

Strategic Priority 6

An Organisation for the 21st Century – becoming flexible, lean, innovative and participatory



The World Organization of the Scout Movement



Developing a Strategic Plan in the Scout Association of Croatia

The Results

In the Scout Association in Croatia we developed a strategic plan, which involves setting out a vision for the association. Our vision is:

'To become an organisation which contributes to each young person finding his or her own way by exploring and experiencing the world through living in nature'.



A strategic approach is taken to strengthen Scouting in Croatia

The process of developing a strategy was facilitated by a consultant and involved many people in the association. The continuing challenge is to make the strategy real for all leaders in Croatia, so that they all feel part of it, their actions contribute to the delivery of the strategy and we maintain and develop the good practice which has been introduced in the process.

The Reasons

The reasons for developing the strategy are as follows:-

- A strategic plan had been developed for the period 1998 – 2002 but there was a strong feeling in the association that most of the activities and actions

undertaken by the national board were not planned and were not linked to the strategy. The actions identified in the plan were more of a 'to do' list than a set of actions with a real purpose which would achieve pre-determined results.

- It was felt that there were not enough volunteers in the association with the skills required to respond to the needs of the association at the end of the 1990s. There was a need for good project management skills and skills to help the association respond to the changes which had taken place in Croatia in the 1990s - the war, the socio-economic crisis and the challenges of globalization.
- There was also internal rivalry in the association, which was hindering our development.
- A number of young leaders from Croatia had attended seminars and forums organised by WOSM at world and regional levels. These had provided opportunities to meet leaders from other countries where ideas and experiences were shared.

The Method

Aleksandar Lukic, a member of the association had the opportunity to hear a business consultant talk on strategic management and the approach mentioned by Peter Senge in his book *'The Fifth Discipline'*. This seemed to be an approach which would help the association in Croatia and, following a successful funding application to US AID, a consultant was hired and a planning team was formed.



Croatia: The Scout Association of Croatia

PROMISING PRACTICES

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The planning team involved people of different ages and sexes and coming from all parts of Croatia. This met the need to have a broad spectrum of people working on developing a strategy. The planning process lasted for one and a half years. The participants attended six weekend workshops on the following topics and with the following outcomes:

The 'Fifth Discipline' To become a 'learning organisation', Peter Senge describes five new competencies which need to be developed – Systems thinking, Personal mastery, Mental models, Building shared vision and Team learning.

Mission and vision Two critical steps in developing a strategy are clarifying the mission of the organisation and setting out a vision for the future.

PEST analysis. This involved an analysis of the political, economic, social and technological aspects of our work. It revealed that following the political instability, there has been a slight move forward, there is a poor economic situation with the economy focussed on survival. Development depends upon increasing knowledge and technology. There is a social and moral crisis in the country with people taking a very materialistic view of the world, which dominates over moral and ethical values.

Strategic analysis. A little 'business intelligence' research was undertaken in the association which revealed that the Scout association of Croatia is at the moment more successful than other NGOs in Croatia in the fields of non-formal education, living in nature and environmental education.

Self analysis. Following a very critical analysis, we concluded that more work is required in the areas of mission, strategic aims, strategy, leadership styles, systems of decision-making, human resources, organisational culture, efficiency and results.

SWOT analysis – this is an analysis of the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities

and Threats to an organisation. It revealed:-

- **Strengths** – tradition, experience in leadership skills, enthusiasm, open to change, teamwork and clarity of our principles.
- **Weaknesses** – organisational culture, know how, lack of common vision, poor communication between the association and the local groups and between leaders and parents, insufficient leader training.
- **Opportunities** – to create a national youth policy, EU accession, the development of civil society and increased experience of people through their business, partnerships.
- **Threats** – political instability, economic and social crisis, changing life-styles of young people.

Scenarios – this technique involves developing scenarios and using metaphors to visualise the association in ten years time. Three scenarios were developed with the favourite and most positive being 'the Lighthouse'. This describes the Scout Association in Croatia in ten years time as a leader in non-formal education of children and young people, offering assistance on this topic to other sectors of civil society.

Making the strategy. We have identified two main strategies for the next period. The primary strategy is focused on children and youth as target groups. Our priorities are non-formal education, personal/spiritual development and living in nature.

The second is a supportive strategy and it is focused on adults in Scouting. The priority is securing sustainability of The Scout Association of Croatia.

It has also involved helping all the members of the team to acquire the necessary knowledge on the topic, to work together as a team and to find ways of coping with new and unexpected situations.

• **Implementing the strategy**

This involved pulling the work together and using a system called the Balanced Scorecard to measure our progress. The Balanced Scorecard helped us to identify four areas – the members – satisfying members, gaining new members, keeping members, improving members' personal development.



The primary focus for the strategy is young people

- **The financial stability of the association** – increasing the income and controlling the expenditure.
- **The internal processes** – developing key processes and being innovative in our processes.
- **Aims in function of Learning and Growth** – educating leaders at all levels, creation of an information system and development of a knowledge management system.

Set up new teams. A very important aspect of the strategy has been changing the decision-making and management structure of the Association. The number of members in the National Council, as the main decision-making body between two Assemblies, has been decreased in

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order to make the Council more operative. On the other side the National Board has grown and new Commissioners have been appointed in order to provide organisational structure for work in selected areas. Beside the usual posts we now have commissioners for:-

- a) research, development and projects,
- b) national events,
- c) supportive strategies and
- d) strategic planning.

Our Learning

It was an ambitious process and very heavy on people's time and commitment. It was difficult to manage the timing of the workshops, to make sure that everyone was free for the weekends and to make sure that they attended.

There was also too much responsibility for too few people. This made the process very dependant on a few people and sometimes there was not enough preparation beforehand.

People do not all feel involved in the process and the information has not been disseminated to all who need it. Some people are resisting the process.

At the moment there has not been sufficient response from Scout Units, either because of lack of interest or lack of time. It is important to get everyone involved so that everyone can contribute to the actions.

Our Future Plans

The process has been put in place but this is just the beginning. More work and support are required in supporting organisational change and in developing the structure of the organisation.

More work is required in developing policies to support the process and bringing the budget in line with the strategy.

A lot of support is required so that progress can be made and people can see the results of their efforts which will inspire them to take further action.

We do believe that in the long term the strategy will make a difference.

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