

Worlds of experience



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'This project has been funded with support from the European Commission. This publication reflects the views only of the author, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.'

Dear Friends,

Welcome to the 20th issue of "Worlds of Experience", dedicated to the theme "Youth and Women Empowerment".

Despite the achievements brought about by the feminist movement, worldwide, women continue to suffer from various forms of inequality, discrimination and violence. And although long-standing experience has shown that women play a crucial role in promoting development and peace, still much needs to be done to empower women, safeguard their rights, eradicate any form of gender-based violence, and promote gender equality across the board.

Volunteer's Voices presents the experiences of young women who participated in an ICYE three-month EVS exchange project that aimed at facilitating the exchange of experience and learning from good practice amongst grassroots women organisations. The testimonials of these volunteers hold out a promise to women across the globe: an English volunteer working in a short stay home in India tells us how socialising with Indian women helped to learn about each others experiences of being women, daughters, mothers, wives and workers; conversely an Indian volunteer working in England realised that patriarchy rules in both UK and India, although due to cultural differences and the progress made, there seems to be a difference in the two countries in the degree of quality of life for women. While an Ecuadorian volunteer working in a Women Cultural Centre in Belgium experienced how important women empowerment is, especially for the illegal migrant women that are most vulnerable, a Spanish volunteer in the Dominican Republic learned how a women radio station can be effective in promoting human and women Rights. This section ends with accounts on the work of "Charity Centre for Refugees" providing teaching courses and events for women refugees and asylum seekers in Moldova, the Swiss organisation "Nosotras" that helps migrant Latin American women, and the Mexican organisation "Ayuda y Solidaridad" providing young girls at risk with more than just food, clothing and a roof: love, friendship and security.

As additional contribution to the theme, you will find a report on the EU funded ICYE EU- Latin America and the Caribbean Training Seminar on the "Active role of women in Society", which was held in Quito, Ecuador - 12-18 July, 2009, as well as a series of references and links to the UN and European Commission's women specialised agencies and policies.

News from Int'l Organisations feature, among others: the UNESCO World Report "Investing in Cultural Diversity and Intercultural Dialogue"; the latest European Commission "EU Youth Report"; and the Children and young people "Unite for Climate" that developed a space to enable young people and experts to collaborate on issues related to climate change using open-source technology.

News from NGOs reports on: E-Civicus special issue on International Volunteer Day (5 December 2009); PlanetCall.org a website that aims to encourage 1 million youth to sign a declaration that calls for an ambitious new climate treaty; and the Facilitator Guide for Gender Training published by Gendernet.

ICYE Programme News, amongst others, feature: the 60th Anniversary celebration of ICYE Austria; a brief report on a series of EU funded staff exchanges between ICYE and partner organisations in Europe and Asia; the 6th UNESCO Youth Forum; the VOSESA / ICYE Baseline Survey on Impact Assessment of long-term volunteering; the ICYE Sweden "Burst My Bubble" campaign presented at the recent European Development Days; and last but not least the Volunteer Week organised by the Cape Town based Volunteer Centre, South Africa.

In the hope that you'll find the reading interesting and enjoyable, we would like to encourage readers to send us their articles and pictures for the next issue of "Worlds of Experience", which will be dedicated to "Youth and the disabled" and will be published at the end of February 2010. Please send your contributions to icye@icye.org, before 31 January 2010.

Warmest wishes!

ICYE International Office

This and previous issues of "Worlds of Experience" can be viewed and downloaded from:
www.icye.org

„Youth and Women Empowerment“

VOLUNTEERS VOICES

An Indian Experience!

My name is Beth Codrington and I am from the UK. I did my European Voluntary Service in SARAS Trust's Short Stay Home for Women. This is a government funded project and it is located in a hill station called Ooty, in the state of Tamil Nadu, India.

The short stay home provides a welcoming space for women and young girls who are experiencing difficulties in their homes and families. They receive free food, shelter, counselling and support. The home is managed by female staff and volunteers, and the day-to-day maintenance, such as cooking and cleaning, is divided up amongst the women who stay there. These women and girls are welcome to



stay in the home, with their children, for anything from a few hours up to 3 years. Spending informal time with these local women for example having dinner, allowed me as a volunteer to develop relationships with them, to understand their lives, and also to tell them a bit about my life, my family and culture.

I felt that some of these women welcomed me with open arms, others were less interested, and some were sceptical of me. But each of these experiences was valuable and my relationships with them changed throughout my months in India as we became more relaxed in each other's company. It was probably during and around these meal times when we learnt most about each others experiences of being women, daughters, mothers, wives and workers. I socialised well and made new friends who were both Indians and foreigners. I found that this allowed me to meet and experience a greater diversity of Indian people, and of course, especially Indian women.



*Beth Codrington
UK EVS Volunteer in India*

Situation of women in the UK and India

My name is Katja, I'm 26 years old and I am an Indian EVS Volunteer in the UK working at "Freshwinds". I have amongst other things been working for "Supporting People" which is a Government initiative offering people with HIV and AIDS the chance to improve their quality of life by enabling them to live independently in the community.



I have been designing leaflets, booklets for the ill people with colours that will relax you, because every time you're coming to an interview you're always a little nervous, a little shy. So

something that will make you feel more calm and relaxed – that's what the booklets are.

England is a tolerant country that allows a person to be who they are and hence no need to hide their views or living standards. This is visible as the society allows gay / lesbians to marry and live in an unbiased community. However, even though being an open culture there sure would be discrimination on women here too. India on the other hand has a rich culture and tradition that is kept alive. Some of these practices make the people to judge you and because you are women you tend to hold on to a lot more responsibility.

Indian women are not used to much freedom, either in their expression or in what they really want to do.

Breaking away from tradition is like rebelling against the existing norms and going against the community, which in turn would lead to drastic measures. This of course needs to be changed, but due to the cultural blockages in the name of caste and religion women continue to be subjugated.

England as mentioned above is a free country and hence going to any place at any given time would still be safe – Even if you get mugged or raped the charges are severe and the person guilty for the crime would have to pay for what is done. However, the difference could be seen in private spaces where women would be subjected to mental and physical issues-

India on the other hand many women who do get mugged or raped hide it from the community and many times even from their relatives as it becomes a taboo. When a woman does gather her strength to make the person pay for what they have done, immediately the woman is blamed by faulty allegations such as: "It was the way she dressed or the way she spoke to get herself into that situation". Women are generally looked down upon when they want to dress up (when I say dress up I don't mean provocative I just mean simple sleeves tee's as well).

Therefore, in conclusion it could be said patriarchy rules in both UK and India. However, as I have tried to explain above, due to cultural and progress made, there seems to be a difference in the degree of quality of life for women.



Katja Esteves, Indian EVS Volunteer in UK

Empowering Women in Ghana

My name is Agnes Stenström and I am a Swedish EVS volunteer in Ghana in a project called Corban Foundation. Corban Foundation's vision is to empower young vulnerable women, not only economically but also to give them a positive self esteem which would be impacted to others in their communities thereafter.

The project identifies the vulnerable women in deprived communities and provides vocational skill training in order to create job opportunities and self employment. The training is provided in a variety of fields, such as batik & tie-dye, hairdressing, fashion design and catering.



The target groups for the project are young women, students waiting for their results and house wives. At the moment there are approximately 30 students enrolled in the project and they choose which field they are interested in for their training, which lasts for six months.

The theme in itself was very interesting and I was really looking forward to get myself involved in the task of promoting women's active citizenship. I could see that the theme was important for the women in the Ghanaian society, as they often had a disadvantageous position towards superiors of the family and of the community. To promote women's equal rights and to encourage women to be more independent is very important for the development of the whole society, especially deprived societies.

The young women in Ghana often seem very strong and have a lot of great responsibilities but when there is someone in a "higher position", which often are the older people and especially men, their self-confidence falls back and they lose their strength. Therefore, the theme to empower women is very important in Ghana, especially since many women are left with the main responsibility for the children and the homes.

*Agnes Stenström
Swedish EVS Volunteer in Ghana*



Motto: Strengthening ties between Women

My name is Catalina Egas Coronel. I come from Ecuador and I volunteered in Belgium in the host organisation IVCA; Intercultureel Vrouwen Centrum Antwerpen, a project run by YWCA which stands for "Intercultural Centre for the Development of Women".



IVCA is a pluralistic organisation, which involves women of all generations, religious beliefs and backgrounds who share the same aim: the empowerment of women. The project offers

opportunities to women to discover their talents and capabilities and to realise their ideas. The Centre's mission is to support women and provide a space for them as well as to promote gender fraternity and mutual respect.

IVCA works with and brings together undocumented women from all over the world who live in Belgium. Since the participation of Latin American women in IVCA was quite low when I started, the main focus of my European voluntary service project was to foster the inclusion of Latin American women in IVCA's empowerment programmes.

So first of all one of my tasks was to establish contacts with Latin American women, either by looking them up on contact lists or on the street. The project I worked in was called "Compinche" – "Buddy". When I talked to women for the first time I explained that "Buddy" means friendship, solidarity, learning together, in order to give people confidence and then encouraged the women to find out which are the concrete offers IVCA can make to them.



Over the three months of my EVS slowly but surely the network of "Latinas" within IVCA was growing, also because my boss and friend had many contacts and connected me with the women she knew who then put me in contact with other women who were also undocumented and in need of support.

We cooperated with various Belgian organisations working with immigrants and they provided forums, trainings and workshops dealing with women rights for the women in "Compinche". Amongst many organisations I found "OCRA" and "PAYOQUE". "PAYOQUE" is a foundation that deals with illicit work, also called "Moonlighting" which is often the labour of illegal immigrants. For me it was interesting to see that in Belgium immigrants who are not legal in the country can also benefit from social programmes to a certain extent, there are a number of institutions that help them to improve their quality of life.

Throughout my involvement in the "Compinche" project we met every fortnight for two months and had meetings and workshops in which we shared our thoughts, feelings and dreams all in a friendly atmosphere - among Latin Americans. These meetings alongside with the experience of living in Belgium helped me to discover my personal abilities and my so far unknown potential. Furthermore this experience made me aware about the importance of empowerment programmes for women in Europe, Latin America and worldwide and even more for the undocumented migrants who are in a very weak position.

I hope the project will continue and I am encouraged by the women who already wrote to me saying that they are still meeting each other and that this project has given them hope and a new perspective for their lives.



*Catalina Egas Coronel (right)
Ecuadorian EVS volunteer in Belgium*

My own hopes

My name is Verónica Martín Bascuñán. I come from Spain and I went to the Dominican Republic to volunteer in the organisation "Centro Jurídico para la Mujer".

In spite of my own hopes, I asked myself: "What will I be doing as a volunteer?". What do I have to contribute? When thinking of voluntary service, I thought of teachers or perhaps medical professionals. However, this project had nothing to do with all of that. The empowering of women, making them aware that they are worth much more than just for cooking, raising children and serving as a punching bag for their husbands is hard work...

....I quickly found ways to be of use to and get involved with the women of my host country, Dominican Republic. On local radio, La Llave (The Key) 95.7 fm, my host organization (Provincial Office for the Development of Women) had negotiated some air time for us with a broadcast named "La Voz de la Mujer" (The Voice of Women), which I could work for and co-present with the enthusiasm of someone who knows about the importance of equality between men and women....



"Foro Nacional de Género"

....Thanks to the help of Solange Rivas, co-presenter in our broadcast, we knew what tools and manners to use so our message would reach the mind and heart of all the Dominicans, male or female, that heard us every day from Monday to Friday at eleven in the morning...

The example of Patria, Minerva y María Teresa Mirabal, three women murdered by the former dictator Trujillo has been a powerful example for many women in the now called Sisters Mirabal Province of the Dominican Republic who continue energetically to struggle for respect of Human and Women Rights.

I appreciate having been able to collaborate in this struggle through our radio broadcast which enabled me to interview specialists like attorneys, psychologists, social workers, etc. Also I could participate in conferences held by experts on women issues, I learned how to follow up on cases of mistreatment, I had meetings with women to share experiences



*Veronica Martin
Spanish EVS volunteer in Dominican Republic*

Projects on Women

My name is Rachel Horvitz and I am a UK volunteer working in Moldova.

Women's organizations and projects in the country where I am based, Moldova, face many challenges. One thing I noticed when I came to Moldova is the fact that vastly different expectations are placed upon men and women, in terms of the gender roles they are expected to fulfill. I have been asked on a number of occasions why I am not married; despite the fact I am only 21!



Moldova has a very high percentage of women working overseas, many of whom work illegally and some of whom have been illegally trafficked. In Europe's poorest country where there is high unemployment, some people prefer to leave by any means available to them rather than stay, especially in rural areas. In some villages, only old people and children are left.

I've been in Moldova for a month, and am working with two hosting organizations which deal, partly, with vulnerable women – the Charity Centre for Refugees and Winrock Moldova.

The Charity Centre for Refugees provides teaching courses and organizes events for refugees and asylum seekers living in Moldova. As part of my work volunteering for the charity, I have been giving English and computer lessons. While the Centre helps any asylum seeker or refugee in need of assistance or who simply wants to meet with others in the same situation, women and children are frequently especially vulnerable to a precarious situation.

Winrock Moldova specifically works with young women at risk of people-trafficking, as well as publishing research around the subject. It helps to provide employment and educational opportunities to this group. As education around the risks of going abroad has become more widespread, efforts have concentrated in rural areas of Moldova and the Transnistrian region, which has remained a relatively closed society since it declared independence in 1992.



My previous experience working for Rape Crisis and with a centre for homeless people has meant that I am very aware of issues affecting women. The women's sector is one that even in Western Europe is frequently underfunded and overlooked. Working in such organizations is a real challenge but a very rewarding one.

*Rachel Horvitz
UK volunteer in Moldova*

A Helping Hand to Women of Latin America from Switzerland

Hallo, my name is Sharon and I come from Honduras. This year as a part of my exchange experience in Switzerland I am working in an organization called NOSOTRAS. The organization will turn 15 years in 2010 and its initial purpose was to help women of Latin America with almost all the problems and issues concerning their life as immigrants in this country.

There are so many different cases, sometimes there are legal problems with residence or work permits, some others is difficult situation with the kids at school, an abuse case at work or even taking the tough decision of whether to stay in this country or leaving back to theirs. Any kind of situations, every woman has a different story to tell and they all have different needs; they come to the organization because they hope to get some help and advice, but also because in a way they need to be listened and feel understood in a place where many of them don't even speak the language.

But not everything is hard work, we also have a lot of fun. Every month Nosotras organizes many different social and cultural events, not only for women but for the whole family. This month we are learning to dance Danzon, a Mexican traditional dance. We will have a concert where some people will remember their teen years with Julio Iglesias, Sandro, Adriano Celentano and others.

Every month we have a families meeting where women of a different country can cook and sell their traditional foods. This month we will cook a very special meal for me, Baledas, because this month is Honduras month, we really deserve it after classifying to the World Cup!

Personally I think Nosotras makes a great labor, they help immigrant women in so many different ways without asking for anything in return and in many cases it happens that people after so many years is still so thankful with Nosotras because of the help they received that they keep telling other about Nosotras.



*Sharon Guardado
Honduran volunteer in Switzerland*

Ayuda y Solidaridad

My name is Rhiannon Mee. I come from the UK and I volunteer in Mexico in the project called "Ayuda y Solidaridad".

There is no common story as to how the girls arrive at Ayuda y Solidaridad. Some have experienced abuse of some form, some have parents in prison, some have parents who are unable to support them any longer. There does seem to be, however, a somewhat common reaction to arriving at the project.



I cannot imagine how strange it is to arrive in a house of 90 other girls of all ages, without any familiarity, without any family. Yet the girls who I have seen arrive cope admirably, they assimilate themselves into the house seemingly immediately. I have watched them form strong bonds with their fellow housemates within hours and join in with all the house activities. I have watched these girls, whose backgrounds I can only imagine, launch themselves into their new lives without tears and with courage.

At Ayuda y Solidaridad there is more than just food, clothing and a roof over their heads, there is love, friendship and security. I can guess that at least one of these factors was missing in their former lives. The girls support each other fiercely, and I have watched with pride and disbelief at how close they are to each other, and how relatively little they fuss and fight. They are truly a family and look to each other for the love a family

provides. They range from 3 to 21 years old, yet the understanding and respect they have for each other is incredible, everyone looks after everyone else and there is no isolation that I have witnessed.

At the project the girls learn structure, discipline and responsibility; they are provided with a model for living. Some have experienced this model in their families, some have not. But all get the chance to grow into mature, independent young women. They are given educational, emotional and social support there and all of the members of staff are at their disposal. The girls go to the staff for anything and everything, they are truly dedicated to helping them develop.

The girls' daily structure is like what they would experience in a typical family, just on a much grander scale. They have their meals, they go to school, they do their homework and they socialize. They are provided with everything that they need, materially and emotionally. They have psychological support, attending sessions with the resident psychologists. They learn how to cope with their various situations and how to develop into competent, balanced adults.



*Rhiannon Mee
UK Volunteer in Mexico*

More on "Youth and Women Empowerment"

EU- Latin America and the Caribbean Training cum Planning Seminar on "Active role of women in Society" Quito, Ecuador – 12-18 July, 2009

With the support of the EU YOUTH IN ACTION Programme

This training seminar which was funded by the European Commission's Youth in Action programme was organized by the ICYE International Office in cooperation with VASE – "Voluntariado y Ayuda Social Ecuador" from 12-18th July, 2009 in Quito, Ecuador.

As one of the three major activities of ICYE's Action 3.2. Project "Youth Action for Civil Society - Building capacities and partnerships for youth volunteering programmes between European, African, Asia/Pacific, Caribbean and Latin American Countries", it aimed at enhancing the exchange of experience and good practice in the field of youth volunteering in women empowerment projects. The training course, brought together a total of 28 participants from 8 European and 10 Latin American countries. The group comprised of youth workers – and representatives of youth voluntary service organisations within the ICYE global network – involved in sending and hosting EVS volunteers under the EC "Youth in Action" programme.

Most Latin American countries were represented by two participants, one representing the ICYE member or partner organisation in that country and one representing an NGO working in the field of women empowerment, women rights, gender-based violence, etc. The programme included inputs from experts, a critical reflection on gender roles in different EU and Latin American cultural contexts, discussion groups, testimonies of volunteers as well as sending and host organisations, workshops on EVS project implementation as well as a project visit to the "Refuge Casa Matilda Foundation" an EVS host organisation in the outskirts of Quito, which helped to define expectations of volunteers and host-organisation in women projects (see box)



The programme included inputs from experts, a critical reflection on gender roles in different EU and Latin American cultural contexts, discussion groups, testimonies of volunteers as well as sending and host organisations, workshops on EVS project implementation as well as a project visit to the "Refuge Casa Matilda Foundation" an EVS host organisation in the outskirts of Quito, which helped to define expectations of volunteers and host-organisation in women projects (see box below). The mix of participants in combination with the variety of activities proposed by the team of trainers enabled participants and trainers to learn from each other and to deepen their understanding of the cultural, social and political dynamics to be considered when working with young volunteers from different cultures and countries, particularly between EU and Latin American countries. At the end of the seminar, participants both from youth volunteering and women empowerment organisations expressed their strong motivation and will to work together in EVS and ICYE long-term volunteer exchange programmes and to make women empowerment an ongoing priority for their projects.



For more information about this training and its final report, please email icye@icye.org



Expectations to international volunteers - formulated during the seminar on "Active Role of Women in Society"

Volunteers should:

- have sensitivity to women's movements beyond gender training
- have knowledge of the subject of gender-based violence.
- be genuinely interested in working with women.
- not be afraid of using the term feminism. We stress that feminism isn't the opposite of machismo but the opposite of patriarchy.
- show initiative, enthusiasm, integration, empathy etc..
- be able to work in a team without imposing their personal views
- not to consider them selves as world saviours
- be able to communicate about their feelings



ABOUT:

The "EC/UN Partnership on Gender Equality for Development and Peace" is an initiative that involves the European Commission (EC), the United Nations Fund for Women (UNIFEM) and the International Training Centre of the International Labour Organization (ITC-ILLO). It is a follow-up to the "Owning Development. Promoting Gender Equality in New Aid Modalities and Partnerships" conference that was jointly organized by the European Commission and UNIFEM in November 2005. The EC/UN partnership aims to identify approaches with which to integrate gender equality and women's human rights into new aid modalities, in accordance with the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness. It also aims to provide support for national partners' efforts to fulfil international obligations on gender equality and to match their commitment to gender equality with adequate financial allocations in national development programmes and budgets. The project will have a specific focus on the role of women in conflict and post-conflict situations, and especially on the proper implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1325. (The Resolution is described in box beside)

http://www.gendermatters.eu/index.php?option=com_frontpage&Itemid=1

Roadmap for equality between women and men (2006-2010) - Communication from the Commission to the Council, the European Parliament, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions

A total of six priority areas have been selected: equal economic independence for women and men, reconciliation of private and professional life, equal representation in decision-making, eradication of all forms of gender-based violence, elimination of gender stereotypes, and promotion of gender equality in external and development policies.

To learn more about the resolution follow the link below:

http://europa.eu/legislation_summaries/employment_and_social_policy/equality_between_men_and_women/c10404_en.htm



Key points of Resolution 1325 are:

- *Increasing the representation of women at all decision-making levels;*
- *Integrating a gender perspective into peacekeeping missions;*
- *Appointing more women as special representatives and envoys of the Secretary-General;*
- *Supporting women's grassroots organizations in their peace initiatives;*
- *Involving women as participants in peace negotiations and agreements;*
- *Ensuring protection of and respect for human rights of women and girls;*
- *Protecting women and girls from gender-based violence;*
- *Integrating a gender perspective into disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration of former combatants.*

For more information visit:

[http://www.un.org/womenwatch/ods/S-RES-1325\(2000\)-E.pdf](http://www.un.org/womenwatch/ods/S-RES-1325(2000)-E.pdf)

LINKS:

<http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/what/gender/>

The European Commission programme on gender issues

<http://www.un.org/womenwatch/>

Women Watch is the central gateway to information and resources on the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women

"Resolution 1325 (2000) holds out a promise to women across the globe that their rights will be protected and that barriers to their equal participation and full involvement in the maintenance and promotion of sustainable peace will be removed. We must uphold this promise." (Secretary-General's 2004 report on women, peace and security)

"One is not born, but rather becomes, a woman"

- Simone de Beauvoir, 1908 - 1986

GA adopts resolution to establish a new women's entity

Source: UN Non-Governmental Liaison Service

After three years of extensive consultations, the UN General Assembly, adopted a resolution on 14 September that takes the next step in the process that seeks to establish a new United Nations entity focused on the rights of women. Four United Nations agencies and offices will be amalgamated to create a new single entity within the Organisation to promote the rights and well-being of women worldwide and to work towards gender equality. For details, [click here](#).

http://hrba.vr13.com/?page_id=69&resource=Case+Study®ion=&tools=&theme=Women

HRBA offers a portal with documents, study cases, etc. on human rights including rights of the women

www.unesco.org/shs/gender

UNESCO's work on gender equality

News From International Organizations

UNESCO World Report "Investing in Cultural Diversity and Intercultural Dialogue"

According to the new UNESCO intersectoral World Report, cultural diversity should become a key lever in policy-making. As globalization spurs an unprecedented cross-fertilization of cultures worldwide, investing in cultural diversity can renew our approaches to sustainable development, ensure the effective exercise of universally recognized human rights and freedoms, and strengthen social cohesion and democratic governance. The highlights, in particular, the interrelated challenges of cultural diversity and intercultural dialogue and the way in which strong homogenizing forces are matched by persistent diversifying trends.



The report proposes a series of ten policy-oriented recommendations, to the attention of States, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, international and regional bodies, national institutions and the private sector on how to invest in cultural diversity. (...) To download the report:

<http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0018/001852/185202E.pdf>

European Commission publishes the "EU YOUTH REPORT"

The 13th of July 2009 the European Commission - DG Education and Culture - presented the first report on the Youth in the 27 Member States to the relevant the national Ministries and stakeholders involved in the youth field. The report is going to be published every three years and focuses on young people aged 15 - 30 and the main issues related to youth: such as education, employment, health, participation in the society, volunteering. The Youth Report responds to the need to base the national and European policy on youth on evidence and data as well as the need to recognize the value of young people as active citizens and future active citizens. To download the report go to:

http://europa.eu/youth/enews.cfm?l_id=en&boxID=5

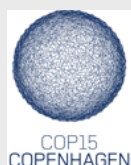
European Commission adopts

**A NEW
EU Strategy for Youth
Investing and
Empowering**

Entitled "Youth - Investing and Empowering", the new strategy acknowledges that young people are one of the most vulnerable groups in society, especially in the current economic and financial crisis, and in our ageing society, young people are a precious resource. The new strategy is cross-sectoral, with both short- and long-term actions. For more information and download, visit

http://ec.europa.eu/youth/news/news1458_en.htm

7 - 18 December 2009: United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP15)



The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change entered into force on 21 March 1994. The Convention sets an overall framework for intergovernmental efforts to tackle climate change and recognizes that the climate system is a shared resource whose stability can be affected by industrial and other emissions of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases. The Convention enjoys near universal membership, with 192 countries having ratified. A number of nations had approved the Kyoto Protocol, as an addition to the treaty with more powerful (and legally binding) measures. The Protocol's first commitment period ends in 2012. A strong multilateral framework needs to be in place by 2009 to ensure that there is no gap between the end of the Kyoto Protocol's first commitment period in 2012 and the entry into force of a future regime. COP15 (Conference of Parties) in Copenhagen is a vital step in this process.

For more information, visit: <http://www.cop15.dk/>.

Children and young people "Unite for Climate"



Children and young people from across the world are joining forces to address climate change with the August 20th launch of a new initiative called "Unite for Climate" at the International Youth Conference in Daejeon, Republic of Korea. UNICEF, in coordination with NGOs, UN agencies, youth activists, and partners from academia and the private sector, has developed a space to enable young people and experts to collaborate on issues related to climate change using open-source technology.

Through networking opportunities and social tools offered on the site, young citizens can connect, share knowledge, engage in solutions and influence policy-making in the run-up to COP 15 in Copenhagen in December and beyond. The site is designed to ensure access in locations where internet connection is slow, allowing young people of diverse socio-economic backgrounds to join the discussion.

To learn more, visit www.uniteforclimate.org or contact us at info@uniteforclimate.org

A Digital Shift: Youth and ICT for Development Best Practices



The Global Alliance for Information and Communication Technologies at the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA-GAID) in collaboration with TakingITGlobal and the Youth Unit of the Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie recently published the document "A Digital Shift: Youth and ICT for Development Best Practices", which showcases the best practices of community transformations through ICT, to ensure the survival and growth of these projects, and to learn from their lessons for the improvement of future initiatives. To read and download the publication go to:

<http://unpan1.un.org/intradoc/groups/public/documents/gaid/unpan036084.pdf>

News From NGOs

Special Issue on International Volunteer Day (5 December 2009)



CIVICUS participated in the Consultative Meeting on International Year of the Volunteers + 10 held at the United Nations Volunteers' headquarter in Bonn, Germany, during 22-23 October 2009. A group of over 40 participants from different organisations, including volunteer sending organisations and NGOs, met and drew up an action plan leading up to the campaign year in 2011. Civil society is a target audience for the campaign and CIVICUS will work with its Members and partners to encourage volunteerism and support for this campaign. To start with, the first issue of e-CIVICUS in December will be dedicated to celebrating International Volunteer Day (5 December). Articles on the theme of volunteering, especially those that show the work of volunteers and their impact on civil society, should be sent to [editor\(at\)civicus.org](mailto:editor(at)civicus.org) by 3 December 2009

Unite 1 Million Global Youth in 100 Days

PLANETCALL.ORG

With only a 100 days to go before the UN Climate Change Conference will take place in Copenhagen, U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon and the Danish Government, yesterday endorsed PlanetCall.org, a website that aims to encourage 1 million youth to sign a declaration that calls for an ambitious new climate treaty. It also asks young people to share solutions and ideas for a better climate. More information is available [online](#).

Stand Up Against Poverty – New Guinness World Record



From 16-18 October the worldwide "Stand Up Against Poverty" campaign took place in order to convince governments to eradicate extreme poverty and to do all that is necessary to achieve the Millennium Development Goals. In total, the campaign gathered 173,045,325 participants at over 3,000 events in more than 120 countries and broke a new Guinness world record.

Pictures, videos and stories about the organized events are available online. [here](#).

Facilitator Guide for Gender Training

Source: Gendernet

The guide draws on a series of courses organized by KIT for Gendernet in 2008. The guide is not a training of trainers manual but rather a resource to support the GFPs and other trainers. It is comprised of instructions, notes and "tips", resources, presentations and training modules. The guide contains a series of building blocks that can be adapted to the needs of the individual user. For details, [click here](#).



Facilitators Guide
for Gender Training

ICYE PROGRAMME NEWS

1949-2009 - CELEBRATING 60 YEARS OF HANDS-ON ACTIVE GLOBAL VOLUNTEERING

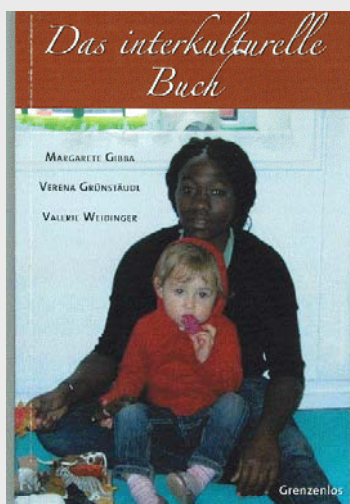
HAPPY BIRTHDAY ICYE! On 22nd November 2009 at the onset of the 26th ICYE General Assembly to be held in Tauranga, New Zealand, a 60th Anniversary Celebration will be held with representatives of ICYE member and partner organisations and invitees from over 40 countries!



ICYE AUSTRIA's 60th Anniversary



On 24 October 2009, ICYE Austria / Grenzenlos celebrated its 60th Anniversary. The colorful and lively event was attended by over 200 people, representing long standing co-workers, ICYE and EVS volunteers, current and former staff, host families and voluntary service placements. Participants could walk through an exhibition of images and testimonials from the somewhat mythical beginnings to the present date, and after a few commemorative speeches enjoyed the party that lasted until the early hours of the morning at the sound of three different bands, including "The What, The Who, The Yeah"!!



In this occasion, Grenzenlos presented the recently published "Das Interkulturelle Buch" (The Intercultural Book). The back cover says:

"Austrian Volunteers abroad get engaged and provide support in projects fostering education, social integration and environmental protection, without any qualification and mostly at their own costs. What kind of experiences do they make? Foreign exchange students and volunteers hosted in Austria, conversely, act as a mirror of our society. How are these young persons doing, who following their adventure just came to Austria? Have they been warmly welcomed? Are their making new friends?"

Through the many individual interviews the authors searched for answers to these questions, and found surprisingly many!"

YOUTH ACTION FOR CIVIL SOCIETY

BUILDING CAPACITIES AND PARTNERSHIPS FOR YOUTH VOLUNTEERING PROGRAMMES



Staff exchange programme between European and Asia/Pacific Countries coordinated by the ICYE INTERNATIONAL OFFICE with the support of the Youth in Action Programme of the European Union

A highlight of the above mentioned large-scale Capacity Building Project were the 2-months reciprocal staff exchanges involving 12 staff/co-workers from the following ICYE members and partners in 7 European and 7 ASIAN countries between May and November 2009:

- Austria / Grenzenlos - Indonesia / Dejavato
- Belgium / VIA - Vietnam / Vol. for Peace
- Italy / AFSAI - India / ICDE India
- Poland / FIYE - China / WOEI China
- Sweden / PeaceWorks - Nepal / ICYE Nepal
- Spain / ASERMUN - Taiwan / ICYE Taiwan
- Iceland / AUS Iceland - Philippines / EYES



ICYE has recently started cooperation with a number of new partners in the Asian region. In view of the great diversity of the cultural, social and political contexts in which ICYE member and partner organisations operate, this staff exchange programme was vital for further enhancing the partnership and cooperation among the participating organisations. It provided both sides with an intercultural exposure and opportunities to learn from each others' way of developing youth exchange and voluntary service activities. Given the different levels of the organisations' experience, the exchange of staff/experienced co-workers proved to be effective in enhancing peer-to-peer training and exchange of good practice in running Youth in Action activities, and in particular EVS projects and lead to promising results. Please find here below some of the feedback received by participants and host organisations:

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An Vleugels - exchangee from VIA Belgium to Volunteers for Peace Vietnam:

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"CONCLUSION of this two-month stay: Volunteers for Peace can offer a wide range of opportunities for EVS volunteers. There are different projects that are focused on various themes: children, environment and people with a disability, etc. ...I had an amazing time in Vietnam. I learned a lot about the organisation, the way of working and the Vietnamese culture. The staff gave me the chance to organize training, to set up some templates for some procedures and to support individual international volunteers. My participation in the work camp was a very intense experience, but definitely a highlight during my stay. Volunteers for Peace took really good care of me and provided me a great place to stay, a warm welcome and delicious authentic Vietnamese food!"

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GRENZENLOS - ICYE AUSTRIA hosting Eko Wahyudi from Dejavato Indonesia and sending Agnes M.C. Vana to Dejavato Indonesia

"Grenzenlos did a final evaluation together with Eko and also our whole team. This was also important for the follow-up projects we would like to develop together with Dejavato. The evaluation was done in the last week of the staff exchange. As Agnes Vana came back already on the 23rd of August, both exchangees overlapped again which was surprisingly nice for the team! (They knew each other already because they got to know each other in Semarang at the start of the project).

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The staff exchange was very inspiring and it was for the Grenzenlos team helpful to explain working styles which are normal for us again to someone external, in order to re-think about the own working style. Our expectations before were not very high but it brought us great new inputs and hopefully new projects which should be implemented in 2010!"

ASERMUN – a Spanish partner organisation hosting Sung Tzu a volunteer from ICYE Taiwan and sending Elena Martínez to ICYE TAIWAN:

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"Thanks to this staff exchange programme we have had the opportunity to share our experience in implementing EVS projects with someone from an organisation who is doing the same in a country outside Europe. This has given us better understanding of the different possibilities that the programme offers and also the way organisations implement EVS program according to the reality of the country. We consider this quite useful knowledge to be applied when orientating our outgoing EVS volunteers. Besides, this project has been a great chance to exchange information about other programmes and actions. We would like to point out the agreement reached in order to start cooperation between ASERMUN and ICYE Taiwan through a short term volunteering programme due to start from October 2009. This we consider a very positive result. We also value very highly the support offered by the staff exchangee and her interest in Spanish language and culture."

**6th UNESCO Youth Forum in Paris
by Anna Lena Aeschlimann, ICYE Switzerland**



The Youth Forum is an integral part of the UNESCO General Conference. As an active co-worker of ICYE Switzerland I had the honour attended as observer the 6th Youth Forum, which was held on 1-3 October in Paris, prior to the 35th General Conference of UNESCO Member States. Besides the approximately 150 official delegates from 107 different countries, around 50 observers participated in the Forum. Apart from attending the plenary sessions, I had time to discuss important issues during a special parallel session focusing on UNESCO's field of action.

This was definitely a good chance for ICYE to get to meet a lot of important, involved and motivated people working on youth issues and have an insight into topics UNESCO is focusing on in the youth field and of steps that are meant to be taken in the future.

The main themes were "Investing out of the crisis: towards a partnership between UNESCO and youth organisations", and "Youth participation: UNESCO Youth Forum, a long-term approach".

Youth is considered to be touched particularly by the crisis. The main concerns were high youth unemployment rates, the funding of youth organizations and their work, and the limited access to health, education, work, entertainment and cultural activities.



Therefore, participants asked the state, market and societies to adopt measures in areas such as education, sport, culture, communication, job training and youth employment. The idea behind is to develop social capital. This is certainly an important point for ICYE, instead of saving on all the possible expenses, investing in "human resources" by offering training programmes for volunteers could make everyone better off.



The Forum focused on the question of education, through which youth can contribute to sustainable economies and societies, and youth participation in decision making processes. Since only a few Member States already allow their youth delegates to attend the General Conference, while most countries just send their Ministers and official delegations to the main Conference, it was decided to set as a first point of the Final Report the following request: "We strongly call on every Member State to include youth delegates within their official delegation to the UNESCO General Conference by 2011 (editor's note: next General Conference), based on a common set of criteria." And for a more sustainable collaboration between UNESCO and youth: "We call on all UNESCO National Commissions to create permanent youth desks".

It was great to see how intense the discussions were, how concrete the outcome was and how passionate participants were. While "professionals" leave meetings when the official agenda announces a break, delegates and observers of the 6th Youth Forum stayed in the hall for about two extra hours to discuss the Final Report. The possibility I had to hear great speakers, meet youth leaders from all over the world, and last but not least, make new friends, has been very inspirational and boosted my motivation to continue working for and with youth!

ICJA's Unesco AWARD

The German UNESCO Commission recognized ICYE Germany/ICJA Volunteer Worldwide Exchange as a UNESCO decade project 2009-2010, that contributes to achieving the Millennium Development Goals and thereby contributes to a more sustainable and more just world.

The recognition went in particular to ICJA's educational programmes and seminars and in general to its volunteer exchange programmes as a learning service opportunity that contribute to education for sustainable development. ICJA reconfirms its commitment to foster quality education in life-long learning and will renew its effort in raising public awareness on sustainable development.



VOSESA / ICYE Baseline Survey on Impact Assessment of long-term volunteering



VOSESA a non-profit, non-governmental organisation based in Johannesburg, South Africa. whose main focus is well-researched, up-to-date information on civic service and volunteering in southern Africa, approached the ICYE Federation to seek cooperation in carrying out a baseline survey to measure the impact of the long-term volunteering programmes. For the very first time ICYE will be involved in an impact assessment exercise,

primarily focusing on Volunteering between (Southern) Africa and Europe. The survey will be carried out before the in-country service starts and then after the completion of the volunteer programme. The overall purpose is to assess the volunteer's involvement and the perceived impact of her/his experiences. During the study volunteers will be asked to rate a number of impact areas including motivations for volunteering, international contacts, open-mindedness, international understanding, intercultural relations, global identity, social skills, life plans, civic activism, community engagement, media attentiveness, financial contributions, and personal transformations. ICYE feels honoured to be associated with VOSESA and looks forward to receiving the exciting results of this research.

ICYE Sweden / PeaceWorks Sweden (former IKU)

"Burst My Bubble" European Development Days



A youth perspective is all too often missing in the discussions about peace, security and development. Sweden's presidency of the EU has offered a perfect possibility to make young peoples' opinions about peace work heard. Over the course of this summer PeaceWorks Sweden ran a campaign called "Burst my Bubble" with the aim to let young people make their voices heard. More than a thousand thoughts about peace and security from young people all around Sweden were collected during several festivals. The key message young people want to send to the EU through the opinion postcards collected is that peace can only be reached by peaceful means.

The Burst My Bubble-campaign came to an end during the European Development Days 2009, which took place in Stockholm from 22nd to 24th October. All the collected opinion postcards together with some balloons were handed over to the Swedish Minister for International Development Cooperation, Gunilla Carlsson, one of the decision-makers in Sweden and the EU. The balloons and the postcards were handed over by PeaceWorks's former Chair, Hanna Hallonsten. The balloons were meant as a symbol to cast light on the bubble that needs to be burst in order for young people to be able to take active part in politics. PeaceWorks thinks that it is important to participate in events like EDD to call attention to the importance of the active participation of young people in society.



VOLUNTEER CENTRE

Helping Build Caring Communities

"Youth in Volunteerism" - Volunteers Week 1 – 7 June 2009

The ICYE standing partner, and soon to be welcomed as new Associate Member, Volunteer Centre, Cape Town, South Africa, in partnership with Table Mountain National Park hosted a volunteer program for youth volunteers during Volunteers Week 1 – 7 June 2009.

Youth from Athlone, Mitchell's Plain, Khayelitsha, Hanover Park, Woodstock actively participated in volunteering activities during Volunteers Week from the 1 – 7 June.

At De Heide Centre for Children in partnership with Cerebral Palsy, Western Cape, volunteers spent the day interacting with the children by massaging muscles, chatting to them, playing games with them and assisted staff in feeding them. At St. Anne's Homes in Woodstock, volunteers helped clear away weeds in the play area and planted some plants to beautify the area.

Euan Smith, a 20 year old youth volunteer from Hanover Park said: "Volunteering teaches you something new all the time and I enjoyed learning more about St. Anne's Homes and the work they do for moms and children there." One of the new organizations, Volunteer Centre approached to participate in Volunteers Week activities was Cape Town Society for the Blind. "It was a privilege to volunteer at Cape Town Society for the Blind, even if it was just for a day, because I could see how people with a disability are gifted to do, at times, more than those of us who are able bodied." said Wardah Wentel, 22 year old youth volunteer from Crawford. Wynberg Haven Night Shelter got on board too by mobilizing volunteers during Volunteers Week 2009. Youth helped with food packs to be distributed to the community. "It's so easy to forget what you have but when you volunteer at places like Wynberg Haven Night Shelter you realize that you must appreciate what you do have." said Chanelle Boesak young volunteer from Durbanville.

Youth were presented with certificates for active participation by volunteering during Volunteers Week 2009 on Monday, 8 June. Youth from Sweden, UK and Germany participating on the ICYE (Intercultural Youth Exchange) received their certificate after successfully completing their volunteer program in South Africa.

For more info email Marion Le Fleur, Volunteer Centre's Communications Officer at marketing@volcent.co.za

ICYE CALENDAR OF EVENTS

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| 22nd-28th Nov. 2009: | XXVI ICYE Federation General Assembly and 60 th Anniversary Celebration, Tauranga, New Zealand |
| 25th Jan. – 25th July 2010: | EU and Latin America EVS Project on Cultural Diversity, Indigenous People and Social Inclusion. |
| 1st-4th Feb. 2010: | EU and EECA EVS Project: Youth Volunteering in Social Welfare, Final Evaluation Meeting, Berlin Germany |