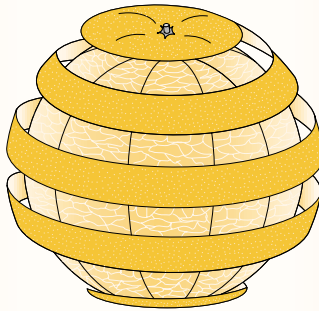


CONFLICT

RESOLUTION



**BEST PRACTICE
IN SCI**



**Service Civil International
GATE**

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SCI'S BEST PEACE PRACTICES*

AN INTRODUCTION

Service Civil International (SCI) was founded in 1920 to create an active response to pacifism. The motto “Deeds not words” was seen as active way of healing the wounds, reconstructing the ruins and overcoming the national barriers to prevent future wars.

More than eighty years after the first workcamp in the ruins of the French village Verdun, SCI has become an international volunteer organisation in 45 countries. Every year thousands of mainly young people participate in over 500 workcamps worldwide. But while the idea of people coming together for short workcamps seemed an appropriate approach to foster peace after the world wars and during the Cold War, it could not answer neither the new outbreak of regional violence and civil wars or to the militarisation of global societies and the return of imperialistic power politics in areas such as Central Asia and the Middle East.

In December 2003 SCI decided to make peace-building the main focus of the organisation until 2009**. Service Civil International decided not only to go back to the roots of its movement, but to start an organisational development process to contribute to the fight against injustice and violence and to the development of global peace as one of the biggest international youth and peace organisations.

This book shows that we don't have to start from scratch. During the last decade activists and groups all over SCI have sought and developed new ways of peace-work. These may be categorised in the three approaches, which lay the basic structure for this book.

1. Concrete peace projects in conflict areas.
2. Approaches to introduce peace and human rights topics in the workcamps and enhance the quality of workcamps, so that they can aid more directly to develop a culture of peace and constructive Conflict Transformation.
3. Training and awareness-building inside the organisation to focus on “peace” and active volunteer work as the central issues for SCI and its

* This book and the conference on SCI's Best Peace Practice have been developed by the Conflict Resolution (CR) Team and GATE. Founded in 2000, the CR Team developed a variety of projects mainly in the field of training for Conflict Transformation and the organisation of resources and seminars to build up Conflict Transformation capacities in SCI. You can find more information about us in the Conflict Resolution Resource pack, which has been published by GATE.

The CR Team sees itself as a platform for people who want to realise conflict transformation projects with SCI. We are always looking for new people and ideas! You may visit us at the website of our mailing list <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/sci-cr/>

** The Long Term Strategy 2004-2009 has been adopted by the highest international body of SCI, the International Committee Meeting, in December 2003 in South Korea. See also the full length version at <http://www.sciint.org/stratplan>

partners, and as well to build up the peace-capacities and capability of the organisations.

The five case studies of SCI projects in conflict areas covers a broad variety of possible volunteer projects: descriptions of workcamps in Palestine, international peace and development work in Kosovo; political and social education programme with underprivileged young protestants in Northern Ireland; work with Azeri children in an refugee-camp in Azerbaijan; and an overview of 25 years of inter-ethnic SCI projects in Sri Lanka offer a unique possibility to review these valuable projects and to develop new visions for future projects. A report of the “Lessons Learnt” – a session at the conference on SCI’s Best Peace Practices in November 2003 should stimulate future preparation for activities in conflict areas.

The second part of the book comprises three different concepts to raise the quality of the study parts and bring peace and human rights issues into the workcamps, thereby working with the very target group of most SCI projects. The Human Rights Messenger Project proved that it is possible to send volunteers for half a year to SCI-branches and partner organisations to deliver human rights workshops and support overall human rights activities, while SCI-Hellas improved their concept for one-day workshops on conflict resolution skills and managed to offer them to all their workcamps in 2003. Wilbert Helsloot also reports about his first impressions from the work with the new resource pack on peace and ideology in SCI-history and present times: “Someone Had An Idea”.

SCI has a long tradition of training for camp coordinators, project-coordination, democratic leadership and more. This strength provided a good grounding for the development of new training-concepts which were realised by the Conflict Resolution Team in the last three years by training a pool of 35 volunteer-trainers and hundreds of workcamp participants with basic skills for Conflict transformation in the Travelling Workcamps. Since 2002 a new line of Mediation Training has been established in GATE aimed to promote Alternative Dispute Resolution and Mediation in SCI, leading to a new culture of constructive conflict resolution. Beside these new tendencies within the European SCI branches which led to the development of a Conflict Transformation Training Strategy, we are especially glad to include a report on the non-violence training approach of the Asian Peace and Human Rights Working Group offering an inspiring perspective to Conflict Transformation and its training methods.

The projects represented in this book give us a first hint about how SCI can realise its new focus on peace building, how activists and SCI as an organisation may grow to become active players in this field but also about the problems and difficulties ahead. Therefore we aimed not only to present the successes of the projects but tried to encourage some kind of evaluation, so future projects can learn from these experiences.

Being an international grass-roots oriented movement these SCI projects developed by themselves and involved only clusters of activists who most often even did not know each other. This book is a first effort to break up the isolation between the practitioners of peace inside SCI and to present a small overview of SCI's peace-activities.

We hope these projects will give a vision for future peace projects in SCI and to encourage more people to tackle the challenges of peace and constructive conflict resolution.

We are looking forward to revise this book in 2009.

Minsk February 2004

*John Finn, Wilbert Helsloot,
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*The prep-team of the
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PART I

SCI PROJECTS IN CONFLICT AREAS

THE SHABAB RECONSTRUCTION PROJECT 2003 WORKCAMPS IN PALESTINE – A COORDINATORS PERSPECTIVE

Sabine Wieck

Sabine Wieck, born in 1974, active in SCI since 1999. Coordinator of the Middle East Working Group of SCI Germany and member of the MIDI Working Group. She was part of the German team lead by Doreen Vorndran that developed the concept of the SHABAB camp.

The SHABAB Project was a common initiative of ZAJEL Youth Exchange Program from An-Najah National University Nablus and SCI-Germany (SCI-D), supported by members of the MIDI Working Group (SCI-France, SCI-Italy, SCI-Belgium). The concept was worked out in full cooperation with our Palestinian partner, first through e-mail and then during an intensive preparation meeting under curfew and Israeli military incursions in Nablus in September 2002. The pilot-project took place in the form of two workcamps in Nablus/West Bank in summer 2003.

It was the first time since the creation of the German Middle East Working Group that volunteers developed and carried out a project on their own. As we were not lucky to get funding, the implementation of the project was based in large parts on the enthusiasm and the financial resources of the involved people.

The idea of the SHABAB Reconstruction Project came up as a reaction towards the invasion of the Israeli military force into the former Palestinian controlled territories and the destruction it caused. Inspired by SCI's history of reconstructing destroyed villages after World War I, we planned a reconstruction workcamp.

Reconstruction was meant to be done on two levels: physical reconstruction sought to reconstruct destroyed places for communication and to support the establishment of local platforms for intercultural learning. The intercultural dialogue with the volunteers on the other hand should “psychologically” support the young people in Nablus.

Intercultural dialogue is an important instrument for non-violent conflict resolution and challenges the growing gap between the Oriental and the Occidental culture which has caused an increasing racism since 11th September 2001. To focus on youth means to work on the roots of a society towards open minds, mutual understanding and respect - the preconditions for peace.

Therefore, besides the manual reconstruction work, the study part played an important role in these workcamps. It was conceived as an exchange between participants on subjects concerning their daily life, like youth or religion. We believe that knowledge is the tool to combat misperceptions, prejudices and racism. In the planning, we tried to avoid overloading the study part with political issues, as this would lead to a one-sided perspective and overtax the participants.

According to previous experiences in youth exchanges SHABAB Reconstruction Project emphasised sustainability and more active involvement of European volunteers in this exchange activity.

WHY YOUTH INSTITUTIONS?

During the current situation, in which villages and towns are isolated from each other for long periods it is of vital importance that young people have a forum for communication. Youth centres and clubs offer young people a place to socialise and provide them with opportunities to acquire skills such as basic life-skills, computer and internet skills, and education. The activities of the institutions also promote emotional release. Here, youth is offered another way to learn and to communicate, in order to express their feelings, needs and ideas.

According to the Palestinian Bureau of Central Statistics the West Bank and Gaza Strip had developed a growing number of youth centres and organisations*. In the current situation, most of them are destroyed or damaged, or the curfew forced them to end or restrict their activities. The youth have lost their facilities to release, to learn and to express.

YOUTH INSTITUTIONS IN NABLUS/ WEST BANK

From 13 youth clubs, forum centres or organisations for youth in the Old City of Nablus, now only 5 are still operating.

The idea was to help with the renovation of IBAL Sports Club, one of the oldest youth centres in the Old City of Nablus. During the invasion in April 2002 the facilities of the club were completely demolished. The renovation attempt failed because of a lack of financial support.

We chose Nablus, a city in the north of the West Bank, as this area tends

* Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (2001), Palestinian Youth: Facts and Figures. Ramallah-Palestine, pp. 25.

to be neglected by international help whilst on the other hand being one of the most affected by the Israeli occupation of the Palestinian territories.

PREPARATION OF THE VOLUNTEERS

All German SCI volunteers received 3 - 5 days of intensive training, usually covering a range of topics: an introduction to SCI and its structures; intercultural training, focused on the Arab-Islamic culture as well as information and discussions about the political situation, including an overview of the history of the region as well as on German history and the problem of anti-Semitism.

The training was co-ordinated by former participants of workcamps in Palestine, many are students of related subjects like Political Science or Oriental Studies. Non-formal education and formal methods like pictures, role-plays, games and lectures are used. A lot of time is spent on the reports of people who have just been to the country and are willing to talk frankly about their experiences, including their fears and the problems they encountered.

As the Israeli-Palestinian-conflict is an ongoing conflict with a usually polarising effect on people, we try to sensitise the participants to the problem of one-sidedness. Furthermore we provide them with addresses and information on Israeli peace-organisations and encourage them to contact such groups before or after their workcamp in Palestine.

Due to our aim to work towards more sustainability of our projects and a more active role of the European participants, the preparation of the study part for the workcamp and the discussion of possible follow-up activities were important parts of the pre-departure-training.

This strategy proved successful. All of the 7 German participants have been committed in different kinds of follow-up activities, one is already back in Palestine to do long-term voluntary work (European Voluntary Service) there. During the two workcamps, these volunteers got in touch with different local groups with whom we are going to realise two projects in 2004.

With the SHABAB project we have achieved the revival and the constant growing of the spirit of voluntary work in Nablus which had been slowed down by the Israeli invasions in April and June 2002. We are highly motivated to strengthen our commitment in this conflict area.

IMPRESSIONS FROM SHABAB-WORKCAMP, AUGUST 2003 – A CAMP-COORDINATORS PERSPECTIVE

Linds Pexton

Linds Pexton, born 1981, active in SCI since 2000, long term volunteer in Korea and Hungary, active in East West activities and part of the Peace and Human Rights Team of GATE.

[This account is based on my experience of two months in Nablus during summer 2003, co-ordinating a workcamp along with a Palestinian camp leader and my good friend, Angela Verweyen from SCI Germany. After one week the Palestinian camp leader left the workcamp and we continued with the amazing support and assistance of the Palestinian volunteers.]

During the early hours of 17th August the girls were awoken by the ground-shaking action of Israeli tanks as they entered the city. Dawn came with cries of curfew emitted from megaphones, as patrol vehicles skidded through the streets. The invasion had not been expected, but now the tanks were outside the door and we did not know how long the situation would last...

As with many projects the great plan did not meet the reality. The August SHABAB project was riddled with problems, the invasion was arguably the least of them. This article should not be perceived as an accusation or an attempt to place blame, but rather as an effort to engage in the issue of how SCI can be more “professional” in an area where we cannot really afford to take risks.

Many of the problems we encountered were related to our project partner. However, rather than focusing on the specific problems working with this partner in 2003, I will attempt to draw the broader lessons for the further involvement of SCI in conflict areas, particularly Palestine.

WORK OR HOW THINGS CAN WORK

When I first learnt that the planned project to rebuild a youth centre was no longer viable, and that there was no alternative plan, I felt quite alarmed. The volunteers’ arrival was just two weeks ahead. Luckily it was possible to arrange an alternative at short notice. In times of relative calm there is plenty of constructive social and labour work that a group of volunteers can undertake in Nablus and the surrounding environs. Within days we had agreed with a local building co-operative that the volunteers would help deprived families to reconstruct their homes that had been damaged by age or by the frequent incursions of the Israeli military.

Thus, in Nablus, with a few good contacts, a phone call, several cups of tea and some social niceties, things can come together amazingly fast.

After a few days we had solved work, accommodation and food problems and were fairly confident to begin the project. However, as I mentioned, even if major issues are resolved, details are not even necessarily discussed... While, this is fairly understandable in a place where being able to carry out what was intended often comes as a pleasant surprise, to be sure it can lead to frustration for outsiders. An example would be the daily negotiation and re-negotiation of meal costs with our host. He had agreed to supply us with food for the entire duration of the project, but the price had not been ascertained beforehand. As a result, the risk of our budget falling into deficit depended each day on who negotiated and how persuasive they could be with the crafty old man!

SECURITY

Finally, our ability to engage in useful and productive work was severely compromised by security issues, both from the Israeli military as well from within and outside Palestinian society.

Palestinian Authority control has been virtually smashed by the Israeli army in Nablus (as in other Palestinian cities) and replaced by various political factions and local tanzim. Each group (tanzim) “protects” a certain area, though between rival factions there can be tensions and outright hostilities of a political or social nature. Unfortunately during summer 2003 Nablus witnessed greater inter-Palestinian fighting. This had direct implications for the second workshop as the fighting was mainly between men from Nablus Old City and Balata refugee camp, two areas in which we were significantly involved, as we had accommodation for the girls at a main entrance to the Old City and we had arranged to work each day in Balata refugee camp.

The risks for Palestinian volunteers and internationals were enough to make us cautious and arrange alternative activities within Nablus. After that, Palestinian checkpoints (an irony indeed) and later the Israeli invasion meant that Balata was always off limits. This was unfortunate as Balata is one of the most intensely deprived areas in the vicinity and much could be done there. It was also perhaps a blessing as the camp is deprived largely due to the interest and attention it receives from the Israeli army. Sure enough, within a week Balata was surrounded and all men of working age were rounded up and detained.

TIME UNDER CURFEW

As the fighting intensified we decided that even the city park, where we had alternative work, was too heavy a risk and that it would be prudent to keep the volunteers out of all potentially volatile areas. This meant effectively putting ourselves under curfew, for at least a short duration, while we came up with yet another alternative plan. This was the most

tense period of the project. The volunteers were not so alarmed by the violence in the city, rather they were angry and frustrated at being kept from doing “something useful”.

I think it could have been partly because we tried hard not to dramatise the situation. Whilst we kept the volunteers well informed, we also aimed at all times not to be alarmist or to spread rumours and to remain calm and positive. This approach proved rather too successful! Whilst it was great that we didn't have anybody “freaking out”, at the same time the increasing frustration at not being able to work and the idea that we were being overprotective meant that the atmosphere actually did not remain positive. This was quite understandable and perhaps inevitable. The volunteers had come to Palestine to “help” and it was clear, to them at least, that they would not be able to help by sitting inside a building.

As the self-imposed curfew swiftly turned to one enforced by the Israeli army, some of the internationals started to discuss whether it was worth staying. Safety was never given as a reason for leaving, it was more the sense that they had so little time left and that while in Palestine they should do something to help. If they were unable to work in Nablus then they wanted to work elsewhere. However, though the feelings and behaviour of these volunteers was comprehensible, maybe even “rational”, it was nevertheless, quite difficult for Palestinian volunteers to cope with. The true meaning of solidarity for many of the Palestinian volunteers was that we would stay together through the good times and the bad. Last year Nablus was under curfew for over six months and now the volunteers were frustrated by less than six days. It didn't matter that the international volunteers wanted to do something to help Palestinians in another place. They had already made a commitment to these people and this group.

Another problem was that some of the group (notably those who had not been to any SCI preparation) appeared not to believe or understand the gravity of the situation at all and felt free to wander away from the building even when we had explained several times. It is quite difficult to keep an eye on a group of around 40 volunteers and as they are adults there is little to do when they deliberately act the contrary to the advice of the leaders. While some people decided to leave by themselves, we had to ask one participant to leave when she categorically went against our advice not to go out during the curfew.

WHAT TO DO???

Yet it is very difficult to remain inactive while you know the houses around you are occupied by soldiers and that the families within them are cramped in one room, needing food and perhaps medical aid. It is very difficult when Red Crescent workers are standing on the street pleading with you to help them deliver aid and you think that you could do something to

help, in fact you think that it is your duty to help. After all, why shouldn't SCI volunteers be involved in such essential work?

However workcamps and emergency aid do not mix well. While there are international volunteers who break curfew in order to help deliver humanitarian aid or to bear witness to and protest against human rights abuses, the volunteers for the SHABAB project had not volunteered to come to Nablus to put themselves on the frontline. They had decided to join a workcamp rather than the International Solidarity Movement* and they had had no training or preparation, for example, on how to act in case they had a gun stuck in their face or if they were being chased by an army vehicle (as actually happened to 2 of our volunteers). What if it had been any of the workcamp volunteers who had been held hostage by Israeli soldiers and used as human shields for several hours, as was the case of two long-term volunteers while they were helping the Red Crescent aid workers.

At the same time, we were embarrassingly unaware to what extent our 'duty of care' extended. When certain volunteers did leave we asked them to write and sign statements that they were no longer part of an SCI project and could not hold SCI liable for anything that happened to them. We did not know if this was enough or conversely if it was even necessary, especially as many volunteers had not been sent through SCI. Such matters need to be addressed in established emergency procedures and policy.

Eventually we had to act to stop the camp from disintegrating. Whilst we felt that actually the curfew was a valuable slice of Palestinian reality, we realised that many of the volunteers would leave if we did not do something. At that time it was not so much a consideration that the project would "fail" but rather that a lot of our Palestinian friends would feel betrayed.

We moved the group to New Askar refugee camp, where we were hosted by the Social Development Center. For one week we worked in New Askar, teaching classes in the Center and helping to renovate the kindergarten. Though there was always the real threat of the camp also being invaded, we were lucky and we only watched the tanks roll by in the distance.

ADJUSTMENT

While in Askar we were treated with great warmth and hospitality, characteristic of Palestinian and Arab culture**. It was really wonderful to be able to live and work in the refugee camp and to see the daily reality. But there were difficulties there too.

Those used to the south of Palestine or Palestinian areas within Israel may

* The International Solidarity Movement organises non-violent resistance against the Israeli occupation. For more information check <http://www.palsolidarity.org>

** Palestinian culture is not homogenous. There is certainly a difference between the attitudes in the city and in the refugee camps, between regions and unsurprisingly, between individuals.

be surprised at the heightened level of conservativeness in Nablus. I cannot stress enough how important it is to prepare volunteers for this. It is essential that volunteers respect local rules especially concerning dress and interaction between the sexes. Gossip is wild and censure comes fast. This is not solely an issue for women. Last year the male volunteers, though aware that they should cover their legs outside, were oblivious to the rumours about what happens indoors. When they were spied through an open window, wearing shorts we received a visit from the local *tanzim* who, with their guns as helpful persuaders, told us that we should certainly establish new accommodation.

It comes down to more than just clothes however. Two incidents at New Askar also led to Hamas causing discomfort for our hosts. One incident involved a male Palestinian volunteer engaging in solitary conversation with an international volunteer. As they were alone on the roof, and the international volunteer mistaken for a woman through merit of his dreadlocked hair, a distressed neighbour called what could be considered a kind of “Morals Police”. The other incident arose when volunteers, exhausted from their morning’s work, took the seemingly innocuous decision to close the door on a crowd of hyperactive children, in order to enjoy a quiet lunch-time break. The scandal that was caused by this mixed group occupying a room with the door shut was so great that even the Palestinian volunteers from the city were amazed by it.

All of these things can accumulate so that they feel like an affront against your very nature and values. Though it is very difficult to prepare a foreign volunteer for such an experience it is important to try and relate such things in as much depth as is possible. It is also important to attempt to convey an understanding of the logic or feelings behind such perceptions, to attempt to cross the bridges of misunderstanding.

Though I have highlighted certain difficulties that can come about through being an outsider in Palestinian society, I do not want to emphasise the sense of “other” too strongly. It is very possible to get involved in Palestinian society and to feel at home there. It is possible, and in fact very likely, that commonalities are found and strong bonds are formed. As Mauri, an Italian volunteer put it:

“Now I have friends among Palestinians and as far as I have friends, I won't stop fighting. I won't stop writing to them even as the Israelis continue to invade their cities and prevent them from studying or working. I won't stop talking to my friends and relatives here in Italy about the awful situation that the guys and girls I know must bear. I think that is the most important thing I've learned in the workcamp.”

THE MEANING OF SOLIDARITY: A PARTICIPANT'S IMPRESSIONS OF PALESTINE

Marcelina, Germany, from the diary

"A local volunteer said to me, "What's wrong? Why are you so sad?" I responded, "We saw a sad film, you know..." And, her answer was: "We have enough sad faces here, we are not in need for more."...



Well, what was the meaning of solidarity then? Why had nobody explained it to me?

Was not it showing your feelings of despair, rage and anger or to hide them and to show consideration instead, giving the Palestinians what they are in need of? Are the Palestinian people more in need of the smiles that we can share with them? More than the tears, despite the fact we are not in the mood to be easygoing and to have fun, when we see things that make us scream, shout and cry inside?

Plans were changed everyday, work was cancelled due to the invasion, no way to go out, because it was too dangerous, clashes in the Old City of Nablus, and the frustrations were growing. What were we there for? We came to Palestine to help Palestinians, to show solidarity, not to watch the bad news and discuss politics! We were volunteers and we had only three weeks. How can we stay in our flats because of the curfew? Expectations were unfulfilled. Motivation turned into frustration. Inactivity and the feeling of being useless grew in me. What was it for? Why did it happen to me? But, really it didn't just happen to me. Suddenly, I accepted and understood the situation, it was the situation of Palestinians, too. It was the feeling of being helpless, bored and not able to do anything. This was the reality we had to accept.



I realised how fast we lose our patience after some days, even if we know that we can leave whenever we want, while thousands of inhabitants can't leave. They cannot do anything. They are forced to accept this inactivity and all the difficult circumstances that destroy any kind of motivation and growth. Aggressions and depressions, hope and despair, that is not only in the political situation, but also reflected in the everyday life and relations of the people. This is another lesson I had to learn.

It is a big mistake to have any kind of expectations for the success of plans, expectations of changing everything, by working and making fast efforts in order to feel useful. We were not really useful, but our experience was how it feels to be a Palestinian, caged like an animal, humiliated, afraid and reduced to think about food while the Israeli tanks do not let you even sleep at night. There was also the boredom, frustration, feeling useless, powerless, helplessness, getting into troubles and living life with rumours about the withdrawal the whole time.



I shared these feelings with Palestinians. Now, I think I understand the meaning of real solidarity, a completely different kind of solidarity, than we all had planned in a different world, where people are free and responsible for themselves.

LET A THOUSAND SUNFLOWERS BLOOM IN THE BALKANS

Rand Engel

Rand Engel has been an environment entrepreneur, managed Insight Meditation Society, worked for Wisdom Publications, been a carpenter, garment industry buying office manager, business consultant and since 1999 Kosovo and International Coordinator for Balkan Sunflowers.

Balkan Sunflowers (BSF) is an international volunteer NGO, registered in United States and Spain, with a project in Kosovo and national branches registered in Albania and Macedonia. Since beginning during the 1999 Kosovo conflict, some 500 international volunteers as well as many local staff and volunteers have implemented hundreds of projects and activities. Gradually, BSF's activities have evolved from emergency response – primarily activities with children and youth in refugee camps – to a broad range of volunteer originated activities including civic education, education support, access to services and opportunity, environment, awareness campaigns and school programmes, etc.



Kosovo, the UN administered province of Serbia, became part of broad public consciousness during the conflict of 1998-1999, which became a NATO air campaign March-June 1999. The build-up to conflict had been at least since the late 1980s, though the roots can be traced back much further (6th century AD, or 1389, or 1913 ...choose your historical perspective!). During the 3-month hostilities between NATO and Serbia (Yugoslavia) some 13,000 people were killed, 800,000+ people

were cross-border refugees, hundreds of thousands more were internally displaced, and some 120,000 homes were destroyed or heavily damaged. The end of hostilities on 10 June 1999 was followed by the departure – some immediate, and some forced over the following months by intimidation, arson, and murder – of more than 240,000 Serbs, Roma and other minorities.

While many aspects of life in Kosovo have become more normalised, there remain many factors that contribute to instability and the potential for violence: unemployment averages 57% though much higher among minorities; most Serb and Roma refugees have been unable to return; many houses are occupied by other than their prior owners; the issue of “final

status” – independence, autonomy, return to Serbia, etc. – remains unresolved; small arms are endemic; there has been no truth or reconciliation process.

PROJECTS OF BALKAN SUNFLOWERS

BSF activities started in refugee camps in Albania and Macedonia in May 1999. Volunteers accompanied refugees to their original communities in Kosovo in July 1999. Since then BSF has done hundreds of projects: some projects that most directly involve inter-ethnic tolerance and peace-building are noted in the box on page 18. Other projects have included restoration of city parks, day camps, Kosovo-wide environment programmes, school environment and science programmes, Roma community centres, English and computer classes, Tai Chi, a youth and weapons video, festivals, arts projects, catch-up class programmes, kindergartens, education awareness, aid to high school elections, a basketball tournament, registration for identity cards, etc.

The projects have a broad objective of “social reconstruction”. In the immediate aftermath of war this has meant providing recreative, social, and supportive activities to children and youth. Over time, it includes assisting restoration of social networks, advancing opportunity, working with minorities to stabilise their ability to live in Kosovo, and inter-ethnic tolerance building. Many of the projects contribute to social reconstruction – environment, education support, social service support, etc.

Each of the programmes involved different groups. BSF Kosovo summer camps have included some 1100+ children. Village programmes have operated in many villages with average 12-20 children per group. Scouting now involves many hundreds of Kosovo youth and children. “Science in Our Schools” presentations reached more than 5,000 school children in their classrooms while the environmental comic printed in Kosovo’s leading newspaper reached more than 10,000 households weekly for 34 weeks. “Welcome to Plemetina”, “Postcard from Peja”, “In the Hands of the Youth”, the Science in Our Schools programme, and 10 BSF produced environmental television commercials have been seen by hundreds of thousands of Kosovar television viewers since 2001. Many local staff and volunteers, along with some 500 international volunteers, have participated in BSF programmes gaining experience and in many cases new careers.



SOME PEACE AND TOLERANCE PROJECTS.

- Gjakova Summer Camp 2001 included Albanian majority children and more than 20% Roma children and a Roma staff member.
- Peja Summer Camp 2000 included 40% Roma and Bosniak children, and staff from both communities.
- Gracanica Summer Camp 2001 included Serbian and Roma children and a mixed ethnicity staff.
- Peja Village integration program 2000-2001 involved children in social games programmes in many local villages, bringing together Albanian, Roma and Bosniak children.
- Peja Photography project worked in Peja area villages, again with mixed ethnicity groups of children.
- Peja Tolerance Mural, a project in the centre of the city.
- Scouting - BSF has helped start and develop programmes for Albanian, Serbian and Roma scout groups, has developed and assisted in training camps for the scout leaders, provided logistics for bringing them together; and facilitated a mixed ethnicity group of 30 to an international Scout programme in Belgium.
- Scouting for Change – BSF is developing a six-month intensive training programme bringing together scouts from many different groups who are together designing their program for the future of this project for youth and children.
- Multi-ethnic sports projects, Gjilan - BSF has assisted local Roma in going to judo classes, and other sports activities with other communities.
- Gjilan City Park project involved a mixed ethnicity work force, and also included 20 speech and hearing impaired workers.
- Postcard from Peja, a youth video has been shown at the Sundance Film Festival, the New York Human Rights Watch Film Festival and in various venues around the US.
- Civic education programmes for Roma minorities have helped improve organising and advocating skills for community leaders.
- Multi-Ethnic Youth Video Project produced Four Years Later, a 42-minute documentary, a project of 9 youth from 3 Kosovo ethnic communities.

EVALUATION

As we are reviewing the activities of an organisation rather than a specific project we cannot easily evaluate the project or impact. We can look at some larger issues and implications.

Some of the major organisational issues have been:

- **Adjusting to changing situation, from emergency to development.** In the immediate emergency and post-emergency period funds were more readily available, projects were easily supported, donors provided funding rapidly and the organisation could easily propose projects and receive positive response. Development requires a much longer view in every aspect: developing project concepts, working with donors to ascertain their priorities as well as our own, training and preparing volunteers for more complex tasks, waiting longer for funding, meeting more difficult reporting requirements, etc.
- **Lack of funding,** particularly established organisational support and infrastructure. We continued to push most of our resources to the field projects, long after it would have been prudent to give consideration to our infrastructure: financial controls, planning, fundraising, etc. This may be idealistically good, but has resulted in failure to keep projects funded, volunteers feeling under-supported, lack of sufficient planning for changing situations, and insufficient financial control.
- **Unfunded projects.** For both good and bad consequences we have kept projects going without direct funding for them, using scarce unrestricted funds, or stretching funded efforts to cover the unfunded. This has meant keeping worthy efforts going, sometimes finally to a point where funding does come through, so the project has survived – but often with costs to other efforts.
- **Being neutral** or one-sided and how the parties viewed our projects. We have had to work hard in training to increase the understanding of this problem. In 1999, volunteers were often “anti-Serb”. In 2000-2001 it was easy to be “anti-Albanian” because volunteers identified with Serbs and particularly Roma who were suffering. We try to break through “identification” without creating distance.
- **Localising volunteerism.** BSF has become local in Albania and Macedonia, but we have not been so successful in developing volunteer effort in Kosovo. We have had many local volunteers in many different projects, but it has not been sustained. To a large extent this is a result of the economic and social situation of the 1990s and the post-war period. People often demand paying work, and those who are capable have been able to find it, as part of the rebuilding of their lives.

SUCCESS

The kinds of programmes and projects described above have had many important positive results. Thousands if not tens of thousands have benefited, from the first activities in refugee camps, which were so important to the children and youth who had suffered so much, to school activities, sports, culture and so on in the communities they returned to. We have become an important life-line in threatened minority communities and provided a voice for youth in video projects. In the process hundreds of international volunteers have accomplished often more than they thought they would, learned, made connections to the people of this region.

FUTURE PLANS

In 2004 Balkan Sunflowers is working on a number of programmes. BSF Albania and BSF Macedonia continue with programmes supporting Roma children's education, with some of the poorest of the poor. In Kosovo, projects continue in minority communities. Two main projects in development are the Community Activists Network (CAN) and the Human Rights Film Series (see box). CAN is designed to support up to 24 international volunteers working and living in 12 marginalised Kosovo communities. Living with host families, being involved in intensive training, they will support local youth and young adults in developing community initiatives as volunteer activists in their communities. Volunteers will help develop projects, look for resources, and assist and enable the activists to make a difference in the lives of their communities.

When I came in Kosovo, I came for an interesting professional experience; I got that, but I received so much more than that, but what I would like to point out is that I left as an idealist, a person who had received the necessary motivational stimulus to shape an entire life around development; one who's willing to pay the price, if I find the approach to development responsible – such as that of Balkan Sunflowers.

Kasper Hoffmann, volunteer in Gjakova, 2001

Pristina, Kosovo. At the groundbreaking ceremony for the restoration of the Gjilane city park, Bernard Kouchner, the head of the United Nations mission here, said, "This is the happiest day of my life in Kosovo." Dr. Kouchner was moved by a gleam of hope from Gjilane. In a highly visible project, Albanians and Serbs were to work together.

The ceremony included Hugo Ortega, 23, an Australian volunteer aid worker, who doggedly put this project together. Mr. Ortega had been introduced to the United Nations Development Programme, the lead donor, by Mr. Dan LePage of the U.S. Army. Major LePage proposed a work crew of mixed ethnicity.

"No way," we said. "You're insane." Of course, Mr. Ortega and our volunteer organisation Balkan Sunflowers were fully committed to the concept – sometime in the future. We believed it impossible now; we knew too many widows, as well as fathers and sons, who had lost loved ones in last year's "ethnic cleansing." ...

*From an article in the **International Herald Tribune**, September 14, 2000*

Becoming a Balkan Sunflowers volunteer

Volunteers may apply in a variety of ways: through their country branch of SCI, through Balkan Sunflowers offices in the United States and in Spain, or directly. However, we prefer for volunteers to work through their local SCI or BSF offices where possible. Volunteers find us as well through recommendations from former volunteers, from web search, and links such as the United Nations Volunteers website. We try to have interviews at least through SCI or former volunteers.

We ask for a six-month commitment though exceptions are made, particularly if a volunteer has a special skill that can be offered in a shorter format program.

BSF expects volunteers to act with safety and security in mind. New volunteer training includes a review of safety concerns. In reality, generally the environment is safe. Volunteers must be over 21, and English speaking generally. We look for education, special skills or interests dependent on project and need.

Great Films that Change our World

Kosovo television (RTV21) will air 26+/- of the greatest feature films on human rights and democracy themes. Each weekly film presentation will be aired during prime time, and will be followed by a panel discussion.

The purpose of the film series is to stimulate thought and action. The stories may be based on history or they may be fiction, but they have stories that cause us to think about our own lives. Of course, first the participants must be stimulated and moved by the films. This is also entertainment.

The series is intended to capture an audience of hundreds of thousands, who will watch because these are some of the greatest films ever made, and will think in new ways about a range of human rights issues because they are compelled to do so. Extensive promotion will be used, including 15-20 television spots per week and distribution of a human rights calendar.

Spring 2004.



THE ETHNIC CONFLICT IN SRI LANKA AND SCI INVOLVEMENT

Noor Mohamed Mohamed Rajudeen

Noor Mohamed Mohamed Rajudeen, senior SCI member, active since 1970, one time International Vice President and presently National Secretary of SCI Sri Lanka. Has been in charge of the Puttalam Refugee Relief and Rehabilitation project.

At the first elections introduced by the British in 1912, to elect a representative to the legislative council, a Tamil, Sir Ponnambalam Ramanathan, was elected. He defeated a Sinhalese, in spite of the fact that the majority of the voters were Sinhala. The first ethnic/religious conflict between the Sinhala Buddhists and the Muslims is reported to have taken place in 1915 in Kandy – in central Sri Lanka.

In 1919 the Ceylon National Congress (CNC) was formed which could be referred to as the first political organisation of the Sri Lankans. Incidentally and very interestingly, a Tamil, Sir Ponnambalam Arunachalam was elected as its first President by a Sinhala majority council, purely on merit.

However things started changing. In 1921 disagreement arose between the Tamil and Sinhala leaders of the CNC over the decision of the British administration to appoint ethnic based representative to the legislative council. Tamils demanded representation for the Tamils living in the western province (Colombo) and the Sinhalese rejected the demand. As a result of this dispute Sir Ponnambalam Arunachalam resigned from the post of the President of the CNC. This incident paved the way for an ethnically divided political scenario in Sri Lanka. Since then the relationship between the two

communities was allowed to deteriorate by ambitious and power mongering politicians. Formation of the Sinhala Maha Saba by Solomon West Ridgeway Dias Bandaranayake, the father of the present President in 1933 and the formation of the All Ceylon Tamil Congress (ACTC) in 1944 sowed the seeds of

separatism and disunity. Making Sinhala the official language in 1956 and the abolition of the Bandaranayake Chelvanayagam pact in 1957, followed by the Sinhala/Tamil riots – slowly and steadily widened the gap between the two communities. The later abolition of the Dudley/Chelvanayagam pact in 1966, which sought to address some of the grievances of the Tamils and introduction of the standardisation criteria for university admissions



were seen as distinct discrimination against the Tamils and as a result the Tamil youths started agitations and non-violent protests against the government. These protests were met by force and several Tamil youths were arrested and held in detention without trial – thus paving the way for the militarisation of the problem in 1976. During the 1977 general elections the Tamil United front contested the elections seeking the mandate of the Tamil people for the establishment of a separate Tamil state and won by an overwhelming majority. The last nail on the coffin was driven by the 1983 July riots which left hundreds of Tamils dead, thousands injured and millions rendered refugees. The damage caused to property was beyond estimate and all evidence pointed to the fact that it was a state sponsored/supported fiasco. This could be safely stated as the beginning of civil war which raged for nearly 20 years bringing the whole country to devastation in every sphere of life.

The year 2001 saw the election of a new government which took a very bold step of signing a memorandum of understanding with the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Ealam (LTTE) for a ceasefire, provision being made for a third party mediation and the commencement of peace negotiations. For two years the war has stopped – and the killing and destruction. But unfortunately the political situation in the country with the President and Prime Minister being from two different political parties has now caused an impasse and the most recent alliance between the Sri Lankan Freedom Party (SLFP) and the Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna (JVP) has left people in suspense not knowing what is in store for tomorrow.

SCI INVOLVEMENT

SCI Sri Lanka has played a significant role in promoting peace, inter ethnic understanding, inter-cultural relations and has worked tirelessly and relentlessly against the war and violence and to promote a negotiated settlement for the ethnic conflict during the last 25 years. Our main tool has been the tried and tested workcamp. Every year we organised 10 – 15 short term camps of 6 – 8 weeks duration and a large number of weekend services. Participants for these services, 25 – 30 in number, were drawn from the Sinhala, Tamil and Muslim communities and very often they were joined by international participants from Asia, Europe, America and Australia. At all these camps we had an essential study component on the ethnic conflict. We had the services of expert resource persons from the University of Peradeniya and other like-minded NGOs. Local communities where the workcamps were held also participated in these exercises. Our experience has proved that workcamps are still an effective and practical methodology to bring people of diverse ethnicity, races, nationality, colour and creed together to understand, appreciate and respect each other's culture and diversity. The degree of camaraderie and friendship that was established at the end of every programme was very valuable. Language

was no barrier. Nor was nationality or gender or age a problem. Only a handful could speak or understand each others language BUT it posed no problem because they were communicating very well. The presence of the foreign participants contributed immensely in the integration process.

1976 – 1979 MAHAKANDE DEVELOPMENT PROJECT

In addition to the regular workcamps we also undertook several medium and long term projects for the promotion of peace and racial harmony. One such project was the Mahakande Development project which we undertook during the period August 1976 to December 1979.



Mahakande is a little village about 10 kilometres away from Kandy in Central Sri Lanka. Here lived at the edge of an abandoned tea estate 79 Tamil families who were the former resident labour force of the estate. When race riots broke out in the country in August 1976 thugs from the adjoining Sinhala villages came and attacked these Tamils. Their houses were damaged and the few personal possessions they had were also destroyed or looted by the mob. The residents ran away, carrying their children, and hid in the adjoining jungle for several days without food or shelter. Even though Tamils who lived in the urban areas were provided protection and shelter in temporary refugee camps, these people had no where to go. When SCI came to know of the situation we mobilised our members and collected essential food items and cooking utensils, clothing and visited the site. As we had within our membership Sinhalese as well as Tamils we were

able to establish a dialogue with the village leaders and the affected community, and form a vigilant committee who assured the Tamils that they could return to their homes and that they would be protected. After the immediate relief operation the need to repair the damaged houses was an urgent requirement. Our appeal for funds found favour with the National Christian Council and we were able to repair the houses through workcamps involving both the communities. This process brought about lot of understanding between the communities. To further strengthen the ties we started several short-term income generating projects like vegetable and paddy cultivation, poultry and dairy farming for the youth of both communities on a co-operative basis and they were essentially forced to work together for the common benefit. This further cemented the ties. The acid test for our integration experiment came in 1983 when almost all Tamils throughout the country were attacked or subject to intimidation

of some degree. We are glad to report that the Mahakande Tamil community escaped unharmed and they were protected by their Sinhala neighbours. This could be sighted as a rare success story.

1990 – 1994 LINK LANGUAGE PROGRAMME

During the period 1990 – 1994 SCI implemented the Link Language Programme. The educational system in Sri Lanka has contributed in no small measure to the ethnic conflict prevailing today. Sinhala children study in “Sinhala schools” in the Sinhala medium. The Tamil students study in “Tamil schools” in the Tamil medium. The Muslim students study in “Muslim schools” in the Muslim medium. These children of different ethnicities have little or no opportunity to meet and integrate. Large majority of the Sinhalese children can only speak and understand the Sinhala language and vice a versa with the Tamil children. This communication barrier has been one of the causes for misunderstanding & suspicion. SCI Sri Lanka selected 25 Sinhala schools and 25 Tamil schools in the Kandy in the Central region and encouraged the Sinhala students to study Tamil and the Tamil students to study Sinhala. At the end of every term competitions were held to test their knowledge – both written and oral and prizes were awarded at a public ceremony organised specially for this purpose. Our target group consisted about 1000 children who were studying in grade 5 and 6. The response from the school authorities and the parents and the children for this programme was overwhelming. The event provided a forum for children, teachers and parents of the two communities to assemble at a common venue and to witness the achievements of their children. Since it was an open competition and certificates, medals and prizes were awarded the teachers and parents took a keen interest in coaching their children. This project received wide coverage in the local media and SCI was highly commended. The government has now introduced the teaching of Sinhala to Tamil students and Tamil to Sinhala students as a part of the school curriculum.

1990 – 1997 PUTTALAM REFUGEE PROJECT

During the latter half of 1990 the Sri Lankan ethnic conflict took a new turn further complicating the complex problem. The Muslim population who were living amidst the Tamils in the north of Sri Lanka were forced to flee, at gun point, by the LTTE. They were given 24 hours notice to leave and all their belongings were looted. Nearly a million people were displaced in this episode and all of them arrived in other parts of the country. The majority of them arrived in Puttalam, a Muslim majority township, in the North East of Sri Lanka. This was very sudden and unexpected and was the first time that the country experienced such a mass exodus of people. Neither the government nor the NGOs were prepared or equipped to meet such an emergency and it was a great challenge.

SCI Sri Lanka was one of the NGOs that took immediate action to meet this emergency situation. SCI joined hands with other NGOs and the government to provide relief and to look after the welfare of the victims. During the initial stages we helped in the construction of temporary shelters and toilets through several workcamps. We also conducted health camps with the help of qualified SCI members. In this way we were able to establish good rapport with the refugees, local population, other NGOs and government officials and to demonstrate the role of practical work in bringing about peace and mutual understanding. Our work was in total contrast to other NGOs who were distributing material things and had no personal contact with the refugees. Our initial work was supported by CEBEMO – A Dutch funding agency, later our programme was continued with assistance from Oxfam, the Australian High Commission, SCF (UK) and SCI international branches.



During 1994 many NGOs started withdrawing from Puttalam. However SCI decided to continue for a few more years as by this time we had established good rapport with the refugees, the local population and the government authorities. More importantly we had commenced an education awareness raising programme so that the refugees would be able to manage their own affairs. There was also the need for education and awareness creation

of their rights and privileges which were being grossly violated. Our appeal for funds from the EU, through the good offices of the Belgium branch of the SCI was successful and we were able to continue with our project till end of 1997.

With funds from the EU we were able to help 1296 families with a total population of 5396 in the areas of housing, sanitation, water supply, health and income generation. A considerable part of the work was done through workcamps. Handpicked volunteers from SCI branches, representatives from other like-minded NGOs, government officials and volunteers from the Asian and European branches of the SCI camped with the refugees for periods ranging from 3 – 4 weeks at one time. During the morning session, they joined the refugees in manual work. In the afternoon, discussions and deliberations were held on the various aspects of the problem. Participants described their country experiences, the strategies that were adopted, and their successes and failures. Some afternoons there were guest speakers who shared their expert opinion on different topics. In the evening cultural events depicted different cultural backgrounds like songs, dances, dramas etc. Nearly 100 local volunteers, 20 foreign volunteers and 75 refugees were fully and directly involved in the workcamps. The presence of the foreign volunteers attracted a lot of attention and they played a vital role in promoting international understanding and creating awareness of the

global nature of the problem. Refugees and locals from Puttalam had the opportunity of participating in workcamps held in other parts of the country. One refugee was also selected to participate in the regional workshop held in Nepal during December 1996.

SCI being gender-conscious, it did not take us long to discover that the refugee women were confined to their huts and bearing the brunt of the suffering and misery. They were bearing and caring children, cooking, cleaning, fetching water and carrying fire-wood. The men were idling away most of the time gambling, drinking and smoking. In view of the strict cultural restrictions the male field workers could not establish a dialogue with them or involve them in our activities. To overcome this barrier female mobilisers were recruited who visited the refugee camps daily and were able to establish good communication links. The process of awareness building was done mainly through interpersonal exchanges. Through this process we were able to gather small groups of women and discuss with them various problems ranging from family planning to human rights and child bearing to income generation. These interventions proved very successful and the results were visible. One example was the participation of 10 young girls from the refugee community in a month long training programme held in Colombo. To persuade this strictly conservative society, with extreme religious and cultural barriers where young girls were rarely allowed to venture out of their homes, was indeed a difficult task.

LATEST ACTIVITIES

The latest of our ventures in the area of peace building is our long term project “Breaking Barriers & Building Bridges” which is an environment and peace programme in a locality called Nillambe outside the Kandy city. Our aim is to reforest the catchment area belonging to the Nillambe Hydro Power project involving school children from Sinhala, Tamil and Muslim schools. The project commenced two years ago and is being successfully implemented at the moment. Like in other projects workcamps have been our main tool and SCI volunteers, both local and foreign, have joined with the school children, teachers and parents in the reforestation work. During the second phase of this programme we will be introducing human rights education and NVCR techniques to students and teachers in our target area. It is estimated that nearly 3000 children and 100 teachers will be involved in this project.

At the regional level the Peace and Human Rights Working Group has been very active. Five regional workshops have been successfully held.

Amidst our own activities SCI has also actively collaborated with other peace promoting NGOs in their activities. These have been in the form of peace marches, public rallies, public meetings, poster campaigns etc. SCI has also given leadership to umbrella peace movements and networks operating in the country.

“MOVING BEYOND SEPARATE IDENTITIES IN NORTHERN IRELAND”

THE NON-VIOLENT SOCIAL CHANGE INITIATIVE PROJECT

Karin Eyben & Peter McGuire

Karin Eyben is the current Chairperson of the International Voluntary Service in Northern Ireland and works for the Future Ways Project, a reconciliation project in Northern Ireland.

Peter McGuire is a former Loyalist political prisoner, and the former coordinator of the Progressive Unionist Party in North Antrim; he is currently the coordinator of the Duncrun Cultural Initiative, and a Youth and Community Worker.

Since 1969, and the outbreak of the violent sectarian conflict, known locally as the ‘Troubles’ in Northern Ireland, almost 4000 people have been murdered and over 40,000 seriously injured. Almost 70% of all the casualties have been civilians. On the one side is the Republican, Nationalist, Catholic community, which seeks unity with the Republic of Ireland, and a complete separation from the U.K. and on the other side the Loyalist, Unionist, Protestant community, which support the union with Britain and oppose any form of union with the republic.



Photo is provided by Uli Reinhardt \ "Zeitspiegel".

On Good Friday, 10th April 1998, after almost two long years of political talks, the negotiations that resulted in the Good Friday Agreement were finally concluded. Northern Ireland’s main

nationalist political parties and most of the unionist parties approved the Agreement. At the same time the governments of the United Kingdom and the Republic of Ireland signed an international agreement, which was subsequently endorsed by referenda in Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland.

However progress has been slow and much of the evidence shows that Northern Ireland remains a deeply divided society both mentally and physically in terms of housing, socialising patterns and education. While levels of violence have generally decreased since the paramilitary cease-fires in 1994, violence remains a fact of life for many poorer communities. None of the paramilitary groups have disarmed or disbanded. The six years after the Good Friday Agreement has included four suspensions of the Northern Ireland Assembly and four polarised elections including the last one in November 2003 – it would be easy to conclude that the peace agreement

has brought little peace to Northern Ireland.

INTERNATIONAL VOLUNTARY SERVICE – NORTHERN IRELAND

International Voluntary Service – Northern Ireland (IVS-NI) is the independent Northern Irish branch of SCI. In 1964, IVS Great Britain established a local group in Belfast. In 1970, as a response to the Troubles, they set up the Northern Ireland Coordinating Committee to undertake a programme of children’s holidays and later, Teenage Workcamps. In 1987, IVS-NI was formally established as a branch of SCI. Since 1964 our work has focused on working for non-violent social change, in solidarity with local and international partners, pro-actively engaging in projects and programmes, which promote social justice, political awareness and mutual understanding.

IVS-NI’s key stakeholders are young people and the communities within which they live and work. Developing the capacity of young people and adults to learn and make sense of their place in relation with others, to grow their capacity to problem-solve and deal with the unexpected is key to developing an inclusive and prosperous society. By offering people, particularly those from marginalised or ‘disadvantaged’ backgrounds, an opportunity to build relationships across cultural, political and national boundaries, more choices become available about how they might wish to lead their lives and how they might participate in wider world as Irish, British or Northern Irish citizens.

NON-VIOLENT SOCIAL CHANGE INITIATIVE PROJECT

For many within the Loyalist, Unionist and Protestant community the Good Friday Agreement has not delivered. They have witnessed what they perceive to be a series of concessions and for them the peace process now equals a surrender, or sell-out process. In this climate of uncertainty and fear, young people in Loyalist areas of Northern Ireland are increasingly turning to Loyalist paramilitary groups. In fact, such is the lack of opportunity and vision within many Loyalist areas that many young people see no other role for themselves in life other than as a member of a paramilitary group.

The Non-Violent Social Change Initiative project (2000-2003) was a political education/community leadership project, engaging groups of young adults in the rural loyalist community in Northern Ireland. All of these young people were on the fringes of, if not members of Loyalist paramilitary groups. IVS-NI saw it as a first small step in supporting them to turn outwards and explore the possibility of new relationships with a wider world. The success of this programme depended on voluntary commitment

of a core group of IVS activists.

"I can't say this project changed me or what I am, but it did change the way I think about the problems here, the whole question of ownership of this part of Ireland. I remember going to the first meeting thinking this is going to challenge my position and I'll have to defend my identity as a Loyalist and that this would make me a better Loyalist. That didn't happen, what the project did was to wake me up to the reality of our situation. Loyalists are always going to be Loyalists and Republicans are always going to be Republicans. They're not going away and neither are we, so we have to come to some kind of agreement."

[Project Participant]

BACKGROUND

Around the spring of 1999, elements within the leadership of, the then, Progressive Unionist Party's (PUP)* North Ulster executive was becoming concerned about the growing 'anti-Agreement' feeling within the rural Loyalist community and their supporters. Through recommendations, they approached the International Voluntary Service (IVS), to explore the possibilities of running a basic political education programme with an international dimension.

Following discussions between IVS activists, senior Loyalist paramilitary and PUP representatives, it was agreed to develop a pilot programme beginning in January 2000 for a group of around 16 participants based in Ballymoney Town, in North Antrim. Three-year funding was sought by IVS from the International Fund for Ireland's Community Bridges Programme with Joe Law and Stevie Nolan from IVS as facilitators of the project. Following the success of the pilot programme, there were subsequently four further groups from North and South Antrim and county Londonderry over the next year and a half.

Overall 75 young people participated on this project with all attending at least five 2-hour sessions. Participants were selected by the local PUP leadership on the basis of potential interest and development in attending such a programme. Four women participated in the first pilot group. One of these women also participated in a second group. Subsequent groups were all male.

Relationships were the key to the success of this project. The young people who participated were activists within their own community, and their desire for learning and knowledge drove the entire process. A steering group, representatives of IVS, the Progressive Unionist Party and the local paramilitary leadership managed the process. The participants trusted their own leadership, that leadership trusted IVS, and as the process developed

* Political wing of the loyalist paramilitary group, the Ulster Volunteer Force.

so to did genuine friendships.

WHAT DID WE DO?

“Selling” this project required allaying people’s fears. This meant assuring participants that this was not about returning to school, would not involve any exams and would certainly not be about making people feel stupid and incompetent. Arguments were needed that were relevant and made sense in terms of where people were at. In a sense this meant that the project was sold in terms of ‘If you are a Loyalist, or a Unionist, you might as well know why.’

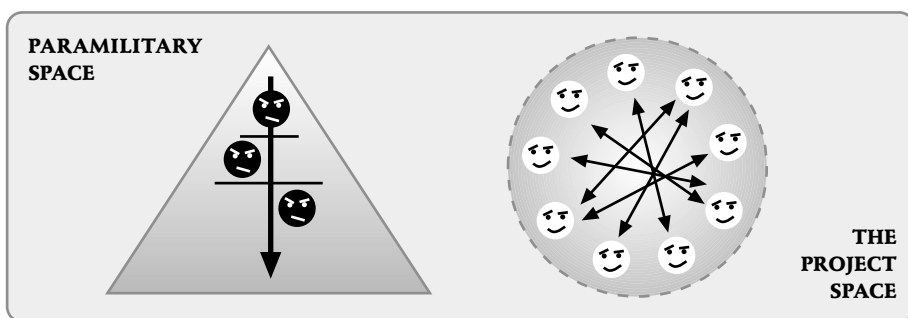
We were trying to give the participants a level of information, which would enable them to make their own decisions regarding the peace process. We were trying to give the participants a level of confidence regarding local politics that would encourage them to play a proactive and progressive role within the Loyalist community”

(The local leadership of the PUP)

The programme consisted of workshops, overnight residentials and invited speakers. The overall theme was politics, history and education. It was felt that these themes would be the most attractive to participants although issues that they faced around identity and relationships eventually required a wider approach, including issues around health, gender, and violence.

A critical dialogue model developed between the participants, the facilitators and other invited speakers, which meant that everyone had a voice.

The ‘project space’ was envisioned as an alternative space for the participants to meet outside organisational hierarchies with an opportunity to experience the possibility of new relationships and a wider world. A critical dialogue



developed between the participants, the facilitators and other invited groups to:

- Engage with the participants’ complete opposition of hearing criticism of the ‘Loyalist / Unionist / Protestant’ beliefs and of the British state;
- Question the legitimacy of violence as a method of resolving differences;

- Examine the simplification of ‘identities’ which allows the demonisation of the ‘Other’.

This critical dialogue meant that:

- The process was first and foremost about the capacity to deal with opposite ideas and beliefs to one’s own.
- The dialogue was about locating the conversations within a wider framework of building a cohesive, stable and sustainable society.
- The voice of the excluded or minority perspectives are given space and voice.

The role of the external facilitators in the critical dialogue process was:

- To be a contrast to existing beliefs and assumptions within the group.
- To share their own experiences and stories, connecting at a human level with the group.
- To act as citizens concerned with growing communities and a society rooted in a common mutuality, fairness and pluralism.
- To protect the informal space, culture and relationships and help mediate difficult conversations.
- To be primarily concerned with and sensitive to the needs and outcomes of the group.
- To move between different roles as citizens, political/community activists, and trainers.

It would have been impossible to include participants perceived to be from Catholic, Nationalist or Republican communities. However it was possible and indeed essential to ensure that the participants were always brought into realities different from their own; that they left workshop sessions at least carrying an awareness of a contradiction between their own beliefs and those held by others.

The backgrounds of both facilitators in themselves created contradictions for the participants. Joe Law born as a Shankill working class Loyalist espousing socialist views and Stevie Nolan with a distinctly London accent and yet from a family background that was deeply rooted in Irish Nationalism.

“The group’s relationship with the facilitators was, at first, one of confusion. They knew what they should be thinking about the lead trainer who was perceived as a Catholic, but they weren’t sure exactly how to react to the facilitator who claimed to be Protestant yet constantly challenged the groups’ views on issues.”

[Evaluation Report 2000 – Stephen Bloomer]

WHAT DID WE ACHIEVE?

The goal of this project was about giving people the space and information to make more informed choices about their place in relationship with others. The evidence regarding whether these goals were met may be determined at both at a personal and organisational level.

Personal

Conversations with participants highlighted a number of different themes:

- A greater understanding of Republican and Nationalist thinking paralleled by the development of greater confidence in people's own identity and sense of place.
- A rethinking of voting habits moving from decisions based on sectarian priorities to thinking more critically about new political realities.
- A desire to become involved in further education and learning.
- The capacity to question what had previously been accepted.
- Becoming connected to people and organisations that offered a sharp contrast to the values and working practices of a paramilitary organisation.

Organisational

In terms of organisational impact:

- There were a number of participants who were waiting to join the local paramilitary organisation who decided against it citing involvement in the project as a key reason.
- The project provided the space for a number of people, already questioning the validity of Loyalist violence post Good Friday Agreement, to leave paramilitary organisations.

Future Participation

As work with each group came to an end, there remained a growing number of individuals, from both the paramilitary and wider Loyalist working class community, who wished to carry on with the process. Following a series of meetings and workshops, it was agreed to develop the Duncrun Cultural Initiative (DCI). The name 'Duncrun' translates as 'fort of the Cruithin' reflecting the heritage and culture that many of the group share. The purpose of DCI is to continue working with Loyalist, working class communities addressing alienation from the political and peace processes and exploring ways of building understanding and relationships that cross the sectarian divide. There was also broad agreement that people wanted to move away from labels and categories, including eventually the category of 'Loyalist'.

The participants came from a very different background and culture to the majority of those involved in IVS and it would have been unthinkable that

this project might immediately lead to a number going on a workcamp or joining IVS. Nevertheless, a number of the participants volunteered to organise and contribute to the European Volunteer Scheme training weekends in 2001.

CONCLUSION

This project gave young people on the political and social margins of society an unexpected space to question how they have been conditioned to think and behave about:

- Past and current events in this divided community.
- The networks and relationships within which they live and work.
- The structures and institutions they take reference from.
- Their understanding of their place in relation to 'others'.

While this was a 'single identity' project in that all the participants identified themselves as Loyalists, Unionists and Protestants, it was not a 'separate' identity project in that the process involved a critical examination of place in relation to 'others'; in particular the broad Catholic, Nationalist and Republican communities.

Neither was this project about 'conversion' in terms of making 'bad' people 'good'. It was about helping people reflect and understand the choices they have made and consider the choices they could make in the future. The final decision is theirs.

IVS-NI provided an umbrella that gave some space for this project to grow and develop its own momentum. In a small way, this project reconnected IVS-NI to SCI's roots through creating the space for dialogue in a society emerging from conflict.

WORKING WITH DISPLACED PEOPLE IN AZERBAIJAN

Servet Maharramov

Servet Maharramov was a prep-team member of Best Peace Practice Conference and has coordinated the majority of the AYAFE projects on peace and conflict resolution. He is currently a member of CR Team and Steering Group of GATE

In 1923, after the Bolshevik take-over of the Caucasus, Nagorno Karabagh was made an autonomous region within the Azerbaijan Soviet Republic. Soviet control temporarily quieted ethnic tensions. Before the recent conflict, Nagorno Karabagh was comprised of mainly ethnic Armenian population; the remaining one third was of ethnic Azeri. In 1988 a war of succession from Azerbaijan started in Nagorno Karabagh with the involvement of Armenia. In May 1992, Armenian forces seized Shusha (the historical Azeri populated capital of the region) and Lachin thereby linking Nagorno Karabagh to Armenia. By October 1993, Armenian forces occupied almost all of Nagorno Karabagh, Lachin and large areas in South-western Azerbaijan. Over 30 000 people were killed in the fighting from 1992 to 1994. As Armenian forces advanced, one million Azeri Internal Displaced Persons (IDPs) fled to other parts of Azerbaijan, most of them still living today in camps for displaced people. The fighting raged until May 1994, when a ceasefire was signed in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan, mediated by Russia. Mediation efforts are carried out under the lead of the Organisation of Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE). In 1992 the OSCE initiated the Minsk conference for a peaceful resolution to the Armenia-Azerbaijan conflict. Currently, the Minsk conference is co-chaired by France, Russia and the United States. The working body of the OSCE Minsk Conference is the Minsk Group, which includes USA, France, Russia, Poland, Finland, Denmark, Norway, Italy, Belarus, Austria, Germany, Sweden and Turkey. By the initiative of the Minsk Group, the Presidents of the Armenia and Azerbaijan meet regularly and hold bilateral peace negotiations. In 1993 the UN Security Council adopted four resolutions (822, 853, 874 and 884), calling for the cessations of the hostilities, unimpeded access for international humanitarian relief efforts, and the eventual deployment of the peacekeeping force in the region. The UN resolution also called for the immediate withdrawal of all Armenian forces from the occupied territories of Azerbaijan.



ASSOCIATION OF YOUNG AZERI FRIENDS OF EUROPE (AYAFE-AZERBAIJAN)

AYAFE-Azerbaijan was established in November 1997 by a group of young Azeri students in Baku. The main objectives of the organisation are to contribute to the strengthening of civil society in Azerbaijan and to assist in the process of Azerbaijan's European integration. These are being achieved by introducing Azerbaijan to young people from other European countries and the rest of the world through the organising of voluntary youth activities (workcamps) in Azerbaijan, and exchange schemes with international youth organisations. AYAFE is a network of people who dedicate themselves to international peace and civil society in the spirit of voluntarism.

AYAFE has 12 permanent staff (voluntary) and more than 100 volunteers, who continuously help the Association in its activities. Furthermore, a number of former AYAFE members are now holding positions in various international NGOs, government structures, or studying abroad.

AYAFE INVOLVEMENT IN CONFLICT RESOLUTION ACTIVITIES

AYAFE, as a leading youth organisation in Azerbaijan, carries out a number of different activities in the field of conflict resolution. AYAFE's and Service Civil International's work in the resolution of the conflict can be divided into two closely interrelated parts: work on national level and international activities.

On national level all projects were targeted directly to assist the conflict victims and aimed to eliminate the consequences of the conflict to the Azeri society. As a youth organisation, AYAFE has been actively involved



in the projects targeted to support internally displaced persons (IDP), youth and children. In the last five years, AYAFE has organised six workcamps in collaboration with SCI, which all involved assisting the refugee children and youth. These camps were organised in Sheki Demiryol IDP Camp (4), in Mingachevir (1) and Khachmaz (1) refugee settlements, and around 45 international volunteers and 50 local volunteers participated.

The main objectives of these projects were to teach English to the children at the camps, and organise sport and art activities. Another target group of these workcamps was youth. It was hoped that organising of different

social activities and informal discussion about different cultural and social processes with the young people would help them integrate faster back to their normal life. Encouraged by the work of the international volunteers at the IDP camps, the young generation in the refugee settlements started several activities to contribute to youth mobilisation in the camps. For example, after the second workcamp in Sheki Demiryol IDP Camp, a group of young people established a Youth Club in the camp, which was then utilised as a meeting place where the young people in the camp could discuss their problems, and to organise free time activities. A secondary aim of these workcamps was to inform the international community about the hard conditions in the IDP camps. Assisted by local volunteers, international volunteers were given the opportunity to visit several families in the camp, talk with them and get to know about life in the camp. It was hoped that by encouraging interaction with the IDPs, the international volunteers would be able to capture the bigger picture of the problem of conflict and IDPs.

On an international level, AYAFE, in collaboration with GATE, organised several international events in Azerbaijan to raise awareness both among the youth in Azerbaijan and in other countries about the Armenia-Azerbaijan conflict, and to empower youth from different conflict regions with conflict resolution skills and knowledge. An International Seminar was organised in Baku in August 2000, and around 20 international and 10 Azeri youth participated, and was a successful beginning both for AYAFE and GATE in the field of peace activities in the region. Encouraged by the success of this conference, AYAFE in co-operation with GATE started the implementation of an European Voluntary Service (EVS) project in the Caucasus region in spring 2001. Three international volunteers from Italy and Czech Republic, together with two local volunteers, spent three months in the Sheki Demiryol IPD Camp teaching English and art to school children in the camp, and organising sport activities. Living in the same conditions as the IDPs, teaching in the school where the conditions are very hard, was both very encouraging and supportive for the IDPs.

In May 2001, as a follow up to the Baku Seminar, GATE organised another seminar, this time on the role of youth in conflict resolution in St. Petersburg. Young people from two conflicting countries, Azerbaijan and Armenia, met in this seminar and together with their colleagues from other European countries discussed the role of youth in conflict resolution in the Caucasus region. SCI thereby offered a neutral place for the conflict sides to meet and discuss their problems. At this and other meetings the Caucasian volunteers met each other and experienced themselves amidst the international mix as being of “one kind”. It has to be concluded though that the offered talks about the present conflict led to no recognisable weakening of the nationalistic positions. Nevertheless it proved to be possible to work and live together as friends. Travelling workcamps on conflict resolution in Germany and Italy

where Azeri and Armenian volunteers organised conflict resolution training for other volunteers is the best example of interaction of conflict sides.

SUCSESSES AND LESSON LEARNED

- Young people of refugee camps became more active in trying to solve the problems in their own communities after AYAFE's numerous projects in the camps and settlements. The establishment of a youth club in one of the camps and the involvement of some young IDP in international projects are two good examples of this.
- It was however also realised that it is important to involve the local youth groups and teachers from the IDP settlements in the design and implementation of projects. This will empower the local people with project development skills and guarantee the sustainability of the projects.
- The involvement of international volunteers in the projects also made the IDP community realise that they were not forgotten, and that the international community does care about them. Clearly indicating such moral support is important in not letting the IDP give up, but in encouraging them to help themselves. It was therefore also important to follow-up the short term projects such as the workcamps with long term projects such as EVS. The latter had more potential to create sustainable solutions for the problems of regional conflicts.
- On an international level, the project activities organised in a neutral country with the participation of youth from conflict sides proved to be more successful than those organised in the territory of conflict sides.

PROBLEMS

- The idea of international voluntary workcamps is not yet fully understood by society in Azerbaijan. Therefore, it is sometimes difficult to involve the local youth in the workcamps and to get funding for such activities from the local funding organisations.
- The workcamps so far have only been able to provide activities in the camps on an ad hoc basis due to the lack of youth activities in the camp during the whole year. Due to the deficiency in work availability most of young people are leaving camp at the first opportunity they have. Therefore, the sustainability of the project aimed youth groups in the refugee camps face difficulties due to the lack of local resources.
- There are not enough funds available to organise conflict resolution activities in the region for the youth from conflict sides in neutral countries.
- There is still a lack of dedicated international volunteers interested in doing long-term work in IDP camps.

FUTURE PLANS

AYAFE intends to continue its peace and conflict resolution activities, both on the national level through its activity in the IDP settlements with youth groups, and on international level through international and regional seminars and trainings on peace and conflict resolution in collaboration with its partner organisations in SCI. There are further several ideas AYAFE would like to realise in future. Although AYAFE has already started to implement some of them using its internal resources, most of them need financial and human resources from funding organisations and our partners in Europe:

- Establishing youth clubs in the IDP camps and involving international volunteers in the development of these clubs.
- Organising international workcamps on conflict resolution in neutral countries with the participation of the volunteers from the conflicting sides.
- Organising workcamps in the IDP camps with the participation of local IDP youth.
- Involving IDP youth in international training and seminars on conflict resolution and peace in order to develop their skills in peace work.

IMPRESSIONS OF INTERNATIONAL VOLUNTEERS FROM WORKCAMPS IN THE IDP CAMPS IN AZERBAIJAN

The most important key to success, I believe, was not sufficient funds or material resources, but willingness on behalf of those involved to understand the fundamental objective of the camp, which of course was to provide the refugee people, both adults and children, with psychological support. I believe that there was a mutual feeling of appreciation, cooperation and respect between the volunteer staff and the people of the camp.

The work was far from complete, but it made a promising start, with a huge potential for further improvements that would enable the volunteers to help both materially and mentally those people who were unfortunate enough to have become refugees in their own country.

LISA IMADZU (Japanese volunteer)

My favourite memory of Sheki is that of sitting in refugees' houses for hours listening to their stories, of teaming up with the children for a swim during the noon break, of just wandering around at night in the settlement talking to the people who were so grateful for our company and interest and dedication.

TINO KUNZEL (German volunteer)

It's hard for me to determine whether we made a lasting impression on them or not in the course of our two short weeks. But I know for sure that, while we tried to broaden their horizon, they at the same time definitely broadened mine. This is why I think volunteer work is some of the most rewarding work one can do. After this camp I have become richer. Not with money, but with experience on which it is impossible to put a price tag: Like a smile on a child's face, someone cheerfully greeting you when you arrive to school, and the feeling of a common understanding although you don't have a common language.

ANNE STENERSEN (Norwegian volunteer)

LESSONS LEARNT FROM SCI WORK AND OTHER WORK IN CONFLICT AND POST-CONFLICT AREAS

Emily Sawyer

Emily Sawyer, born in 1977, active in SCI since 2000, long term volunteer in Kosovo in 2002, currently chair of the East West Action Group of IVS GB and member of the CR team of GATE

This report is a result of brainstorming and discussions at the Best Practice Peace Conference in Sheki, Azerbaijan, November 2003. The participants all had experience in conflict resolution projects, some in the countries where they are from, and some had volunteered in other countries.

WHERE TO START?

Some of the participants had volunteered in areas where conflict was still taking place or where open conflict had only just ceased. There are many factors to take into consideration when starting a project or starting to volunteer in these circumstances. For example, ideas from projects must come from the grass-roots, not others telling those involved what to do; local people know their needs best. For intervention you need a good analysis of the basis for the conflict, and very good knowledge of the situation and the background. If there are local organisations working for peace, get in contact with them as their knowledge and work will be invaluable. When initiating new projects it is important to consult the community. There is no point in running projects that are of no use or interest to the local community.

HOW TO INITIATE BILATERAL WORK

In some areas where the participants had volunteered, the conflict was still too “hot” to consider undertaking multi-ethnic or bilateral projects. However, other participants had taken part in multi-ethnic projects.

Ultimately, for peace-building and multi-ethnic projects, the initiative has to come from the community. But you can build up links with the different groups to prepare for this. If the community is not ready for peace-building, you can implement awareness-raising projects, for example raising awareness about human rights and non-violent conflict resolution, and respect for other cultures.

The key to successful multi-ethnic projects is building up trust. It is vital that all different groups trust the organisation and the volunteers. When working with different communities who are or have been in conflict with each other, it is important to be honest and transparent and to undertake

pre-consultation. When starting multi-ethnic projects, talk to the local people and the local power structures of all kinds, as this will help to build up trust and good relations.

For peace-building and multi-ethnic projects to work, the people involved must want and need peace. A good starting place is to run projects with sections of the community who are open to peace-building and multi-ethnic projects, as it is important to keep good relations and maintain their positive attitudes. The results of these projects may persuade others that those kinds of projects are necessary and worthwhile.

The organisation needs to develop projects, but you also need to know when to pull back, depending on the situation. If there is an isolated inter-ethnic incident, you should not necessarily cancel the project, but consult all concerned and then re-evaluate.



When running projects, provide services and schemes that are needed and wanted. People may be willing to take part in multi-ethnic projects who otherwise would not, if they are keen on the project idea, or if they need the services that the project provides. If it is too soon to run multi-ethnic projects in the area, it could be possible to take a multi-ethnic group to another country or area and run a project there.

It is important to do multi-ethnic work, even if this means that some people refuse to take part in the projects. But it is also important to run non-multi-ethnic projects at the same time, depending on the situation and the project.

BRINGING INTERNATIONAL VOLUNTEERS TO THE SITUATION

In some situations it is necessary for logistic reasons to have international as well as local volunteers – it may not be possible for local people to go to all necessary areas safely. It is also good to have international volunteers who can be a liaison between different groups who may not be able or ready to meet directly.

The presence of international volunteers shortly after a conflict can help those involved to see things less in “black and white” – meeting people from other countries can broaden their perspectives.

LOCALS AND INTERNATIONAL VOLUNTEERS WORKING TOGETHER

Care must be taken when providing support during a conflict. Match the intervention to the need. Manage it so as to reduce the need. If you are volunteering in an international project, to avoid over-dependency, involve local people in the implementation of projects. However dependency is not just material – you may be relied upon for protection.

Remember that locals may be traumatised so they may not be able to offer as much as in “normal” circumstances. Remember that involving local people in projects is a long-term, gradual process. Local people can benefit from getting involved in projects through gaining experience and possible paid employment. Initiative and participation should always be encouraged. Projects should not be imposed on the community.

LONG TERM OR SHORT TERM

When setting up projects in conflict and post conflict areas, it is important to commit to running work there long-term. But if you or your project is not going to be long-term, be honest about it so you don’t raise expectations. Be realistic about what can be done if you are staying short-term. Short-term projects could be appropriate, but they could also be a waste of resources. Evaluate this carefully.

PERSONAL BEHAVIOUR

Try to be unbiased. If you have personal views of the conflict, don’t let them affect your work.

If you are an international volunteer, remember that you are guests, be sensitive to cultural traditions. Don’t dictate how to behave, but challenge destructive behaviour. Be aware that you are a representative of the “outside world”. Show the people that you are working with that they have not been forgotten.

Know your own limitations. You can’t do everything and you can’t solve everything. Stay humble, but also remember you are part of the process. Remember your own strengths and weaknesses.

Lead by example of how to behave and make every effort to build trust. Learn from all experiences. Work to highlight the benefits of peace building. Don’t give up the hope that the situation will be resolved in the longer term.

PART II

CONFLICT TRANSFORMATION AND HUMAN RIGHTS IN WORKCAMPS

CONFLICT RESOLUTION WORKSHOPS IN SCI WORKCAMPS IN GREECE

Antonios Sifakis

Antonios Sifakis is a co-founder of the CR Team in Baku 2000, prep-team in the follow up Seminar in St. Petersburg in 2001 and the Training Course in mediation in 2002 in Bulgaria. The participation in the Travelling Workcamp 2001, in Hamm, Germany together with Maria from SCI Hellas, gave us a status of volunteer trainers in basic CR skills and the impetus to explore the potential of organising equivalent CR workshops in local workcamps in Greece.

The purpose of this article is to outline the experience of the organisation and running of Conflict Resolution (CR) workshops in SCI workcamps in Greece.

SCI Hellas is a totally volunteer organisation and its activities are closely related with the interests, motivation, time and enthusiasm of individual volunteers. SCI Hellas has been a fairly recent branch of SCI (established 1984, branch status 1992) and it has not been involved in any form of field action in conflict resolution in Greece or elsewhere. It is, more or less, an organisation which runs workcamps (no more than 10 annually) and long-term exchanges in different fields; mainly ecology, children with special needs, culture and volunteering.

Whereas workcamps are the main activity of SCI Hellas, volunteers became critical of the way workcamps were running in Greece and started exploring the potential of the branch in terms of human resources and knowledge in upholding the character of SCI workcamps as a statement of peace rather than a 'summer alternative vacation experience'.



It was decided that workcamps should be more than voluntary work; they should be an educational tool with both practical and theoretical dimensions. Experienced volunteers of SCI Hellas were rallied to prepare model workshops in different themes of universal interest that both reflect the aims of SCI and can realistically and responsibly be elaborated by them both during workcamps and outside them. Four such modules have been developed:

- “Crossing Borders (refugees) workshop”
- “Human rights workshop”
- “What is SCI? workshop”
- “CR workshop”

The first attempt to organise a CR workshop in Greece was in one workcamp in the summer of 2002. This experience was thoroughly evaluated and the following organisational matters became apparent: firstly, that a CR workshop is interesting and welcomed by the volunteers. It is much appreciated by them, so it is in principle worth the effort. Secondly, that the participation of the workcamp volunteers should be voluntary and nobody should feel obliged to take part. Thirdly, that co-operation between the workcamp co-ordinator and the workshop organisers and trainers should be very close; and fourthly that a team of volunteers that should have workshops as a specifically determined task. Following a call for a co-trainer during autumn 2002, Unai, an EVS volunteer in SCI Hellas at the time, expressed interest in being actively involved with the organisation and running of the workshops. Unai had a basic background in CR and experience in working with adolescents and great motivation for the project. We formed the SCI Hellas Mobile CR Unit.

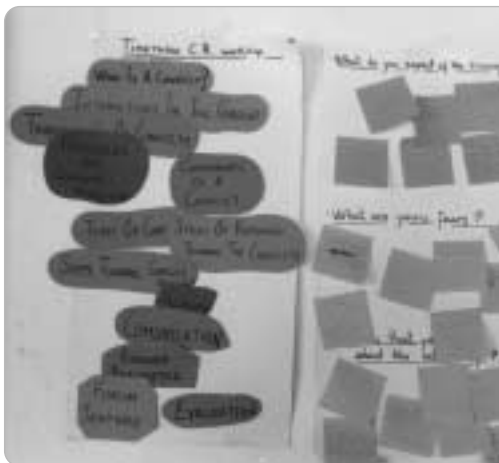
Preparation kicked off on the arrival of the CR Resource Pack* in late 2002. The Pack was thoroughly studied by both members and a series of meetings was arranged in order to outline the basic structure of the one-day workshop, who does what etc. and also to physically prepare the training (e.g. write the posters, prepare papers etc.) Material was also used from the “Co-ordinating Together” book. The workshop was divided in two parts (a) theory and (b) practice, and an effort was made to develop it as interactively as possible – including the theoretical part, broadly based on the modules developed in the travelling workcamp, I had participated in during 2001.

The workshop included: Introduction of trainers, Name game, Presentation of Programme, What is a conflict?, Interactions in the group, Transformation of conflict, Principles of conflict resolution, Components of a conflict, Styles of response towards conflict, Steps towards conflict resolution, Self Esteem, Communication: (a) General, (b) Speaking, (c) Listening, (d)

* The first three parts of the Conflict resolution Resource Pack were published in 2002 and can be ordered from GATE (see imprint).

Acceptance, Violence Barometer, Forum Theatre, Evaluation. Duration: 6-7 hours including breaks.

During the SCI Hellas Co-ordinators' Seminar (in May 2003) all co-ordinators received "invitations to a CR workshop" (see CR Pack) and a specific date during the camp that the workshop would take place, that was prearranged by the Unit. Once the workcamp started the coordinators would communicate with the Unit and confirm that a sufficient number of volunteers were willing to participate. Out of the 7 workcamps organised, in two workcamps the



volunteers were uninterested, so in total 5 workshops took place. Because I am currently working during weekdays, all workshops were arranged during the weekends (Saturdays or Sundays) and the "weekends" of the volunteers were accordingly arranged to Friday-Saturday or Sunday-Monday, since the workshop day was considered a working day of the workcamp. The coordinators and volunteers had no problem with that. In total, 30 volunteers participated in the workshops.

EVALUATION OF THIS EXPERIENCE IS THUS:

Positive:

- A "photo archive" of the first workshop was used in the consequent ones. Those photos were of the posters that were produced during the first workshop and were used as guide. So no good memories necessary!
- All posters of the workshop stayed in the workcamp.
- Co-ordinators were informed of the workshop well in advance.
- Arrival of trainers the previous day, time to integrate with the group.
- Volunteer trainers, good/ informal atmosphere.
- Co-ordinators and occasionally locals took part along with workcamp volunteers.
- A CD-ROM has been prepared with photo evidence and info of the 2003 SCI Hellas Mobile CR Training Unit service.
- Some volunteers were quite surprised that SCI is active in CR Training*!

* Some volunteers admitted they were surprised positively in realising that being participants in an international workcamp of SCI, also meant them being part of the "peace movement". This is simultaneously negative since SCI (and partners) do not sufficiently communicate this "detail" to volunteers...

Negative:

- Forum theatre felt a bit awkward as a training method in most cases.
- A two-day workshop would be better but highly unlikely to happen.
- Not much interest of participants to act as multipliers in CR issues.
- English was a barrier at times.
- Late arrivals in a workcamp participated without knowing why and they were a hassle at times. Informing volunteers on first day using the invitation paper is (still) VERY IMPORTANT!
- Some volunteers were quite surprised that SCI is active in CR Training*!

Overall we strongly recommend that CR workshops should be a standard feature of SCI workcamps, bearing in mind that the Unit should comprise of at least one “CT volunteer trainer”, with basic experiences and knowledge of conducting conflict transformation training. We believe that the idea of “local CR workshops in workcamps” is a tool that if properly implemented can be both of great benefit to the participants and to communicating the message of SCI. Nevertheless, it can only be effective if integrated in an overall strategic planning and action for peace education within the movement.

* Some volunteers admitted they were surprised positively in realising that being participants in an international workcamp of SCI, also meant them being part of the “peace movement”. This is simultaneously negative since SCI (and partners) do not sufficiently communicate this “detail” to volunteers...

PEACE MESSENGERS 2003

Linds Pexton

The concept of “Messengers” combines several fundamental aspects of SCI work; workcamps, non-formal learning, long-term volunteering linked with intercultural learning and exchange and the relatively new focus on training for trainers as a means of multiplication. Accordingly, this project was an experiment in how to use SCI methodologies in a creative and integrated way so as to meet the aims of SCI as a peace movement.

Originally an idea from the GATE “Back to the Roots” Seminar in 2001, the peace messengers project clearly complimented the decision of that year’s International Committee Meeting to put more focus on peace and non-violent conflict resolution and to use international workcamps as a key tool in achieving the mission. In Spring 2002 the “Peace Messengers are Coming” seminar was held, launching a two-year Peace and Human Rights Campaign. The key action of the campaign was the “Human Rights Messenger” project, which aimed to develop a human rights network and create and inspire new human rights activities within our branches and partner organisations.



Sixteen volunteers from fourteen countries were selected in early 2003 and in May 2003 they gathered in Zagreb for a two week training course. From there they headed to their host country to spend 5 and a half months conducting non-formal human rights workshops. The messengers worked predominantly in SCI workcamps but also tried to form contacts with other NGOs that could potentially (if followed later by the branch in question) encourage new or continued relations between SCI and likeminded organisations. In several cases the volunteers were also able to adapt their workshops to suit other settings and thus reach out to a wider audience (examples include workshops for children and long term programmes for branch volunteers). This was seen as valuable activity that could and should be encouraged in future projects of this kind (yet with workcamps remaining a priority).

The scale of the project was ambitious and a real attempt at making a pan-European campaign. It is notable to think that in 2003 hundreds of volunteers discussed human rights in SCI workcamps. However, I don’t wish to give the impression that everything was amazing at the first attempt. Though

efforts have still to be made to thoroughly examine what affect such workshops have and how to improve them, the comments made by the messengers at their centralised final evaluation meeting, have indicated several things. For example they suggest that a two hour workshop may not be “enough to make a difference” and that the topic of their workshops was often too theoretical and distant from the minds of the participants.

These two criticisms are actually linked with each other. A broad theme such as “human rights” indeed seems unsuited to all workcamps unless the workshop or discussion links the project and the study theme clearly. In this way the participant is more likely to feel that the study part is relevant and truly part of the project rather than something extra. **We should recognise how the theme of each project relates to peace or human rights (in their broadest context) and develop the study material upon that theme rather than thinking that “one size fits all”.** The study parts should help the volunteer realise the significance of the work they are doing and the greater global issues surrounding the project. In addition workshops on peace related topics such as conflict resolution, and the philosophy of workcamps and alternative community should be seen as relevant in all circumstances provided that it is clear to volunteers why it is deemed relevant. Once these links are clear a two-hour workshop should have a greater impact. Furthermore, if developing a study part for a workcamp seems too difficult or remote in its links to peace or human rights then surely the actual project needs to be more closely examined.

Certainly this messenger project raises issues of what we actually want to achieve in constructing study parts on workcamps. It is appropriate to have some form of “study” on a workcamp but it should be made clearer why this is so. More emphasis needs to be placed on relating to partners, camp-leaders and participants that SCI believes peace issues, and the wider implications of the particular project, go hand in hand with the work and social aspects of the workcamp. Naturally, however, workshops should remain optional and varying degrees of study could be encouraged, as both a practicality (agreement of project partners, availability of trainers) and an acknowledgement that there can be counter-affects of ‘forced’ reflection. Some messengers were keen to introduce sustained study elements over the course of entire workcamps. While this could result in deeper discussion of issues and ideology and has the potential to afford a greater impact, a balance of deeds and words should be maintained. Also, it is important that we remain aware of our roots as an organisation open to all and do not become so specialised that we only attract those who are already politically and socially conscious.

Another point of concern is the **quality of workshops**. Whilst the volunteer trainer is not meant to be an “expert” or to know every answer, they are still a representative of SCI (often the only one aside from the campleader)

and should therefore give a good impression of the organisation. There needs to be some measure of quality control for the workshops we run, in particular because workcamps are our greatest medium of outreach. By giving a poor impression at the workcamp we will not encourage people to become more involved!! Long-term volunteer trainers have the advantage of building up their experience and training techniques over time. However, last year the Human Rights Messengers received only two weeks of training, only one of which was strictly relevant to their actual task, and were expected to be capable of delivering workshops from there on (though at a later point they also received conflict resolution training, which as it was conducted in the middle of the LTV duration was found inconvenient for many branches). Consequently we really need to find a balance between providing volunteers



with enough confidence, capacity and experience to deliver “professional” workshops and the questions of time and practicality of arranging adequate training. One obvious solution is to recruit volunteers who already have some training experience. Another idea, perhaps less feasible practically, is to organise longer initial training courses, in which the participants have enough time to practice on each other and “try out”. The training of 2003 utilised every available moment and yet still barely enabled volunteers to have such practice.

To conclude, many have understandably questioned the scale and expense of the Messenger project. There were undoubtedly some advantages to its size, namely the support network developed between the Messengers themselves and the good effect that this had on their work creating a joint publication on human rights. It was also encouraging to think that last year at least 14 branches or partners had sufficient volunteers to be able to run study parts on a significant number of their workcamps. This only came about because it was a centralised project with many of the time-consuming financial and training tasks taken on by GATE. However, what was really missing was the bigger picture and while the idea was undeniably grand, it was not planned in sufficient detail or in close enough co-operation with the branches themselves. Perhaps it is more useful and less complicated in future to mobilise LTVs on a national level to carry out the task of designing and running study parts. Or perhaps, having incorporated the experience of 2003, and with greater efforts to improve co-operation and commitment of all parties, from initial planning to realisation, this grand idea would really go on to prove its worth.

SOMEONE HAD AN IDEA: AN “IDEOLOGY RESOURCE PACK” FOR SCI

Wilbert Helsloot

Wilbert Helsloot, born 1968, active since 1995 in SCI, mostly active in the Balkans. First workcamp in 1993 during Bosnia war, has been working with refugees in Balkan and the Netherlands, was prep-team member for Best Peace Practice conference in 2003.

SCI started in 1920, with a workcamp in Verdun, bringing volunteers together from different countries to rebuild houses in a destroyed French village. While the workcamp had to be broken up after a few months since the locals withheld the participation of German volunteers at the camp, other workcamps followed. The idea of a civil service, to help and construct, as opposed to destructive military service, was born.

In the beginning of the 21st century SCI organises over 500 workcamps every year. While the ideals are still alive among SCI activists, some participants in workcamps may not recognise this vision nowadays. Did SCI turn into an alternative travel agency? Where is the vision of SCI’s mission? In what sense are we still combining practical work and international solidarity?

The resource pack “Someone had an idea... Connecting vision and action in SCI”, published in 2003 could be a useful tool to bring these discussions in workcamps, SCI meetings and other SCI projects. “Someone had an idea”, also known as the ideology resource pack, is a direct result of the Ideology Seminar of SCI, held in the Netherlands in 1998, to reflect on the roots of the organisation and to relate the present work of SCI to peace. It has been written by one of the organisers of the seminar, Liesbeth Vroemen from VIA-NL, who since then collected a lot of materials concerning SCI and its ideals.

The resource pack consists of a book of 122 pages and a separate folder with a photo series, a structure of SCI puzzle and quotes from Pierre Ceresole, the founder of SCI. The book has four parts.

1. Methods, games and activities
2. History
3. Food for thought
4. Literature and practical information

The methods and activities are meant to give the participants a deeper insight into SCI and its values. While most exercises target the volunteers at workcamps a lot of them are intended for activists, who have already been involved in SCI.

FROM THE CONTENT:

- working with definitions,
- intercultural games,
- ideology against compromising due to the reality,
- warming-up activities,
- games with quotes of Pierre Ceresole,
- games to identify negative and positive forces in a group or organisation,
- tips for having a special guest in a study programme,
- motives for doing a workcamp,
- identifying a long term plan for a group or organisation,
- games with recent newspapers,
- dilemmas and themes in the organisation and the role of activists in it,
- evaluation methods.

The photo series from the SCI archives in Switzerland with pictures from over eighty years of SCI history is accompanied by a list of possible ideas and games and how to use them. By playing and/ or discussing the photos, people easily get to know better the original ideas of SCI and their meaning for today.

The history part of the book serves interested SCI activists with more detailed background information about their movement. It includes seven articles about specific periods, for example about the Christian peace movements in the early 20th Century, the beginning of SCI in Great Britain or the role of SCI in the Algeria war. The chapter ends with a chronological order of the history of SCI.

The third chapter consists of more recent articles relating to actual problems and questions inside the movement. For example the north-south issue and the question of Internationalism in SCI, the statement that volunteerism can sometimes do more harm than good. Another article discusses whether SCI nowadays is more a service for volunteers, than a service for the people who need it...

To make the resource pack work and really connect vision and action in SCI it needs to be better known, more widely distributed and most of all activists should work with it at their meetings and workcamps.

These sessions can be done in study days, reflection days, but also in an afternoon workshop in a workcamp. The resource pack gives no easy answers to what peace and SCI are about, but it can certainly stimulate discussions and reflection among activists and workcamp volunteers. It's first applications in recent workcamps, proved to be very helpful and successful, especially the photo series.

Resource packs can be ordered from Liesbeth Vroemen at liesbeth.vroemen@planet.nl

PART III

TRAINING FOR CONFLICT TRANSFORMATION

TRAINING FOR CONFLICT TRANSFORMATION – THE TRAVELLING WORKCAMPS

Silke Marzluff and Christine Wessel-Berning

Christine Wessel-Berning, member of CR team since 2001, one of the authors of the first TWC concept, trainer in TWC 2001 and 2003.

Silke Marzluff, born in 1975, actively involved in SCI since 1998. One of the developers of the concept for the Travelling Workcamp, trainer of TWC in 2002, member of the various working groups within German SCI, works for a centre for political education in Germany

The idea to organise a “travelling workcamp” (TWC) came up first on the GATE/AYAFE seminar “The Role of Voluntary Youth Work in Conflict Resolution” in Baku, Azerbaijan in August 2000 where the Conflict Resolution Team of GATE was initially formed.

Within the general strategy of the CR Team, the specific role of TWCs is:

- To promote Conflict Resolution (CR) as an important subject for SCI branches and partner organisations.
- To give interested volunteers the opportunity to build up or widen their CR skills by letting them get personally acquainted with behavioural alternatives in conflicts and to give them the opportunity to gather (first) experiences as a trainer.
- To broadly spread the ideas of CR through the offering of one-day trainings in regular workcamps.
- To build a network of CR trainers who can plan and co-ordinate new CR training activities.
- To encourage the volunteer trainers to share their knowledge and organise workshops on CR in their own branches after returning home.

A TWC consists of three parts*:

1. THE TRAINING WEEK (7 DAYS)

During the training week TWC participants build their group, by getting to know each other, consenting on the rules of their camp life and exchanging expectations of the training. They learn some theory on conflict resolution and get the chance to gain experience as a volunteer trainer. The initial theoretical input has varied with the development of the TWC concept. Strategies of conflict resolution and non-violent communication were main topics in 2003. For the travelling part participants split in to small groups to prepare training units on different conflict resolution topics. The trainers also provide the groups with material and support. After having chosen the exercises and planned their programme the small groups present it to the other TWC participants. As an important part of the learning process the training unit is intensely reflected and evaluated.

2. THE TRAVELLING PART (12 DAYS)

After the training week TWC participants split up in to groups of 3 to 5 persons and each group travels to four workcamps to offer one-day workshops on conflict resolution to the workcamp volunteers.

3. THE FINAL EVALUATION (4 DAYS)

For the final evaluation all the travelling groups and trainers get together again to exchange their experiences of the travelling period. Each stage of the Travelling workcamp is evaluated. The final topic is future projects: what will volunteers do with their newly learned skills and knowledge when they return home?

Since 2001 four TWCs have been carried out. The ones in 2001 and 2002 were organised by GATE and SCI Germany and took place in Germany. TWC 2003 took place in Italy and was organised by GATE and SCI Italy**. In 2003 it was funded by the European Commission and included all of GATE's Human Rights Messengers – an important step in joining up different GATE activities towards an overall strategy. In 2003, SCI Germany also organised a TWC on the theme of human rights.

* Please take a look at the Conflict Resolution Resource Pack Part II for a detailed description of the scheme of the TWC.

** Part II of the Conflict Resolution Resource Pack includes a section about the TWCs. There you can find detailed information on the plan of the train the trainer week, some results of the evaluation, a bit of theory and exercises about conflict resolution and useful hints for the organisation of one-day workshops.

TRAVELLING WORKCAMPS 2001-2003

5.08 - 26.08.2001 Germany (CR) SCI Germany

28.07- 18.08.2002 Germany (CR) SCI Germany

5.07 - 28.07.2003 Italy (CR) GATE/ SCI Italy

27.07.03 - 24.08.03 Germany (human rights) SCI Germany

EVALUATION OF THE TRAVELLING WORKCAMP CONCEPT

We have achieved many successes, but also general questions emerged which have to be dealt with for future improvements.

MAJOR SUCCESSES WE HAVE ACHIEVED:

- About 35 people have been trained as volunteer trainers.
- About 5 people improved their skills to the level of more professional trainers.
- One of the volunteer trainers joined the international Trainers Pool of GATE.
- About 10 participants became active members of the CR Team.
- About 40 workcamps were offered one-day training, which means more than 450 people received first introductions on constructive approaches to conflict resolution.
- One-day CR workshops have been permanently integrated in to the workcamps of SCI Hellas.



- One-day workshops on CR have been offered to some workcamps in Poland and France
- The TWC concept can be adapted for different topics. In 2003 the first Travelling Workcamp on human rights took place in Germany, which was organised along the same scheme as the Travelling Workcamps on conflict resolution.
- Each year we learnt from the evaluation of the previous year. Therefore many improvements have been made model of travelling workcamps.

DIFFICULTIES WE HAVE TO DEAL WITH (LINKED TO THE DIFFERENT PARTS OF THE TWC):

The training week:

- Duration of the training week: it would be very helpful to extend the training week for at least one more day in order to have more time for support of volunteer trainers concerning the preparation of the units.

- There still is a lack of appropriate training material in English language for workshop and training units*.

The travelling part:

- The division of the travelling groups has been complicated in every single TWC and no universal solution has been found.
- In the workcamps the one-day workshops have not always been appreciated. It has to be stressed more clearly that workcamp participants are invited and it is not compulsory**.
- Communication between campleaders, project partners and organisers of a TWC still can be improved.
- The quality of the workshops can be very different depending on previous training experience or conflict resolution knowledge of the volunteer trainers. How can we reach a higher standard?
- Support for travelling groups has still to be improved, because so far the volunteer trainers are travelling without the support of experienced trainers and have to rely on themselves.

General Problems:

- The travelling workcamp needs a big logistic effort.
- Due to the often long travel distances the travelling workcamp is a very expensive project which always needs much energy for securing funding.
- Choice of participants: funding guidelines can restrict the free choice of participants.
- Language skills: Since the participants of the travelling workcamps act as trainers themselves it is important that they have a good knowledge of English.



FUTURE PERSPECTIVES OF THE TRAVELLING WORKCAMP CONCEPT

As a result of the experiences made in the travelling workcamps of the past we are planning two projects for 2004:

The TWC Manual

CR Team members are planning to write a manual about travelling workcamps containing two different parts. Part one will explain how to manage a travelling workcamp from the beginning to the end in order to pass on the experiences we made to other activists. This first part can be applied to any travelling workcamp topic and is not necessarily connected

* The first TWCs collection of theory, games and exercises as documented in the Conflict Resolution Resource Pack Part II can only be seen as a first step.

** To this some help will be provided in the new edition of the Conflict Resolution Resource Pack Part II.

to CR. The second part will give help on how to run the “Train the Trainer” week in a travelling workcamp on conflict transformation. It will offer a range of theory, games and exercises that can be used either for the training or for workshops on conflict resolution in general.

Advanced Training for Trainers on Conflict Transformation

A new project, based on the experiences of the previous travelling workcamps, was developed at the Best Peace Practice conference in Azerbaijan: A training for trainers on the topic of conflict transformation will be held in 2004 in order to widen the skills within Trainers’ Pool. In 2005 another training is planned for new volunteer trainers on conflict transformation, according to the travelling workcamp concept of the training week. Instead of the former travelling part the participants will return to their home countries and get support of members of the Trainers Pool who will assist the new volunteer trainers to conduct one-day training either at workcamps or in different places like schools or youth clubs. Thus the new volunteer trainers can get feedback on their skills as a trainer by an experienced person and the logistic and financial efforts for offering training opportunities will be reduced.

WHAT DID WE LEARN FROM THREE YEARS’ EXPERIENCE OF TRAVELLING WORKCAMPS?

The concept has its advantages and pitfalls. We really can be proud of having found a way to train previously inexperienced people to become volunteer trainers in a very short period of time. Many of the participants have gained more experience as trainers since then, were co-leaders of other travelling workcamps and learned more skills through further qualifications. This means that in the field of training SCI gains a bigger pool of trainers that can enhance the quality of workcamps and other SCI projects.

On the other hand, one single travelling workcamp takes a lot of effort to organise and costs a lot of money. Therefore the idea to train new volunteer trainers in a train the trainer course and then move to the field of practical experiences on a local level with the support of local more experienced trainers can be the solution for the big financial and logistic efforts a “traditional” travelling workcamp takes.

Hopefully we will be able to evaluate first experiences with this new approach in 2004/05.

The experiences and knowledge we acquired through organising international TWCs shall not get lost but be put together in a publication. Since the travelling workcamp concept as such can be adapted to many topics it is worthwhile to offer a manual for those who want to manage such a project themselves.

All in all, we can say that the TWC idea is moving on. All the main aims of the CR Team towards TWCs will be kept up in the revised concept. Now we have to wait and see what the next experiences will be like – we are looking forward to that!

NON-VIOLENCE CONFLICT RESOLUTION TRAINING IN ASIA

Jayaprasad Kumar

Jayaprasad Kumar, born in 1954, and active in SCI since 1986, worked with Race Against Time (a fundraising project for apartheid in SCI) in 1988, presently working for promotion of peace in the Peace and Human Rights Working Group of SCI since 1997 as contact person.

THE PEACE AND HUMAN RIGHTS WORKING GROUP 1997-2004

The Peace and Human Rights Working Group (PHRWG) was formed in 1997 and based in the Asian Region of SCI as a reaction to the fact that the concept of non-violence has been losing its importance in the region and the advocacy to war and violence through proxy war has become more common.

Between 1994 and 1997, SCI was conducting programmes on non-violent conflict resolution (NVCR). Since 1998 several activities related

to peace, non-violence and human rights have been undertaken by the national sections of this Working Group. SCI, being a peace organisation committed to resolving conflicts through non-violence, wants to equip people who would be committed and able to handle conflicts in a non-violent way. Several training workshops on non-violence were organised on the international level to support the work of branches and the build up a network of national peace and human rights working groups.



NON-VIOLENCE TODAY, 1999

The first workshop called “Non-violence Today” took place in Sri Lanka in 1999. Participants from India, Bangladesh and Nepal took part along with local and European participants. One of the aims was to understand the Sri Lankan conflict and the use of non-violence in this context. The workshop also aimed to promote regional cooperation and the setup of an Asian regional network. The project was facilitated by Samadana/m, a peace NGO working for the promotion of peace among the different ethnic communities in Sri Lanka. Samadana/m is one of the pioneers who introduced the concept of NVCR in Sri Lanka and supports other like-minded NGOs like SCI.

The objectives of the workshop were:

- To share experience and skills in using non-violence methods, and the challenges faced when applying these methods.
- To improve and to develop new methods of NV actions.
- To learn from the situation in Sri Lanka and the experiences from other countries in the region, to find out what would be practical and viable for the region.
- To strengthen a network on non-violence, peace and human rights.
- To introduce and give an induction on the concept of NVCR to Diakonia partners in Sri Lanka.
- To broaden networking in this field in order to build solidarity internationally.
- To make the participants understand the theory of non-violence and its importance for today's society.
- To understand the place non-violence has in their own lives.

Non-violence or *Ahimsa* is an act born out of *Satyagraha* or the desire to know the ultimate reality or truth. While truth as perceived by our instruments of knowledge and tested by reason and conscience was the basis of all knowledge and action, it was to be realised and established only through love, and non-violent means. According to Gandhi, non-violence was not a negative term, meaning non-injury to the other in thought, word and deed, but it was love; emotional identity of interest. Non-violence also meant aggressive goodness which would overwhelm even the enemy or the opponent with selfless service and sacrifice of the supreme kind.



The workshop used effective communication skills, trust building, case studies, role plays and discussion in order to obtain constructive dialogue between the workshop participants on effective non-violent conflict resolution methods.

The training was the first of its kind and the participants were really inspired and motivated to implement non-violence in their home countries.

NON-VIOLENT LIFESTYLES TRAINING, 2000

In 2000 a follow-up workshop was organised again in Sri Lanka. The theme of the workshop was “non-violent lifestyles, non-violent action, and effective conflict resolution”.

The workshop was declared as an activity under UNESCO’s Culture of Peace campaign and included different elements. The event involved school children from both communities in conflict, who were drawing posters, writing poems and stories etc. The study part included sessions on the conflict in Sri Lanka and how regional cooperation could be built, as well as topics related to the importance of peace, the growth of violence in the region, the role of peace activists and the challenges faced. The 45 participants shared their experiences as well as mutual support and solidarity.

Daily workshops started with meditation and thereafter the importance of meditation in non-violence was discussed. The keynote address was given by the eminent Sarvodaya* leader, Dr. A.T. Aryaratne (who has won the Gandhian Peace award for his work), who spoke on non-violent lifestyle. In the second session the group shared experiences of non-violent lifestyle in their respective areas. Later a film on non-violent cases and lifestyle was shown. The next day the workshop began with types of non-violent action and role play on non-violence cases and action were enacted. It was a really wonderful experience for the participants to get involved and enact different roles to find peaceful solutions.

The next day the concept of effective conflict resolution was introduced, thereby discussing different methods of conflict handling like assertiveness, needs and fears, and root causes of conflicts and showing a film on conflict handling. During dinner the participants were asked to identify a common conflict for the session the next day.

On the last day the participants were asked to map out the problem of the identified common conflict and try out effective conflict resolution with various methods. This gave the participants a practical approach to handle conflicts and resolve them through their own skills. Different ice-breakers and trust-building exercises were introduced after each sessions and much attention was paid to combine the training with expertise in the field so that the workshop could be related to the situation in their home countries.

GANDHIAN THOUGHT, 2002

The success of these two workshops resulted in holding a five-day seminar in Mumbai, India, in 2002 on the subject “Gandhian thought”. It was well attended by more than 50 participants from all over India, from Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Nepal and the USA. The seminar was organised to get a deeper

* *Sarvodaya* which means ‘the good of all or the affluence of all’ is a movement started by Gandhi and later carried on by his followers to propagate Gandhian philosophy.

insight into non-violent methods adopted during India's freedom struggle and what relevance it had today in the present context. The teachers were Gandhians from the Institute of Gandhian studies who practice non-violence and study Gandhian philosophy. There were also teachers from other religions who shared their thought on non-violent actions. There were two sessions every day with themes such as:

- Understanding Gandhi as a person and as a philosopher no full-stop.
- Non-violence and experiment with truth.
- Gandhian principles.
- Harmony
- Gandhi and world Government.
- Overall view of Gandhian thought.
- Relevance of Gandhi in today's context.
- Seven sins.
- Personalities inspired by Gandhian thought and their contribution.



The seminar began daily with meditation and all religious prayers and in the evening one hour was spent on topics like time management, body language, mnemonics, motivation, food-discipline and goal setting.

The sessions were lively and well attended. The first two hours were an opportunity to talk about the subject and later there were open question and answer sessions. The participants then shared many questions in practical application of non-violence. The participants also had an opportunity to visit an Indian village known as Gagoday, which was run on the principles of Gandhian philosophy of non-violence.

EVALUATION

The workshops and seminars inspired the participants to hold similar activities to promote peace in their home regions, many of which are directly effected by war or local acts of violence. The participants took part in "Peace Walks", put up exhibitions on peace, campaigned against violence and war, conducted several awareness and educational camps on human rights and organised actions on Hiroshima and Nagasaki days, communal harmony day and at all religious prayer meetings.

FOLLOW-UP ACTIVITIES IN SCI BRANCHES

Nepal:

Several talk programmes have been held in relation to Human Rights Day and also for world peace, several human rights activists, lawyers and volunteers took part. A March for Peace also had been held.

Sri Lanka:

Lobby work and campaign work for sustaining the present peace level in Sri Lanka and to move forward for a lasting peace.

A national poster campaign on WAR AGAINST IRAQ was done, it was also sent by mail and e-mail internationally.

Bangladesh:

Child rights – rally, seminar, workshop, human chain, photo exhibition in collaboration with other NGOs from January to June 2004.

Anti-war campaign – rally, human chain, mass meetings in collaboration with other NGOs and government organisations from July to November.

Human Rights Day – celebration day on 10 December 2004 with all SCI units.

Workshop on peace & human rights – 3 days in September 2004.

India :

Harmony cells in schools and colleges from July – December 2004

Human rights education in need areas (slum areas) with the help of Para Professional Community Social Workers who will be trained in human rights training from August – October and December 2004 (3 camps).

Campaign against communal violence in November 2004 along with a Camp on NVAM in the riot affected area in Gujrat.

Video film shows and exhibitions for mass education in 5 Schools and colleges from August 6 to 9 during Hiroshima Nagasaki observation week along with Peace Walk.

The evaluation shows some weak points too:

- Not all planned activities could be implemented.
- Regional programmes and activities were limited to a certain area.
- The activities relied on the finding of the right activist who could spare the time.

- Lack of funds to support such activities.
- There is always more need to do something than we could possibly do, so once we get involved in a conflict (in a community) the activities are growing.
- The need for this Working Group in Asia is to work on issues that are directly effecting the lives of the people, taking into consideration the correlation and interdependencies between peace and economic conditions on the one hand and terrorism and distortion of lifestyle on the other.
- The programmes should be implemented at inter-continental level also, to have a greater inflow of ideas, mediation and solidarity.

Participation in the Best Peace Practice Conference held at the Baku in 2003, brought about vast changes in unifying with similar NVCR teams within SCI. It also gave an opportunity to exchange views and experience and work with solidarity in future with the East-West and European conflict resolution teams.

The key to success is to release many small actions on a continuous base. That way an organisation like SCI can play a major role in bringing about peace in this region whether it is Nepal, Bangladesh, India, Sri Lanka or any other Asian countries.

PROPOSED PLAN OF ACTION FOR THE YEAR 2004

1. Electronic Publication – THE DROP - 3 Issues – March, July, November
2. Development and coordination of NON-VIOLENT ACTION TEAM (NOVI-PAT) as a follow-up to the Non-Violent Action Modules workshop held in 2003 – March onwards
3. Development of the ALTERNATIVE NEWS TRANSMISSION – Electronic alternative news transmission to provide in an organised form, news that most people do not hear. Starting February – Number of issues depend upon the inflow of news.
4. Possible participation in the WSF in India
5. Starting of Human Rights School via electronic mail with the cooperation of Asian Human Rights Commission – Starting in April
6. Electronic publication of the Asian Human Rights Charter - October
7. Seminar on Peace and Human Rights – September
8. Another 12 Peace activities to be organised at local branch level in Bangladesh, India, Nepal and Sri Lanka.

MEDIATION TRAINING IN SCI

Anna Belousova, Giuliana Montefusco, Antonios Sifakis

Anna Belousova, born 1975, active in SCI since 1998, involved in preparation of CR events of Alternative-V and leading workcamps, long term volunteer in Germany and GATE office, prep-team member of Advanced Mediation Training in 2004.

Giuliana Montefusco, born 1973, has been active in SCI since 1998, past SCI Italy committee member, currently part of Trainer's Pool and Conflict Resolution team of GATE.

Antonios Sifakis, prep-team of Mediation Attitudes Training in 2002, see also this book CR-workshops in Greece, p. 43

The need for conflict mediation training has long been perceived within the Conflict Resolution Team of GATE. A first idea of a “mediation oriented” course emerged at the St. Petersburg seminar in 2001. On that occasion it was recognised that whereas training in general conflict resolution skills was already included in actions either at international seminars or travelling workcamps, a particular focus on mediation skills was generally absent from both SCI and partners, either at an organisational level, or from volunteers interested in CR.

TRAINING ON MEDIATION SKILLS 2002

In September 2002 the “Empowering Youth Leaders with Mediation Skills” Training Course was held in Bulgaria as part of GATE’s broader campaign to promote Peace & Human Rights.

The training course was meant to provide activists of SCI with professional training in mediation, defining the role of international voluntary youth mediation and sharing concrete experience of successful mediation work. An ongoing aim was also to plan future conflict resolution activities within SCI and to create a network of voluntary youth mediators throughout Europe.

The initial plan was that the training would focus on practical mediation skills for participants. However, considering the expectations and the dynamics of the group, the focus became more focused on attitudes towards conflict.

The participants evaluated the knowledge and insight into conflict resolution gained during the training course as a useful tool for their work as youth leaders. They were eager to participate in future events and to set up relevant new projects and actions.

However, in order to embark in any mediation related activity, either at an international or local level, there was a clear indication that further training on practical tools, concrete mediation skills and confidence-building was needed.

THE PROGRESS OF MEDIATION SKILLS TRAINING IN 2004

So the next planned step was to develop practical competencies and to set up a shared base for common ongoing work. An advanced training was a natural follow up, to effectually face the diversity of conflict situations. The “Empowering Youth Leaders with Advanced Skills in Conflict Mediation” training course was held in Bakuriani, Georgia, from 25 to 31 January 2004, just after Georgian peaceful revolution.



The training was aimed to enhance the long-term work in conflict transformation and resolution, developing higher knowledge and skills in conflict mediation and implementing new local-national-international projects in this field. It was decided to select a professional mediator to join the prep-team and an intense agenda was prepared, aiming to combine theoretical conflict analysis and practical work, professional methodology and SCI open style. Within the same perspective, the

participants selected were all active volunteers, ready to get involved in concrete projects. They came with lots of practical involvement and commitment.

A common expectation was to improve conflict mediation in everyday life, given the different geographical situations of participants and to obtain practical strategies to use in a variety of common situations.

The focus of this training was not to create professionals of mediation, but rather people who are prepared and confident to work in this field, to look for the win-win solution in all aspects of life.

The strategic starting point was the awareness raising of conflict as a part of our existence, as a neutral dynamic of our world. From the Chinese culture comes an enlightening working definition of conflict, as the combination of danger & opportunity.

Significant conflicts were analysed at the training, considering the historical background, social context, main and additional parties, power relations, real issues, alternative options. Such an analysis down to the roots of the conflict provides a practical example of ways to reach general awareness of conflict management and explore its possible alternatives and solutions. Also it was shown that is an ever-effectual attitude to always: think wide!

Those who were secretly expecting some universal principle for conflict mediation would have been disappointed, since there is no right attitude.

This training definitely chose mediation as its main aim, however that does not mean there is an ever-valid style; definitely it is neither an effectual nor realistic option all of the time. The will to solve the conflict is a necessity in mediation.

MEDIATION = CONFLICT FACILITATION?

A mediator has the first simple, yet hard, task of helping people to listen, to become aware of themselves and the other parties in the conflict. The real work of mediation does take a lot from facilitation; mediators need to be educated in understanding, to absorb anger and discover the common interests, so as to rebuild relationships and make the parties work together.

A necessary commitment is to prevent oneself from giving ready solutions (arbitration is another stricter technique), but letting the people involved create the solution. This means that the solution generated is more deeply accepted by them. Among all decision-making models, consensus is the one that provides the highest level of both participation and satisfaction of parties; this is highly recommended to be used in the mediation process, so as to come to a balanced long term agreement.

As a challenging experience, the so-called dilemma of the prisoner was played, a strategy game, where the only win-win solution gets misconsidered and the results are highly conditional on the relations and trust between the parties. Here, more than in other occasions, the game was debriefed; so to get to a better understanding of our 'normal' behaviours, of our deep rooted attitudes and possible alternatives.

Reflection groups met at the end of every working day, actively criticising all aspects of the course; most participants appreciated the groups as a useful opportunity for discussion, whilst for the prep-team, they were an efficient instrument to regularly evaluate the work and set an active dialogue with participants. From the final evaluation, the appreciation of the quality and professionalism of the training emerged, as well as the will to practice mediation through SCI practical work.

IMPLEMENTATION OF MEDIATION SKILLS

The open project promoted in the training is the 'Conflict Mediation Pool' (see box on page 66); to be developed as a lively forum on concrete everyday conflict situations, somewhere to focus on sharing experiences and elaborating creative alternative solutions.

The group feels enthusiastic about such work and of the possibilities of using these experiences in the not so rare (!) examples of SCI internal conflict.

CREATING A CONFLICT MEDIATION POOL FOR SCI

A main outcome of the training course has been the birth of a pool of people in SCI, particularly focused on mediation work. We see two main needs for such a “Mediation Pool”

1. Following its priority aims, SCI is regularly involved in initiatives of peace-building, especially in post-conflict areas where a high level of mistrust can persist at the end of official hostilities. In such delicate situations every intervention needs to be carefully planned and run to implement a real evolution towards peace.
2. On a different perspective, in the complex interaction of branches and groups of the international structure of SCI, the need is strongly perceived to try and establish some positive practice of internal facilitation and conflict mediation.

The aims of the Pool are to:

- set up a “help desk” to support the resolution of conflicts between branches, groups and individuals inside SCI;
- run a forum on mediation and promoting alternative ways to explore its mechanisms and contents;
- organise short trainings on mediation and conflict resolution for SCI trainers and volunteers;
- create guidelines for projects and activities which involve mediation.

The other outcome of the training is the WEB resource list.

A CONFLICT TRANSFORMATION TRAINING STRATEGY FOR GATE AND SCI

Björn Kunter

Björn Kunter, born in 1970, active in SCI since 1991. Co-founder of the CR Team in 2000 and one of the developer of the Travelling Workcamp. Member of the GATE Trainers Pool, works as coordinator of a support program for Belarussian NGOs and as a trainer for non-violent actions and conflict transformation.

In 2001 GATE founded the East-West Trainers Pool (GATE-TP). Currently there are 25 trainers with several years of experience in the organisation and training of international seminars and training courses. In the framework of a training strategy for GATE, a joint working team of CR Team and GATE-TP members drafted a strategy in the field of conflict transformation*.

Analysing the situation of SCI branches and partner organisations, as well as the regional and international SCI structures the following needs were defined:

Training needs

1. SCI wants to promote peace and non-violent ways to solve conflicts. SCI activists need basic training skills and information material to promote these ideas effectively.
2. SCI activists (campleaders, staff, board members, working group members, prep-teams etc.) face everyday conflicts. They need skills and ideas how to transform their (potentially destructive) conflicts in constructive problem-solving processes.
3. SCI is working in long-term projects in areas of violent conflict. The number and variety of these projects will probably rise in the future. The volunteers and organisers need special training how to work under these circumstances.
4. SCI lacks experienced trainers for constructive conflict transformation to fulfill the tasks 1-3, therefore we need to expand the training of trainers.

Two lines of training were developed, defining the needs of SCI structures, the different levels of training qualifications, the different types of training activities and materials, and defining which activities should be organised on branch level and which should be organised by international structures:

1. Training for conflict transformation and peace education
2. Training for mediation and alternative dispute resolution inside SCI

Both lines were developed on the basis of existing training concepts and projects and the experiences of CR Team in the last three years, for example,

* The full length can be received from the author at bkunter@gmx.de

the Travelling Workcamps on conflict transformation, one-day conflict transformation workshops and the Mediation Training Series, as well as the knowledge and capacities of the members of the GATE Trainers Pool and other SCI trainers today.

The third defined line:

3. Training for activists in conflict areas

This was not developed since the authors felt a lack of concrete and comparable experience in the training of activists for conflict areas. Since the experience of successful and insufficient preparation for these projects exists in SCI, an international conference should be organised to develop standards and training resources for the preparation of short- and long-term volunteers in conflict areas.

1. TRAINING FOR CONFLICT TRANSFORMATION AND PEACE EDUCATION

The training strategy proposes four different types of training activities:

1. One-day workshops are an important tool to give conflict transformation skills to volunteers in workcamps and in local peace education projects of SCI groups (in schools, youth clubs etc.)
2. Three-day workshops target activists who are already active in SCI branches, partners and contacts and enable them to thoroughly understand the basic ideas of conflict transformation and to work on their personal conflict transformation attitudes and skills. After the three-day workshop a CT activist should be able to promote and multiply the idea of conflict transformation in personal talks and information campaigns. S/he may also be a co-trainer on one-day or three-day workshops together with more experienced trainers. One and three-day workshops are organised only on national or regional level.
3. The CT train-the-trainer cycle is aimed at SCI activists who have no training experience and enables them to train one-day workshops by themselves. As practical experience plays a major role in training groups, the cycle consists of a six day train the trainer course, a practical tryout phase in which the volunteer trainers split up in teams and conduct a minimum of three one-day CT workshops and an evaluation together with their trainers.

Since it needs a certain amount of organisation to release the practical phase, train-the-trainer cycles could be realised either on local level, as part of a conflict education project of a local group of activists/volunteer trainer working in schools, or on national / international level in the form of a travelling workcamp, conducting one-day workshops in SCI workcamps.

Successful participants of the cycle are called CT volunteer trainers. After co-training a CT train-the-trainer cycle together with an experienced conflict transformation trainer, they can become CT trainers themselves.

By now 5 experienced CT volunteer trainers have co-trained train-the-trainer cycles for other volunteer trainers and enhanced their training skills on a trainer level. Other experienced trainers in SCI have also participated in training courses outside SCI to gain Conflict Transformation training skills. But the number of CT trainer inside SCI-CR and the Trainers Pool is still very low and limited to just a handful of western European countries (4 Germans, 2 Italians, 1 French, 1 Bulgarian, 1 Finnish).

4. Experienced SCI trainers without the knowledge and skills to conduct conflict transformation training can participate in a CT Training course for experienced trainers to become CT trainers in SCI.

To support the implementation of the training strategy, the CR Team will develop and publish:

- A training manual for conflict transformation workshops and train-the-trainer courses (planned for end of 2004).
- An organisational guidebook for organisers of train-the-trainer cycles and one-day workshops (planned for summer 2004).

Table 1: Training activities and levels

Training activity	CT Training course for experienced trainers				
	one-day CT workshop	three-day CT workshop <i>CT activist</i>	CT train-the-trainer cycle <i>CT volunteer trainer</i>	Co-training of a CT-train-the-trainer cycle <i>CT trainer</i>	<i>CT trainer</i>
goals	To raise the level of peace awareness, CT ideas and attitudes amongst volunteers in SCI projects	To train multipliers in national and local SCI groups to sustainable promote CT ideas and attitudes	To train SCI activists with training skills, so they can conduct one-day CT-workshops on their own	To qualify experienced CT volunteer trainers to train complex CT training courses	To qualify SCI trainers with the knowledge and skills needed to train complex CT training courses
activities	one-day CT workshop	3-day CT workshop	6-day train-the-trainer course Guided experience as trainer of min. 3 one-day CT workshops (in teams of 3-4) evaluation of guided experience	To qualify experienced CT volunteer trainers to train complex CT training courses	6-day CT training course
content	first CT ideas and attitudes	basic CT ideas, attitudes and skills	CT training skills (being able to train one-day CT workshops)	Training skills, preparing CT content for training, evaluation practice	Non-violence, CT attitudes, CT processes and procedures
participants	Workcamp volunteers, youth clubs, schools etc.	SCI activists	SCI activists	CT volunteer trainer	experienced SCI Trainers

2. TRAINING FOR MEDIATION AND ALTERNATIVE DISPUTE RESOLUTION INSIDE SCI

It does not need professional mediators in SCI to implement procedures of alternative dispute resolution (constructive resolution of conflicts). SCI could never train enough mediators to solve the hundreds of smaller and bigger conflicts in over 500 workcamps worldwide, but it may well increase the quality of its internal conflict resolution activities by implementing procedures of alternative dispute resolution (including mediation) and creating a culture of constructive conflict resolution inside SCI.

The implementation of alternative dispute resolution procedures is foremost a political decision of SCI's branches, partners, contacts and international structures. Training may only create awareness for this matter and help in the implementation. Most of the training and information activities should take part at the national level and need to be organised by the branches themselves. The international training strategy may only suggest activities for the branches and develop resources and international training capabilities for their implementation.

Excluding professional mediators, who will be called only for severe conflicts, the training-strategy differentiates three different target-groups/mediator roles in SCI:

1. Camp coordinators (campleaders) need some basic conflict transformation skills to understand the dynamics of conflict and develop a constructive attitude. Mediation skills are not needed, as the coordinators are usually part of the conflict and therefore not in a position to mediate.
2. SCI staff, volunteers in offices and board members should be offered at least one-day mediation awareness workshops, and better three-day mediation training to improve their skills for resolving and mediating in conflicts. These activities should be run and organised only at national or regional levels, while international structures may provide a CT trainer.
3. Interested and experienced activists who want to increase their mediation skills, so they can mediate in medium-severe conflicts and help out if staff cannot deal with the conflict themselves, should receive a six-day training on mediation skills organised either on national (bi-/tri-lateral) or on an international level for those branches, partner or contacts who are too small to organise such activities on their own.

The training activities should be supported by an information campaign to spread the knowledge and use of alternative dispute resolution procedures in SCI and by political decisions of the international structures of SCI and the national branches, contacts and partners to include mediation procedures in their regulations. The next steps are:

- Publication of a resource pack for branches, partners and contacts about alternative dispute resolution and mediation procedures (to be developed by the Conflict Mediation Pool and CR Team).

- Collection of methods and guidelines on how to conduct mediation awareness and training courses (to be developed by the Trainers Pool and coordinated with the CT training manual).
- Preparation of a political decision for the IEC/ICM, branches, partners and contacts (to be prepared and followed up by the CR Team).
- Organisation of an international conference on “alternative dispute resolution inside SCI” for staff and board members in 2005 (to be developed by the CR Team and Conflict Mediation Pool and co-ordinated with the International Secretariat).

Table 2

Training activity certificate		3-day basic Mediation-skills workshop	Mediation-skills training course <i>volunteer mediator</i>	<i>professional mediator</i>
	one-day Mediation awareness training			
goals	to raise awareness for alternative dispute resolution in SCI	to support staff and active volunteers with basic mediation-skills	to train SCI activists with mediation skills, to mediate minor and medium conflicts in SCI	
activities	one-day workshop	3-day workshop	6 day mediation training course	
content	CT ideas and attitudes, mediation procedures	basic mediation ideas, attitudes and skills	CT and mediation skills (being able to mediate simple conflict resolution talks)	
participants	staff, volunteers in SCI offices, board members	staff, volunteers in SCI-offices, board-member	SCI activists, willing to join a national mediator pool	
organised by	national / local SCI	national / local SCI	national (bi-/tri-lateral) or international level	

HOW TO USE THE STRATEGY

The Conflict Transformation Training Strategy is a guideline through which training activities should be realized at the international level and which are better to be organised by SCI branches and partners themselves, therefore some training activities should be national and some international. It outlines the support SCI-activists can expect from GATE Trainers Pool and the GATE Conflict Resolution team. In combination with the focus on peace building in SCI’s Long Term Strategy, adopted in December 2003, the training strategy offers the branches a reliable base of training and training resources to organise further activities in their countries and develop the capacities for further projects and the implementation of a culture of constructive conflict resolution. As with SCI’s long-term strategy, every branch is to decide for themselves whether and how they will adopt it.

ABBREVIATIONS

AYAFE	Association of Young Azerbaijani Friends of Europe (partner of SCI)
BPP	Best Peace Practice Conference in Sheki (Azerbaijan) November 2003
BSF	Balkan Sunflower (partner of SCI)
CNC	Ceylon National Congress (Sri Lanka)
CR	Conflict Resolution to resolve conflicts in a constructive way
CT	Conflict transformation to transform a (potentially) destructive conflict in a constructive problem-solving process
DCI	Duncrun Cultural Initiative (Northern Ireland)
EVS	European Voluntary Service
GATE	Group for Action Together in Europe / East-West Working Group of SCI
GATE-TP	Trainers Pool of GATE
HRM	Human Rights Messenger project (in 2003)
ICM	International Committee Meeting (of SCI)
IDP	Internally Displaced People (in Azerbaijan: Azeri “refugees” who fled from the occupied territory around Nagorno Karabagh, but stayed in Azerbaijan)
IEC	International Executive Committee (of SCI)
ISM	International Solidarity Movement (active in Palestine)
IVS	International Volunteer Service (SCI-branches in certain countries)
IVS-NI	International Volunteer Service – Northern Ireland
JVP	Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna (Peoples Liberation Front - Sri Lanka)
LTTE	Liberation Tigers of Tamil Ealam (Sri Lanka)
LTV	Long term volunteer
MIDI	Mediterranean Working Group of SCI
NGO	Nongovernmental organisation
NV	Non-violence
NVCR	Non-violent conflict resolution
OSCE	Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe
PHRWG	Peace and Human Rights Working Group of SCI in Asia
PUP	Progressive Unionist Party (Northern Ireland)
SCI	Service Civil International
SLFP	Sri Lanka Freedom Party
TP	Trainers Pool of GATE
TWC	Travelling Workcamp
VIA	SCI-branches in Belgium and the Netherlands
VIA-NL	Vreiwillige Internationale Akten – Netherlands



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