



Scout Sub-Regional Peace Education Programme in the Great Lakes Region of Africa

PROMISING PRACTICES

The Results

For more than ten years, the Great Lakes sub-region of Africa has been in a state of profound crisis. The genocide in Rwanda, the civil war in Burundi and the war in the Democratic Republic of Congo established barriers between people in neighbouring countries, from the same country, from the same tribe, from the same ethnic group and from the same family.



Scouts work together on joint projects to break down the barriers

In 1999, the national Scout associations which had been organised since 1996 as a sub-regional grouping known as the "Concertation des Scouts des Grands Lacs" (CSGL), which translates in English as the Dialogue of Scouts of the Great Lakes, decided to do something about the situation and to play a more active role in restoring peace by building a special element of peace and education for non-violence into their youth programme promoting positive values, a culture of peace and the management and resolution of conflicts by active non-violence.

The programme initiated concrete action, such as:

- the twinning of Scout groups on the borders of Rwanda, Congo and Burundi;
- the formation of a contingent of 24 Scouts from Rwanda, Congo and Burundi to go to the African Jamboree in Nairobi at a time when it was very difficult to bring the politicians and

governments of these three countries together round the same table;

- the production of a sub-regional bulletin on subjects to do with restoring and promoting peace;
- leader training seminars on active non-violence and the integration of peace activities into the youth programmes of the three associations;
- house-building camps for people made homeless and displaced by the war in Burundi, Rwanda and in the East of the Democratic Republic of Congo;
- support, welcome and reintegration of repatriated and displaced persons in the three countries of the sub-region;
- supervision of children in camps for displaced persons and of children living in the open;
- a sub-regional peace Jamboree and workshops to reproduce and capitalise on the experience of the peace Jamboree.

The Reasons

Young people and children, who make up at least 60% of the population, are among the first victims of the suffering caused by this type of violence. Many of them are also perpetrators of that violence, manipulated by adults.

The Methods

These young people are a valuable resource for promoting lasting peace in this region; if they are involved positively in a process with lasting peace as its goal.



Africa: Scouting in the Great Lakes Region

Strategic Priority 2

Adolescents – supporting their transition to adulthood



The World Organization of the Scout Movement

The Methods

A charter was drawn up in June 1996 and ratified by the World Conference in Oslo the same year. The charter reflects the commitment of the Scout associations of the Great Lakes region to contribute to the return and maintenance of peace in the sub-region.

It constitutes an important tool for guiding Scout peace education initiatives.

Its objectives focus on three main areas:

1. Peace education

- steering young people back to human values by helping them develop an ethic of tolerance, cohabitation, justice and democracy;
- helping young people to play an active and constructive role in the community.

2. Communication and information

- developing young people's skills at analysing information, spirit of sharing and open-mindedness;
- helping young people to take an analytical and critical look at the community and its components.

3. Culture

- strengthening links between young people in our three countries by offering opportunities for expression and cultural displays;
- furthering peaceful cohabitation and the acceptance of difference through a series of events at national and international level;
- opening our activities up to other youth movements with a view to promoting exchanges which pay no heed to origins.

Our Learning

- Not only are young people the most vulnerable sector of society but also the most dynamic. Under the influence of adults, they can either aid or hinder the maintenance of peace.
- The exchange of experiences between national organisations or between cross-border groups is an effective way to promote the intercultural dimension of peace.



Respect of different cultural identities is an important aspect of peace education

- Educating young people to be non-violent is a matter for the whole of society. By working in synergy, we can join forces to strengthen action and the capacity to maintain and promote peace.
- The issue of peace is not restricted only to the problem of war. Violence is everywhere, veiled or spectacular. Our educational action should also be directed at conflict-resolution in the minds of young people, in our families, at school, in our Scout groups, at the workplace, in parks, on the street, in the media, etc.
- It takes patience to implement a peace education project successfully. Peace education is a long process full of obstacles. Immediate results cannot therefore be expected.

Our Future Plans

- Production and distribution of a peace education handbook for leaders in the sub-region.
- Capitalisation of the values acquired by the young people during the sub-regional peace Jamboree (promotion of and technical support for the activities proposed and planned by the young people in 2003).
- Organisation of peace days in the Scout sections:
 - sub-regional peace rally (Cub Scouts);
 - sub-regional inter-patrol competition (Scouts);
 - Work camp in favour of displaced persons (Senior Scouts and Rover Scouts).
- Evaluation and celebration of the completion of the Three-year Scout Peace Education Programme in the Great Lakes Region (2001–2003).

For more information, contact Gilbert Musumba at CSGI: csgl@usan-bu.net



World Organization of the Scout Movement
Organisation Mondiale du Mouvement Scout



© 2003 World Scout Bureau, Geneva, Switzerland

Reproduction is authorized to National Scout Associations which are members of the World Organization of the Scout Movement. Others should request permission from the authors.

World Scout Bureau
P.O. Box 241
1211 Geneva 4, Switzerland

www.scout.org
worldbureau@world.scout.org