

Worlds of Experience

No. 34 (July 2014)



INDEX

EDITORIAL

VOLUNTEERS VOICES on "Volunteering for a Sustainable Future"

NEWS FROM INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

- UN World Report "Youth and Migration"
- UNESCO publication on Global Citizenship Education
- Sustainable Consumption and Production
- Youth Action on climate change
- UNDESA International Youth Day 2014 Campaign
- Guiding Principles on Young People's Participation in Peacebuilding

NEWS FROM NGOS

- CIVICUS State of Civil Society Report 2014
- The Global Youth Wellbeing Index
- First Euro-Africa Youth Parliament 2014
- CIVICUS Advocacy Toolkit "Influencing the post-2015 Development Agenda"

ICYE PROGRAMME NEWS

- Training "Citizenship for Change: Empowering Volunteer Activism"
- The Volunteer Activist is now online
- Mercator Foundation's Scholarships through ICYE Switzerland
- "Let's go together" – Meeting of ICYE Members in Latin America



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"Volunteering for a Sustainable Future"

Dear Friends,

We have dedicated the 34th issue of the ICYE Newsletter to "Volunteering for a Sustainable future". This is because sustainability remains one of the key challenges facing us today. Increasing global forms of poverty and inequality as revealed by the MDGs, the impact of climate change and global warming, financial crises around the world - the signs are aplenty for all to see! Development must take into account the needs of today and tomorrow, achieve a balance of interests and priorities, and integrate the environmental, economic, social and cultural aspects of development. As Koïchiro Matsuura, Director-General of UNESCO from 1999-2009 states, the cultural element is crucial because sustainable development "is closely linked to peace, human rights and equity as much as to ecology or global warming. And if it obviously concerns the natural sciences, economics and politics, it is also a cultural issue."

In Volunteers Voices, we invite you to read articles by eight young volunteers engaged in diverse projects around the world, addressing one or more dimensions of sustainable development. We start off with the inspiring work of the Moroccan-Spanish volunteer in Vietnam involved in a campaign on reducing the usage of plastic bags and developing a community based eco-tourism project in four villages in rural Vietnam. We move to Argentina where a Polish volunteer narrates her step-by-step learning experiences whilst working to protect children's rights. In the UK, a Colombian volunteer reflects on the *raison d'être* of a volunteer, who should strive to create an inclusive community – the key to sustainability. Former Ecuadorian volunteer looks back on her experience in India and tells us that for her, a volunteer is one who is willing to fall in love with the world just as it is – with all its warts and cultural differences. An Italian volunteer in Kenya explains that volunteers have the potential to become valuable agents of change. In Brazil, a Finnish volunteer emphasizes that nothing compares to a real encounter that enables cultural exchange and is the keystone to a sustainable future. Former Indonesian volunteer in Spain shows us how the continuous stream of volunteers at the Betesda Foundation ensures support where it is lacking and how the Foundation strives towards an inclusive society. Our last stop is in Berlin, where a Finnish volunteer at the ICYE International Office argues that working towards a sustainable future is just as much our own responsibility as that of large corporations, governments and policymakers. All these articles reveal the path to change, to an inclusive society, to a sustainable future through the culture of exchange.

News from International Organisations, amongst others, feature: UN World Report "Youth and Migration": the UNESCO publication on Global Citizenship Education; UNEP Global SCP Clearinghouse; UN International Youth Day 2014 Campaign; and the Guiding Principles on Young People's Participation in Peacebuilding.

News from NGOs report on: CIVICUS State of Civil Society Report 2014; the Global Youth Wellbeing Index; the First Euro-Africa Youth Parliament 2014 hosted by YBF and EYP; and the Advocacy Toolkit "Influencing the post-2015 Development Agenda"

ICYE Programme News include: Training "Citizenship for Change: Empowering Volunteer Activism"; The Volunteer Activist is now online; Mercator Foundation's Scholarships through ICYE Switzerland and "Let's go together" – Meeting of ICYE Members in Latin America.

Wishing you an interesting reading, we would like to encourage readers to send us articles and pictures for the next issue of "Worlds of Experience", dedicated to "Volunteering and Activism – two sides of the same coin?". Please send your contributions to icye@icye.org, before 30 September 2014.

Warmest regards!
ICYE International Office

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

“Volunteering for a Sustainable Future”

VOLUNTEERS VOICES

Finding my piece of Vietnam

I've now been in Hanoi for 3 weeks, and I can say that I'm falling in love with the city and probably the country too—it reminds me of my chaotic hometown Casablanca, but chaotic at another level. The scents and colors make my senses go crazy, and I like it. It's that kind of craziness that heals your soul from Western lifestyle.

The second week I started working in CSDS (Centre for sustainable development studies). CSDS promotes education for sustainable development in Vietnam and intervenes at the community level to improve basic necessities such as food, water, shelter and clothing for people in rural areas, especially children. They also raise awareness of the environment, water and sanitation.

I'm taking part in two main projects; one is creating a campaign to reduce the usage of plastic bags in a local market in a busy area of Hanoi. I believe that in order to create a green environment, all we need is the right attitude: an eco-lifestyle attitude. We need creative campaigns such as the Plastic Bags Campaign to improve environmental awareness among members of the community.



We're going to start the campaign by Dong Xa market and then who knows, we could spread the campaign to other markets and areas in Hanoi. Right now, we are working on the base survey asking sellers and customers about their daily use of plastic bags, some young students are helping us with the Vietnamese language, and I'm filming a clip on it. By the end of May, we will start doing workshops in schools close to the market.

The second project I'm working on is a project to promote and develop a Community Based Eco-tourism project in four villages in the An-Lac rural area. In 2 weeks I'm going to visit the project.

Last month I participated in Hanoi Global Volunteer Day (GVD 2014), a Cultural Exchange Program that has attracted significant numbers of young people from many countries that are volunteering in Vietnam. "Global Volunteering Day" is an annual activity initiated by the Volunteers for Peace Vietnam Club (VPV Club). The program was organised on a large scale and is considered the largest festival about cultural exchange of volunteers from many countries around the world. The money raised from the program will help the children of Dao Yen Bai province, one of the many ethnic communities in Vietnam. The international volunteers contributed many excellent performances such as traditional dancing from Thailand, Japan, Indonesia and Palestine. Each country was represented by a booth with more than 20 cultural booths from Vietnam, France, Palestine, Germany, Australia, Japan, Korea, Spain, Denmark, Morocco ... Each booth displayed the country's unique features from food, traditional costumes to other cultural characteristics. In the event, I represented both Morocco and Spain. I went to the Moroccan and the Spanish embassies in Hanoi where they gave us some flags, pictures, brochures, etc. The young Vietnamese were very impressed by the diversity in Moroccan and Spanish cultures. It was an opportunity for me to interact directly with young Vietnamese and other international volunteers, learn about their country and make some friends. This kind of event contributes to the formation of good values and intercultural exchanges that will surely help Vietnamese youth create a better future for their country.

Since my arrival, I've been really impressed by the Vietnamese development in regard to the economy, technology and tourism. It will develop even more in 10 years probably. For now, I will remain an observer—but an observer who will attempt to mix among the colors.

Amine Nadir, Spanish EVS Volunteer in Vietnam

STEP BY STEP...

Since April I am volunteering at Foundation Prasam where I'm working on my EVS project about a "sustainable future". Foundation Prasam works to protect children's rights, prevent violence and addiction ([seehttp://www.fundacionprasam.org.ar/index.html](http://www.fundacionprasam.org.ar/index.html)).

The Foundation is situated in two places: Adrogué and Ezeiza, both outside Buenos Aires.

I volunteer at Prasam three times per week. My work is divided into two activities. The first focuses on helping the children with their homework. For me, it is not the easiest part of my work because I do not speak Spanish

(Castilian). At that moment, I therefore help the youngest children to learn counting or reading.

My second task concentrates on recreation - this is the part of the project where I can introduce my own ideas with the children. As I mentioned earlier, I do not speak Spanish and so I come up with simple ideas. At the moment, I'm focusing on the environmental aspect of sustainable development. I started my project with the topic of RECYCLING. I show the children how to use everyday objects to create for example a new toy. We learn how to give new life to worn out objects. It means that each bottle, roll of toilet paper, box of eggs or cardboard is now worth its weight in gold. Every week, we try to create a new animal (spider, bird etc.). Recently, we even made a snowman, something unknown to children in Buenos Aires.



At the same time, the workshops show me that as a volunteer I have to be more open to the children's ideas. As a volunteer you have to be prepared for the unexpected, and it is the best part of my work. Even if it is not too easy sometimes, this work and experience is worth it.

Working with children and the subject of sustainable development are new for me. Sometimes it is not easy to find materials for a big group of children. But every workshop brings a new experience. For two months I have learnt that apart from ideas and the preparation for an activity, it is important to turn your attention to other people. Personally, it is important for me to teach the children how to take care of our surroundings, so I slowly, step-by-step, explain to the children the need for separation of waste and recycling. I believe that fun and games are the best way to educate children.

Working for the EVS project "From Awareness to Practice: Volunteering for a Sustainable Future" is a very good experience for me. Working out of the city allows me to notice differences between the city and the provinces. I hope that the next months will bring new possibilities for a sustainable future.

Edyta Jankowska, a Polish EVS volunteer in Argentina

What's a volunteer for?

We are here because other people are here too, which logically means that we work for each other and together because every single role in the society must work jointly. We should create a world of human inclusion with new sceneries, an opened and transformed society: a real sustainability.

Movements bring changes, and changes bring new challenges and new backgrounds. We as human beings must face up to placing value on looking for prosperity, dignity and welfare for every single person. This is what is happening today, our world as a community is shouting out to us for such a movement, such a change. What I believe, and thanks to my experience as an international volunteer, my career as an architect and all my training, I can blindly say: it's not about constructing utopic societies or trying to dream of something unreal, but to encourage one another that these movements and changes can modify societies and bring hope for those who have lost it, that such changes are already in our hands.

I volunteered in a project called Gilwell Park Scout Activity Centre, which is a camp site and activity centre for Scouting groups, the biggest one among a wide range of scout centres located in several places in the UK. My experience in Gilwell Park was basically about supporting and encouraging people who visited and joined the centre to gain and discover the fantastic world (and philosophy) of the Scout movement, which aims to promote empathy through physical activities, to improve skills, mental faculties in which people are required to think thoroughly and "to pop up life strategies" with creative solutions and new perspectives, to face what the world brings to us; and last but not least, teamwork. I feel very pleased to say that I gained this with the Scouts. My role promoting these values was mainly of running outdoor and indoor activities with 6-17 year old children who belong to Scout groups. Another important task was to keep and conserve a charming landscape and environment of the site, changing my conception of life and nature quite more responsibly. My 6-month experience in Gilwell Park was an integral part of my growing as a human being, seeing myself as someone who endeavours to be responsible in my community, who manages consciously the relations between humans and nature, creating systems where the preservation of life is essential in the configuration of such a habitable machine in which we are submerged.



I'm now volunteering in a project called Carer's Support Bexley and Greenwich Volcare, an organisation located in South East London, working in the vast area of Greenwich borough. This project offers carers of family members with disabilities the chance to have a break by providing support in their own homes. The volunteers in this project enable carers to have a well needed break, by working with the family member with disability, being a companion and offering conversation, cooking meals and making drinks, assisting with eating and feeding, supporting with their leisure needs and interests, among other duties. I have had training which enables me to deal with and support a range of disabilities such as learning difficulties, autism, Down syndrome, strokes, dementia and blindness. I support British families – the carers - in looking after their partners, and siblings who have disabilities. I consider this important in the way that we are extending boundaries of what a carer is for and giving added value, a chance so that they have their own space and time; in other words connecting both lives (the carer's and the service users) with what they worthily deserve.

I think that "disabled" communities lack opportunities to work within this world, and we should strive to create a world of "human inclusion with new sceneries, an opened and transformed society". It's in this way that all my expectations match with my experience as an international volunteer (goals that I think match feelings and thoughts of a new society), and I say: being a volunteer not only means that you are contributing to help out people with needs, because basing it on my own experience, volunteer duties go beyond this, demanding and requiring a huge and delicate responsibility with society. I'm talking about a new society where all those ecosystems which are still excluded, can have room in the construction of a future where all and every single person can fit and live on. Finally I say this is an opportunity that everyone must grasp in the way that makes us grow as a community and not solely as individuals. By keeping in our minds and hearts an inclusive idea of community, we will achieve sustainability, the key to face our own challenges through life.

Juan Manuel Santander Ospina, Colombian ICYE Volunteer in the UK

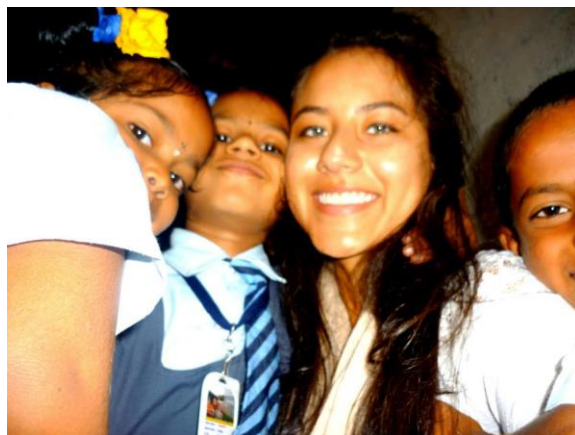
You have to live it yourself!

I spent six months in India and I can't describe all that I have learned. I stayed there with a host family that had previous experiences with volunteers, so they helped me a lot when I was adjusting in a completely new



environment. Staying with a family and not by myself was a big step to understanding and feeling at home in the culture.

I started my volunteering job working as an English teacher in a public school in Mysore, India. From the first day on, I bonded with the children, which made going to work not just a job, but also an essential part of my life. I had a class of my own for the 4th standard; we were together from morning till afternoon learning vocabulary, grammar and writing. During lunch time, I helped the little ones to eat and clean up after themselves, and in the afternoon I'd take the children to the backyard and do some sports together.



The special thing about being a volunteer, above all when you work with little kids is that they don't see you as a teacher, so they open themselves to you almost immediately and you get the chance of becoming a really important part in their lives. We became friends, we made each other smile every single day and despite the difference in age, they taught me how to start a new day without thinking of the past or worrying about the future. The English we could learn together wasn't that important anymore, but just spending time together. For me, this was the most wonderful experience because it taught me that a volunteer is not, precisely, someone who changes the whole world. A volunteer is someone who shows she is willing to fall in love with it just as it is.

A volunteer is someone who contributes through time, care and love, supporting those from less privileged backgrounds. This, for me, is the essence of volunteering, of inclusive growth, and thus of a sustainable future for us all.

I definitely recommend such a programme as it is the best way to break the "social bubble" in which we live. I can't tell you how this helped me to grow or how this will always be a big part of who I am, you have to live it yourselves.

María Inés Salazar, an Ecuadorian volunteer, part of the ICYE South-South Exchange Programme in India

Sustainable development or regression

"Development" means "a process in which something passes by degrees to a more advanced or mature stage". Therefore, in order to have real development, it must necessarily be sustainable. However, the term "sustainable" has always been interpreted in a restrictive way or has been a purely theoretical concept. The northern hemisphere has given priority to the profit earned today, setting aside other aspects and needs of tomorrow. The consequences are before our eyes. But sustainable development is a fundamental concept for life, which stems from the awareness that we are in a finite planet. It determines the need to live according to principles that take account of that, to safeguard environment, ourselves, our present and our future. Today we are trying to repair things afterwards, but often we just pretend we are acting in this way. The vested interests are stronger than yesterday and the perception of the damage that each day of the system in which we live produces is still very weak.



The concept of sustainable development is a key element in developing countries, which don't have to follow our example, but plot new and better ways to conduct economic, cultural, social and environmental changes. Doing this is a must, considering basic elements which are closely related to each other: ecology or human ecology, including sustainable agriculture too; economics or ecological economics, minding treatment of natural capital (quantity and modality); culture of respect, supporting the cultural dimension in public policies; social and politics action, with political policy about legitimation and regulation of international economic policy, investment, trade, energy and climate change, measurement and assessment, natural resource management, communication and technology. A development that evolves taking into account these elements, balancing interests and setting the right priorities, helps to create the conditions for peace. In fact it means respecting fundamental rights, such as the right to a healthy environment, self-determination, dignified existence and, in short, the right to happiness. The UN in 2000 established the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG's) that, as we know, consists of poverty alleviation, education, gender equality, child and maternal health, environmental sustainability, reducing HIV and other diseases, building a global partnership for development.

The project in which I'm engaged as a volunteer tries to contribute to achieving these goals: the NGOs OBACODEP (Obama Health & Community Development Programme) promotes activities to assist vulnerable individuals (orphans, people living with HIV, small-scale farmers, widows and widowers, community groups etc.), to raise awareness, educate, train, empower and mobilize the community in the initiation of development activities. The aim is to improve the standard of living of the beneficiaries through participation, networking and intervention measures on the impact of HIV and malaria. For this purpose, OBACODEP conducts a continuous monitoring of vulnerable people through home visits and school visits. Especially it attempts to support scholar fees, when it's possible, education being the main tool for improvement, personal growth and country development. But due to the lack of funds, it isn't always possible to provide material support. Therefore, an essential part of our action here, in the rural area of Awendo, consists of lending start-up support to Income Generation Activities (IGAs) and promoting food production for poverty alleviation and food security. Another fundamental element, key of sustainable development and OBACODEP's main activity consists of civic education and communication to generate awareness and promote prevention: Helping people to understand the importance of defending themselves from malaria using special nets, taking care of hygiene, boiling water before drinking, sometimes changing their attitude about children and women (gender equality), etc. In fact, every real change starts from awareness and the possession of tools to act independently. Giving fish is of little use in long run if you don't teach people how to fish.

Considering this vision, the collaboration with larger NGOs is not only a source of economic support, but also a way to discover and disseminate new tools, improve people's lives. Often in rural Kenya, some people speak only Swahili, Luo or other local languages, but no English. So the smaller NGOs function as the interface between larger NGOs and the people. Although the attitude of people towards westerns ("muzungu") is usually very cordial and affectionate, it is obvious that the locals know more than anyone else about their needs, priorities, local culture and the best way to communicate with their fellow citizens. So these collaborations take on an important role for development.

But which is the role of the volunteers? In my view, it's an important role: beyond the activities of the NGOs in which we work, the action of volunteers from other parts of the world carries the exchange of knowledge, information, practices and cultures. We can become a valuable agent of change. Even just this partnership, possible thanks to EVS, potentially represents sustainable development. But the biggest change is definitely what an experience like this creates in us.

Martina Masi, an Italian EVS volunteer in Kenya

Are you willing to be present?

It was the 2nd of April when I came to Brazil full of excitement and curiosity. I had taken a big step in my life and I had come to do voluntary work to Porto Alegre.

Why people start to do voluntary work? What is their motive? I guess there is a need to have a reason for what we do and feel we can benefit from each other. I wanted to do voluntary work because I feel it's a very good way of getting experience in and on another country, culture, people, language, and of course help people in my project. In this way, I can also help other people to get to know something about my life and culture, particularly if they don't have chances to go to abroad.



I am EVS - volunteer in CESMAR. In my project, I help teachers with the children in different activities. My work day consist of helping children, talking and spending time with them. When we have free time they often want to show me different places and tell me different things from heaven to earth. These moments are so unique. I think I am so lucky that I have the opportunity to get to know their thoughts and hear about their life. I really like to work in CESMAR, but of course I need a lot of patience and flexibility every day.

The presence of one or more volunteers is very normal in my project. In this way, the project maintains international activities and offers experiences to volunteers and other persons in the project. I think this is the way to focus on the cultural dimension and build a sustainable future among different people and cultures.

Every day I understand more and more about how important it is to meet people. We need other people to be in touch with ourselves. Nothing compares to a real encounter, and a real encounter requires that you are really present in this moment. This short time here has already now taught me a lot about it. The children in my project are from families that aren't in a very good

situation, and I don't really know how much attention and care they receive at home. I have tried to remember that, and I feel that I want to care for them and get them to feel that they are loved. I think that the main thing in voluntary work is not to do something concrete all the time. I feel that it is more important is to be present. With all your senses! #

I am very curious to see what kind of things this time here will bring. I still have 6 wonderful months here and I guess I will get to know much more about life in Brazil. But the most important of all, I will get to know myself better and I will have very many good memories for the rest of my life.

Petra Virtanen, a Finnish EVS volunteer in Brazil

Mi corazón, Madrid!

At first I was not quite sure whether or not I should join the EVS, because joining it means that I have to be away and leave my family and everything behind. Yet in return, I would also have a new life, new friends, a new family, experiences and many other things. I did my EVS in a NGO called BETESDA FOUNDATION, which is a residence for the elderly with intellectual and physical disabilities. My job there was helping them with daily life skills like showering, feeding, and leisure activities.

Living alone far away from my family and friends is really hard. However, I found myself a better person after doing my EVS Project. I become more independent as I had to get used to doing and handling everything by myself. Another value I have learned during my EVS is finding my own identity. By meeting, living, talking with many people from all around, the world makes me aware of the importance of culture. It proves that culture reflects someone's identity and their way of thinking. During my EVS, I shared a flat with 3 other volunteers from different countries, 2 Japanese, 1 British and me an Indonesian. Each of us is from a very different culture. We surely have different opinions, yet we always tried to listen and respect each other.



As an ex-EVS volunteer, I believe that what I did in my project was connected to sustainable development. I perceived it in a social and cultural way. In a social way, it was through my work in the residence of the Betesda Foundation in Madrid. I feel really glad that I could work

there, be a part of their community and society. By working there, I helped the community in residence and gave my best to help and support them in their activities. Just like the former volunteers who had worked there before me, we have done our best in our project, and the next volunteer can evaluate and keep continuing what we have done for the residence in his/her own way for a better life in the community.

On a cultural level, I remember the international seminar, "Citizenship for Change: Empowering Volunteer Activism" in which I had participated. During my EVS and the seminar, I met many people from all over the globe and furthermore learnt about their culture as well. This seminar has awakened and raised my awareness about European citizenship issues. In the seminar, we discussed some issues that had been going on in Europe lately. We also talked about how we could as volunteers take part and find the best solution to assist the process of change. I believe that all of us can apply what we learnt during the seminar in our home country. We might come from a different historical background, yet we share the same aim of life, to have a better life for all humans. So in short, I feel lucky for the opportunity to do my EVS in Madrid and I definitely want to go back some day, as I feel that Madrid is my second home in a different part of the world. Gracias por todo Madrid, y te echo de menos!!

Sheta Medyadini, an Indonesian EVS volunteer in Spain

Making choices, looking towards / deeper

The European Commission defines Sustainable Development as "a better quality of life for everyone, now and for generations to come." (<http://ec.europa.eu/environment/eussd/>)

Volunteering is generally considered an altruistic activity which promotes the improvement of human quality of life. In my point of view, there is one thing which prevents us from creating a better quality for everyone and that is ones wish to possess more than what one needs; it's greediness. Therefore I do think that every altruistic act is advancing the possibilities for a sustainable future. Exploitation of natural resources, other species and humans is usually happening because of ones wish to possess more and more. Why are we not trying harder to stop these kinds of actions? I think one form of greediness is also indifference. The will to preserve your own comfortable space as long the problems are not directly affecting to you.

I'm volunteering at the ICYE International Office and it is clear that my work routines are not directly linked to working for a sustainable future. I'm not helping disadvantaged people, nurturing animals or working with environmental issues. I do administrative tasks like corresponding with member and partner organisations and editing activity reports. I have faced many questions when people hear that my voluntary work is as an office assistant, but for me this experience has been for sure the most suitable way to understand the meaning of



volunteering and the importance of promoting it. I am amazed at how much I have gained through my work in an international atmosphere for projects taking place all over the world. I feel that the boards of my box are breaking while the world is coming closer to me. Countries on the other side of the world are not just distant anonymous places anymore, but home countries of people who I contact every day in my work. And the events somewhere far away are affecting all of us from the perspective of a sustainable future. I no longer consider myself just as a citizen of a country in northern Europe, but as a citizen of the world and I understand that the everyday choices I make are statements about what kind of actions I want to support and what not.

When I decided to volunteer, I didn't think of it as an altruistic act, but nevertheless it has taught me the importance of having a wider view to world. Previously, I worked for a company with which I didn't share the same values. I was forced to act against my own morals for example by throwing eatable food away every day. During this experience working in an organization, which shares the same values as I, I have decided to live in a way that I can feel good about my actions. A sustainable future is not just in the hands of the big organizations or the policymakers, but equally in the hands of every citizen's life choices and refusal to look away.

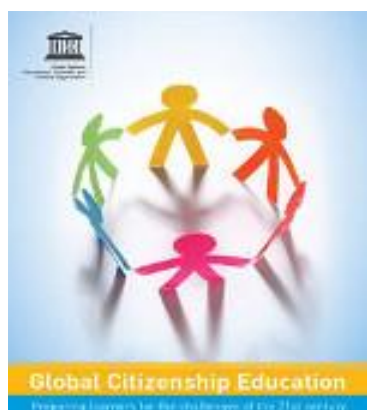
Tuuli Hostikka, an EVS volunteer from Finland at the ICYE International Office

NEWS FROM INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

YOUTH & MIGRATION

UNDESA LAUNCHED THE UN WORLD YOUTH REPORT “YOUTH AND MIGRATION”

On 14 February 2014, the Division for Social Policy and Development in UNDESA launched its flagship UN World Youth Report “Youth and Migration”. The report is based on the experiences of young people affected by migration and relates the stories of individuals as they move to new lands. The report outlines the global situation of young migrants by highlighting some of the concerns, challenges and successes experienced by young migrants as told in their voices taken from a series of online consultations and surveys organized by the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA). [More](#)



GLOBAL CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION: PREPARING LEARNERS FOR THE CHALLENGES OF THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY

What is Global Citizenship Education? Do we learn it in school? What difference can it make if it is a common feature of all education systems? How can it be implemented and scaled up? The answers to these questions and others can be found in a new publication just released by UNESCO. [More](#).

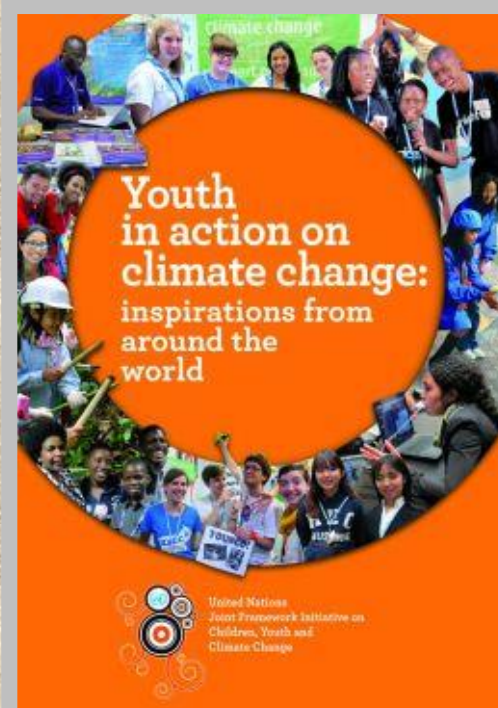


SUSTAINABLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION (SCP)

Young people - nearly half of the world's population - have a significant role to play if we are to bring about the widespread behavioural change needed to shift towards more sustainable lifestyles and consumption habits. Young people are brimming with the determination, creativity and innovation that are accelerating the movement towards sustainable consumption and production (SCP). Sign up on the Global SCP Clearinghouse, convened by United Nations Environmental Programme (UNEP) - a hub dedicated to advancing SCP. Share your ideas, projects and events, build networks and spread your enthusiasm on SCP! [More](#)

UNFCCC: YOUTH IN ACTION ON CLIMATE CHANGE: INSPIRATIONS FROM AROUND THE WORLD

With the opening of the conference on 4 June, the latest flagship publication of the [United Nations Joint Framework Initiative on Children, Youth and Climate Change](#) was launched in all official UN languages. The objective of the publication is to highlight concrete work young people do to incite their governments to scale up climate action and raise ambition towards a post-2020 climate change regime. It is designed as a tool and a source of inspiration for developing and carrying out projects, initiatives and campaigns to increase awareness of the causes and impacts of climate change, promote sustainable lifestyles and advance green low-carbon development. [More](#)



INTERNATIONAL YOUTH DAY 2014 CAMPAIGN

The United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA) has launched its Mental Health Matters campaign for International Youth Day 2014! From 12 June -12 August you can help reduce the stigma surrounding youth and mental health conditions by using the #MentalHealthMatters and joining our activities on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [Instagram](#) and [Pinterest](#). Interested in organizing your own event for IYD? Check out the IYD 2014 Toolkit: <http://bit.ly/1qbTogG>



GUIDING PRINCIPLES ON YOUNG PEOPLE'S PARTICIPATION IN PEACEBUILDING

The Guiding Principles on Young People's Participation in Peacebuilding were officially launched on April 24th 2014 in New York. The Guiding Principles provide guidance to Governments, UN entities, donors, national and international non-governmental organizations and civil society on meaningful youth engagement and participation, especially in conflict or transition settings. They are designed to inform peacebuilding strategies and programmes that are participative, inclusive and intergenerational. These Principles were developed by the United Nations Inter-Agency Network on Youth Development (IANYD) Sub-working Group on Youth & Peacebuilding, through a widely collaborative process. [More](#).

NEWS FROM NGOS



CIVICUS STATE OF CIVIL SOCIETY REPORT 2014

The CIVICUS State of Civil Society Report 2014 was launched 2 June. The Report draws on [contributions](#) from more than 30 of the world's leading experts on civil society as well as on inputs from our members, partners, supporters and others in the global CIVICUS alliance. The varied contributions highlight changing global political dynamics, an emerging disillusionment with global frameworks of governance and a fundamental lack of accountability within international decision-making. [More.](#)



YBF, EYP HOSTS FIRST EURO-AFRICA YOUTH PARLIAMENT 2014

Youth Bridge Foundation, organizers of the annual African Youth and Governance Conference Initiative, in collaboration with the International Office of the European Youth Parliament has organized the first Euro-Africa Youth Parliament in Berlin, with 100 youth delegates from about 20 African and 30 European countries to deliberate on matters of mutual interest to them. [More info.](#)



CIVICUS Advocacy Toolkit "Influencing the post-2015 Development Agenda"

The Advocacy Toolkit "Influencing the post-2015 Development Agenda" is for civil society and other stakeholder organisations, coalitions and individuals that wish to influence the post-2015 development agenda, including the design of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). You can either follow its step-by-step approach or simply consult the tips, tools and case studies most relevant to your existing activities. "[Engaging with the Media](#)" is a companion to the toolkit which provides a guide to the strategic use of the media and social media in the context of post-2015 advocacy. [Download the Toolkits here.](#)



WHAT IS THE GLOBAL YOUTH WELLBEING INDEX?

The inaugural Global Youth Wellbeing Index gathers and connects youth-related data to assess and compare the state of young people's wellbeing around the world. The Index ranks 30 high- to low-income countries in five regions that represent nearly 70 percent of the world's youth. In addition to data availability and consistency, representative countries were selected for inclusion in this inaugural Index to ensure regional and income diversity. With half the world's population under the age of 25 it is increasingly evident that national growth and global development, prosperity and security are dependent upon addressing youth needs and harnessing their potential. [The Center for Strategic and International Studies \(CSIS\)](#) and the [International Youth Foundation \(IYF\)](#) partnered to develop this Index as the flagship project of the Youth, Prosperity and Security Initiative. [More.](#)

ICYE PROGRAMME NEWS

“CITIZENSHIP FOR CHANGE: EMPOWERING ACTIVISM” AN ACTION 3.2 PROJECT OF THE YIA PROGRAMME OF THE EU

Motivated by the desire to raise awareness about volunteering and bring about change in their local environments and communities, 33 young people from 17 countries came together in Madrid, Spain, at an international training seminar in April 2014 within the scope of the project *“Citizenship for Change: Empowering Volunteer Activism”*. The five-day training seminar was filled with inspiring talks on activism and campaigning, on the Occupy London movement, the social market system - the Mercado Social, and a visit to Asociación Garaldeia – an alternative association for people at risk of exclusion. Discussions, exchange of ideas and good practices vis-à-vis campaigning and activism served to prepare the ground for the campaigns in 17 countries in Europe, Asia, Latin America and Africa. The training seminar came to a close with the presentation of the ideas and plans for the 17 campaigns worldwide.

Local and international volunteers, NGOs, volunteering host and ICYE organisations are presently working together to raise awareness and influence at the local, regional and even national level, opinions, perspectives and agendas of individuals and nation-state's alike, on racism, the situation of refugees, equal working rights and conditions, volunteering, environmental issues and much more. The campaigns can be followed, *liked* and commented upon on The Volunteer Activist website, which is being updated as the campaigns take shape and are implemented. See <http://activist.icye.org>



THE VOLUNTEER ACTIVIST IS NOW ONLINE!

The Volunteer Activist is a web portal that presents campaigns in 17 countries worldwide with the aim of sharing actions, ideas & experiences by volunteers and civil society organisations aiming at social change. It has been created within the framework of “Citizenship for Change: Empowering Volunteer Activism”, a global awareness raising project encouraging young citizen action for social change. This project seeks to deepen, widen and sustain youth participation in socio-political processes of democratic society addressing volunteering, social inclusion and equality of opportunity. Check out the 17 campaigns in Europe, Asia, Africa and Latin America as they raise awareness through a diverse range of activities and events <http://activist.icye.org/>



Stiftung
Mercator
Schweiz



International Cultural Youth Exchange
Internationaler Jugend- und Kulturaustausch
Echange Culturel International de Jeunes

“WELTWEIT ENGAGIERT!”

MERCATOR FOUNDATION'S SCHOLARSHIPS THROUGH ICYE SWITZERLAND

This program year 2014-15, ICYE Switzerland starts the triennial project “Weltweit engagiert!” (“Get involved worldwide”), supported by the Mercator Foundation Switzerland. The aim of the project is to promote the intercultural exchange through volunteering for young people with vocational training /professional apprenticeship. Until now this target group is hardly represented in the prevalent group of outgoing Swiss volunteers, most of whom have a high school diploma.

Convinced that intercultural experiences are an additional value in an increasingly globalized working environment, ICYE Switzerland awards up to 10 grants for young people with a completed apprenticeship, who are/were already active as a volunteer in Switzerland. This summer, Julia, the first to be awarded this grant, will start her 6-month volunteering experience in Ecuador. She finished her apprenticeship as a specialist in health and was an active volleyball trainer in a local association. She will keep us updated about her experiences in Ecuador and implement a little project during her stay in Ecuador or once back in Switzerland. We are looking forward to promote more committed young people with an apprenticeship and to strengthening their cross-cultural competence.

“LET’S GO TOGETHER” - MEETING OF ICYE MEMBERS IN LATIN AMERICA

From 23 to 26 April 2014, an ICYE Latin American training event took place in Quito, Ecuador. Representatives from ICYE member and partner organisations in Argentina, Brazil, Bolivia, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Honduras, Mexico and Peru attended peer-to-peer and expert led training sessions on Marketing & Recruitment, Financial Management, and on Impact Assessment of the ICYE long-term exchange programme. This productive three-day activity also included discussions on strategies and activities to strengthen regional cooperation and exchange of good practice. This event was followed by a training seminar on the government funded German Programme Weltwärts organised by ICJA/ ICYE Germany and VASE/ICYE Ecuador.

