



Volunteering in Youth NGOs: Citizens in action Istanbul, Turkey, 24 to 29 March 2011

Critical issues on volunteering Outcome of the session

Scout leaders are not volunteers in the usual sense

- What is the usual sense of volunteering?
 - It depends on time (part-time activities)
 - It depends on the issue of the activity
- A thesis about volunteering is scouting:
 - 1-Professionals are paid for their job
 - 2-Volunteers are not paid for their activities
 - 3- Scouts pay to do their volunteering activitiesTHEREFORE → scouts are poor! But COOL!!!
- Has the "usual sense" a positive or a negative meaning? BOTH:
 - Scouting as a form of volunteering in a "negative" way:
 - ♣ It takes a lot of time (closer to 24/7)
 - ♣ It needs particular skills and this is why it's hard to find volunteers
 - Scouting as a form of volunteering in a "positive" way:
 - ♣ High quality results (due to high trained programs) / High availability / high trust – credibility of scout volunteers
 - ♣ Scouting is a lifelong process – a life style
- Scout volunteers have a personal project and maybe other volunteers in other organisations don't have one, they just spend some hours in volunteering
- Scouts take care of the development of young people and don't just offer activities: our mission is broader
- We should always remember that there are different types of volunteering, scouting is just one of them
- Scout leaders are moved by values (the scout lifestyle) while other volunteers just volunteer with isolated tasks...or the other way around?

Professionals manage volunteers better than other volunteers

Volunteers

- Not paid; but can have more skills in management

Professionals

- Paid
- An employee - an expert
- Ideal profile: professional who was once a volunteer; knows the organisation well
- They have training in HR management
- Also a volunteer can be an expert
- The professional won't be better than a volunteer if s/he has many other things to do than managing volunteers

Motivation

- Motivation: the volunteers lead the project, the professionals support them
- Volunteers vs. professionals - difference in motivation ("just doing their job")

Time

- Volunteers might not have enough time to invest -> more volunteers or more professionals to finalise things?
- Professional can be more focused and thus easier

Knowledge

- Professional AND volunteer needs to be educated to expertise
- Finding time to become an expert in managing people

What are we managing?

- What about the SUPPORT and INSPIRATION?
- External experts; different points of view
- The professionals offer the TOOLS for volunteers

- Managing volunteers is different than managing professionals
- Experience about subject
- Professionals have more time (might be) -> balance
- What kind of managing? -> a professional can manage the volunteers to manage other volunteers
- Sometimes external help is good; we shouldn't be afraid of professionals
- It is easier to become an expert (as a professional) when you have more time to develop your capabilities
- Experience + expert
- Difference in credibility?
- Sometimes volunteers need professionals to believe and trust

There is no difference between voluntary and professional work

- Voluntary = no vacation!
- In Scouting, the original motivation is the same: the belief in the project
- A professional can be more reactive than a volunteer (faster, easier to reach; office hours)
- In France, some people with the same function (for example, national commissioners) don't have the same status: one is volunteer, the other professional: It depends on the importance of the work
- It is a great example for the young people to see that their leaders are spending time for free to take care of them
- There is a difference: a volunteer can refuse a mission, a professional can't <-> volunteers have more choice than paid staff
- Volunteers can choose their project team - professionals can't
- Ask the volunteers to work professionally
- Share value
- Normally, I am more obliged in Scouting than at work <- depends on the work
- To work as a professional = paid job; to do job professionally = an expert level of quality
- A professional is at office until...
- As a professional you can't change your position easily
- Doing something voluntarily means doing it with joy. This joy and passion is somehow transferred to the people (adults or children) you work with (meaning: voluntary work)
- For discussion: you are only doing something voluntarily if you are getting back more than you put into it
- Volunteering gives you:
 - Recognition
 - Getting satisfaction
 - Good feeling of being helpful
- A volunteer can be more difficult to replace
- As professional, you must have a lot of time for Scouting; should have possibilities for searching, finding information
- Same value of the work. We work as volunteers but the quality of the work is the same as professionals
- Volunteers are supported by the professionals

A lot of volunteering is in fact imposed, not done with a free will and heart

Rovers becoming leaders, is that an imposition?

- When you are rover you are often expected to become a leader → logical way of doing things (you don't think about it)
- Because rovers grow up in local group they feel they must be leaders
- You have to find the person who is going to follow you before leaving
- Making rovers to continue with leading scouts, to continue the movement, is a very big mistake
- Scouting is not about creating better scout leaders

No clear role for volunteers

- Most of the time you really want to be volunteer but sometimes you have to do more than your "job description"
- Volunteers need a real description of their mission

- Sometimes you don't have somebody to follow you up
- More flexibility in working hours (so more external recognition) make volunteering imposed ☹
- It is imposed because the job is not defined
- That's always stuff that is being added to your risks <-> not all expectations are clear from the beginning / tasks are not well defined
- Nobody to follow you up so you stay a longer → causes a lack of motivation

No clear recognition for what volunteers do

- People want to be felt needed and missed sometimes
- People would like to receive special credits
- External recognition may impose doing it by heart <-> looks good on a CV is different than doing something with a free heart
- Motivation comes only after from outside
- Is it CSR (Corporate Social Responsibility) a way to impose volunteering? Involving employees in company projects to show support for company policy...

Society doesn't value volunteering enough

- Who defines what means "valuing"?
- Recognise all volunteering: work together with other organisations
- Volunteers have to be good models for their society so they can find their value
- It is important to communicate the right things to the press and society
- Including volunteers "work hours" in GDP
- Define value. For example: extra holidays, tax reduction or being paid by your employer to go to a summer camp. Or verbal recognition: "good job", "well done"
- Volunteer organisations contribute to develop active citizenship in society
- Advertisement that show real activities of Scout volunteers
- We should communicate that we are volunteers. Leaders have to know that they are volunteers and tell it
- We have to learn to "sell" ourselves (PR)
- Being valued on different levels:
 - Political level
 - Also local level: are local groups valued by their community, by parents ... ?
 - Individual level
- To have a tool of non-formal competencies that can be used out of Scouting and be recognised (like the study book in Austria)
- We need to promote quality of volunteering
 - Know what is really volunteering
 - Differences between NGO rules and volunteers (e.g. paid - unpaid volunteer)
- Finding ambassadors of volunteering/society
- We need a good definition of what Scouting is and promote it (inside and outside)
- Good volunteering law (on political level)
- Recognition of volunteering (internal and external)
- Value increases if there is a catastrophe
- Problem with definition of volunteers (professionals are being paid; in my opinion they are not volunteers)

Media promotion

- "Open" vocabulary: What is Scouting?
- Public media
- Not reflection of our work, even if we are helping in a catastrophe

Volunteer work is one of the reasons why we have high unemployment

- When you volunteer, you do something better because you do the job because you love it, not for money
- If money would be available, volunteering could always be replaced by paid staff
- Generally, volunteering supports employability in a positive way
- Money spent on international volunteers could be used to support local communities by themselves - especially in developing countries
- Firstly, everyone has to have a job; then s/he has to manage time to work as a volunteer
- Volunteering creates higher employability experience and training (non-formal education)
- Volunteering (free will) is not the same as internship (obliged)

- Disagree! Volunteering is providing experiences and will help you get a better job (it will increase your ability to change and adapt to the jobs that are available)
- Volunteering is also working against unemployment because volunteers learn professional competencies. This can help them to find jobs
- The thing that we aren't talking most up to the situation of the country where we live and sometimes it's up to your own talent or wish
- Increasing productivity balanced with everyday job
- Monetary and economic system is responsible for high unemployment
- Voluntary work (could be done next to a job). It produces more creativity, proactivity; supports job - life or other way around much easier
- Voluntary service (long term) is much more likely creating unemployment; e. g. substituting nurses in a hospital with volunteers: unpaid interns = volunteering service?

An example from France

- There is a new programme initiated and supported by the government
- A low paid volunteering: half by associations, half by the government
- 20 hours a week work for an organisation
- Benefits for the organisation include helping new project, implementing complicated programmes ...
- Benefits for the volunteer include new skills, training paid by the organisation, help in finding a job offer, first experience as a worker ...
- This is a way to leave unemployed status