



## World Scouting assists the World Bank

### SUMMARY

**WORLDinfo (October 2003)** reported that Scouting co-organized a conference in Paris on 'young people and peace' on behalf of the World Bank. Henrik Söderman, Project Office (WSB), tells us why this was an important event and sets out the future plans.



Henrik Söderman and James D. Wolfensohn attend a meeting

*Henrik,*

*You were very involved organising the conference in Paris, attended by 110 young people from 70 countries and the President of the World Bank, Mr James D. Wolfensohn and his staff. What is the World Bank and what is its role?*

The World Bank is a development bank (and part of the UN system) which provides loans, policy advice, technical assistance and knowledge sharing services to low and middle income countries. Its mission is to fight poverty and improve the living standards of people in the developing world.

*The World Bank is currently developing a Children's and Youth Policy. Why is this important for us in Scouting?*

Scouting is a world-wide Movement and many of our members are in developing countries. The policies of the World Bank will have an impact in these countries and this impact will be felt by young people, many of whom will be Scouts, families and

friends of Scouts and potential Scouts.

The World Bank is also going through a transition process. They are taking a more 'human' approach to development, where in the past there was a more structural approach. A human approach involves working with people, involving them in identifying the problems and finding appropriate solutions. In many developing countries around 50% of the population are children and young people and they have ideas which need to be listened to.

*What role is Scouting playing in the process?*

We provided expertise in the area of youth policy and appropriate working methods for young people aged 18-25. We also proposed concrete actions that could be taken to ensure that the policy agreed upon could be successfully implemented.

We were also able to draw on our experience in the wider youth scene to co-ordinate with other key contacts.

*What do we hope to achieve?*

Overall we hope that the Policy will be good and successfully implemented - i.e. that it will make a difference to the lives of young people who are living in poverty, providing education, a reasonable standard of living and sustainable opportunities development. We also hope that our involvement will have a positive impact on the profile of Scouting in the international environment.





**Scouting's Profile –  
strengthening communications,  
partnerships and resources.**

In the long-term we hope to be able to undertake joint programmes with the World Bank. In the main this will materialise at country level, as this is where the majority of the projects are devised and implemented.

More information on the World Bank and the proposed Youth Policy is available from the World Bank's web-site:

**<http://www.worldbank.org/childrenandyouth>**



**James D. Wolfensohn sees Scout HIV/AIDS awareness programmes in Africa**

*Are there any positive signs?*

There is currently a commitment from the World Bank, at a political level, to the 'Big Seven' and the work that they plan to undertake on HIV/AIDS prevention in Africa. Another sign of their commitment to young people is the appointment of a team responsible for Youth at the HQ in Washington.

*What are the next steps?*

The Youth Policy will be adopted by the World Bank in 2004. Contact people for Youth Organisations have been appointed at regional level in the World Bank and I believe that there are plans to replicate this at national level too. These people are important future contacts for Scouting at regional and national level.

