion of youth members to the total available youth population of the same age range in your country?
- What barriers prevent young people who would like to be Scouts from joining your association? (For example: no group/unit available nearby; lack of adult leaders; image of the movement, uniform not appealing to young people; cost of participation; too much competition from other movements/sectors; insufficient free time; other reasons...)
  - how can these barriers be removed?
- Does your association communicate what you offer to young people, what you stand for, effectively to all segments of your society?
  - to which audience(s) are you addressing your message?
  - do the language and image used need to be changed?
  - do the media used for communication need to be reviewed?
  - what else can be done to spread your message through the various segments of your society?
- How does your association plan to actively increase its membership in order to achieve the Movement's mission in your country?

d. Adults

To achieve its mission, we believe that Scouting today must ensure that:

it attracts and retains adults who are prepared to develop the knowledge, skills and attitudes required to support the Movement and in particular to implement the Scout Method.

Key issues

- recruiting the appropriate type and number of adults to support the Movement at all levels, by ensuring that the role to be played is perceived and meaningful;
- retaining those adults within the Movement through an adequate policy for the management of adult resources, which includes the provision for relevant training and support;
- ensuring that adults working with young people identify with the fundamentals of Scouting and are able to use the Scout method fully and effectively. Amongst other considerations, this implies being able to "get along" with young people in a spirit of true partnership.

Some questions to consider

- What is the total number of adult leaders in your association?
- how many of these are involved in unit leader positions (working directly with youth members) and what is the ratio of unit leaders to youth members in each age section?
- are there sufficient unit leaders to effectively implement the youth programme in all age sections within your association?
- are there a sufficient number of adults within your association involved in adult support, administration or management positions?
- If your association admits girls as well as boys, what is the proportion of female adult leaders in your association?
  - what proportion of them are involved in unit leader positions?
  - in what age sections?
  - what proportion of female leaders are in adult support, administration or management positions?
  - at what levels (local, national)?
  - do you consider that these statistics reflect equitable treatment of both male and female leaders? If not, what could be done to change this situation?
  - would every adult leader have equal access to any responsibility/position in your association on the basis of demonstrated competence, rather than other considerations surch as gender, age, etc.? If not, what could be done to change this?

- Based on your own personal experience, and that of other adult leaders you know, to what extent does your association:
  - recruit adults to do a specific job, based on a written job description?

  - carefully check potential candidates to ensure their suitability?
  - consider carefully the motivation that led each adult to volunteer to join your association and to remain?
  - provide adequate introduction to each person's task?
  - provide appropriate training and support in various ways when they are needed?
  - ensure that each job is rewarding, up to expectations and a source of personal growth and satisfaction?
  - enable adults to move to another position/job, or to leave the association, when the current task/term of office is complete?
  - consistently make appropriate arrangements to meet specific requirements (e.g. child-care facilities for leaders with young children) when arranging activities, meetings, training opportunities, etc.?
- does the image your association projects attract and facilitate the recruitment of the type of adult leaders that you need?
  - are there other barriers to attractiing and recruiting effective leaders?
  - what more could be done by your asociation in this area?

e. Relationships and partnerships

To achieve its mission, we believe that Scouting today must ensure that:

its relationships with other institutions are based upon a partnership which respects Scouting independence and its specific character as an educational movement for young people.

As a community-based educational movement for young people, Scouting cannot operate in isolation. In order to be effective it needs the support of other institutions in the community whose purposes are complementary. Such partnerships may be forged to support scouting's infrastructure through the provision of human, material and financial resources; or they may be to enrich the educational activities of the Movement.

Key issues

- Ensuring that any institutional relationsips established at national or international levels (whether permanent or of a time limited project nature) are focused on supporting the pursuit of scouting's mission as a non-formal educational movement for young people (male and female); such relationships must never threaten the independence or specific identity of Scouting;
- encouraging mutually beneficial relationships with partners as close as possible to unit or community level within the movement, including families.

Some questions to consider

- To the best of your knowledge, what are the institutions of whatever nature (the government, development agencies, the church or other religious bodies, other youth organisations, etc.) with which your association has established relationships?
- Identify, in each case, the purpose of these relationships (for example, to obtain financial support for the association, to cooperate on the implementation of a project, etc.)
- How are the conditions of partnership with another institution negotiated? Whose responsibility is this? Have these relationships/partnerships each been the subject of a written agreement between your association and its partners, establishing the terms of the partnerships?
- Have the partnerships been established in order to help your association to achieve its mission as an educational movement for young people? Examine each partnership separately to determine how each serves that purpose. Have there been other reasons for establishing the partnerships? If so, what are they?
- Have these relationships/partnerships respected Scouting's independence? Or have some of the partnerships restricted Scouting's freedom as an educational movement for young people? If so, in what way?
- Would you question any aspects of these partnerships that your association has established with other institutions?
- Are there other new partnerships which could help your association to achieve its mission? If so, what are they? What factors would you take into account in establishing new ones?
- How does your association encourage and support local unit leaders in developing positive, supportive relationships with partner organisations and the families of youth members within their community?

f. Unity

To achieve its mission, we believe that Scouting today must ensure that:

all components of the World Organization - national Scout organisations/associations, regional and World bodies - strive to strengthen the international unity of the movement by actively pursuing their common purpose and direction.

Enhancing the unity of the Scout Movement

worldwide is one of the primary aims of the World Organization. It is one of the foundation stones on which the movement is built. The international dimension is an essential aspect of both its purpose (contributing to the education of young people to become members of their international communities) and its principles (the promotion of international peace, understanding and cooperation).

Key issues

- developing an enhanced sense of unity and common purpose and direction of the Movement.
- strengthening the international dimension in all aspects of Scouting and the importance of the Movement's role in the promotion of international peace, understanding and cooperation;
- commitment by national Scout associations to participate fully in the decision-making processes of the World organization and to implement the decisions made by Regional and World scout Conferences.

Some questions to consider

- In your association, to what extent is there a sense of belonging to WOSM - a worlwide brotherhood that goes far beyond your own association?
- In what ways does your association contribute to promoting world peace, brotherhood and cooperation?
- How is this reflected in the life of your association (youth programme and use of the Scout Method, use of the world Scout badge, participation in regional and world events, etc.)?
- What does the management structure of your association - including the International Commissioner - do to promote the international dimension of Scouting?
- How does your association prepare itself to take an active part in the decision-making process of WOSM at a Regional or World Scout Conference?
- What does your association do to implement the resolutions adopted at Regional and World Scout Conferences? Are these shared with all within the association?

3. Discussing the findings

After this analysis has been completed, the association has a list of the conclusions, needs, expectations and aspirations related to the 6 main challenges. This will form the basis for drafting the educational proposal.

Some conclusions may concern the needs and aspirations of young people, others may concern the expectations of the various partners. Only the key elements should be listed.

It is then necessary to find out whether the Scout association is able to meet each of these needs or expectations in some way or another. The list can be used to stimulate debate at all levels of the association.

Members should discuss the feedback from the surveys and the list of needs and expectations and identify whether Scouting's current response is adequate or could be improved. The ideas should be noted under various headings (young people, parents, authorities etc.) and collected by the national programme committee, to be incorporated into the educational proposal.

Examples concerning young people

- Young people aged 12-16 express a keen interest in outdoor activities and the protection of the environment. The programme for this section places an emphasis on camping and outdoor activities, but does not do enough in terms of environmental education.
- Young people aged 16-22 are very concerned about their professional futures. Nothing has been done to meet this need so far. The programme of the senior section should incorporate elements of professional guidance and work experience.

Examples concerning parents

- Parents and some teachers are afraid that Scouting will take up too much time in their children's lives, to the detriment of their studies. So far, this point has not been taken into account. The way in which the Scout programme has a favourable impact on young people's success in school should be highlighted more effectively.
- Many parents, with the support of church representatives, expect Scouting to provide a solid education in spiritual and moral values. The promise and law are an important educational element in each section, but leaders feel quite ill-prepared as far as spiritual education is concerned. Efforts must be made in this area.

Examples concerning public authorities

- On several occasions during symposia, representatives of the authorities have expressed an interest in community development projects organised by the Scout association: building playgrounds for children in underprivileged areas, renovating historical monuments, etc. They are interested in everything that can contribute to civic education and responsibility. This element of the programme should be maintained and strengthened.

3. Drafting the proposal

Many ways of drafting such a text can be envisaged, but what is important is that it clearly expresses, using terms that are readily understood by everyone, how Scouting proposes to provide concrete responses to the aspirations and needs of young people in a given situation.

Once the text has been drafted by the national programme committee, it then has to be submitted to the governing bodies of the association. After that, it will be circulated among all leaders for consultation, before being officially adopted by the general assembly of the association.

An example of educational proposal

The Charter for Guiding and Scouting in Europe

We are helping Young People to grow:

- by promoting their development and defending their individual freedoms within the framework of Children's Rights and Youth Rights;

- by contributing to the development of a personal system of moral and spiritual values through participation in a progressive programme of self-education, in partnership with their peers;

- by encouraging them to interact more closely with the natural environment, understand more fully their relationship with it and, therefore, appreciate better the need to respect it;

- by offering a positive relationship with adults, based on trust, in which young people will find appropriate educational responses to their developing sexual maturity, emotional needs and general well-being.

We are helping Society to grow:

- by providing youth information services: young people can only integrate themselves fully into society when they are fully informed on the opportunities and the issues which concern them, directly or indirectly;

- by providing an education for democracy: societies can only function with the full participation of young people in the decision-making processes which will ultimately affect their lives;

- by practising equal opportunities: each person, without distinction of gender, origin, race, creed, abilities or wealth must be encouraged and assisted to achieve her or his full physical, intellectual, social and spiritual potentials;

- by seeking and creating partnerships with the marginalised: young people and adults from the marginalised sectors of society must be welcomed and accepted openly into our organisations if they are to challenge and overcome the causes of their exclusion from general society.

We are helping Europe to grow:

- by helping young people overcome barriers to their mobility, often created by limited access to information and communication networks, suitable transport, or accommodation;

- by challenging xenophobia and racism: inter-cultural learning opportunities for young people challenge nationalistic stereotyping and provide an education for peace and tolerance;

- by actively contributing to the development of better and more effective youth policies in Europe, to the benefit of all of Europe's young population and not just to the benefit of our members;

- by building bridges of friendship in and beyond its border: as Europe grows, its young people must grow in friendship with all their neighbours in every part of the world.

World Organization of the Scout Movement
Organisation Mondiale du Mouvement Scout