



The Scout Association of Malta Our Strategy for the Future

scout method expectations
vision LEADERS Executive Quality
STRATEGY
scouting skills KPIs RESOURCES
objectives basic principles
Finance volunteers human resources

Version 2.0



SCOUTS[®]

Nibnu Dinja Aħjar

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Feedback Report and Proposed Strategy

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A review of the feedback received on the Strategy Discussion Document published in May 2013 as well as a proposed vision, mission and strategy to be adopted by the General Assembly of the Scout Association of Malta.

05. Document Control

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Introduction by the Chief Scout

Dear Scout,

It is with a deep sense of humility that I wrote this introduction to this document. I believe that from amongst the multitude of documents that our Association has over the years amassed, it is this document and its spin off that shall help our Association provide the necessary answers to our own members and also to the Maltese society, on how to ensure that The Scout Association of Malta shall remain in the years to come, the leading youth organisation in Malta.

Unfortunately less than 50% of our scout groups have submitted their replies to the initial document presented by the General Assembly in May 2013. Even worse was the fact that out of all the adult and youth members within our Association, only 18 individual replies were submitted.

Personally, this is a worrying factor in that it seems that the element of belongingness to the Scout Association of Malta, whilst easily claimed by all our members, is in practice lacking. In my opinion a multitude of reasons exist for this, ranging from cultural (in that our sense of island insularity may be extended to group level insularity) to outright carelessness.

These issues are counter-productive to the Scouting spirit which is embedded in each and every one of us. Such a lack of contribution demonstrates a mentality wherein rather than actively participating one opts to allow others to decide for them. Facts which are diametrically opposite to the Scouting system. May I take this opportunity that such omissions are opposite to our own Scout Law, which law we Promised to adhere to religiously.

I hope that I am wrong in my opinion, I pray that the General Assembly in its forthcoming meeting on the 7th December 2013 shall prove me wrong.

Arthur Azzopardi
Chief Scout

1st December 2013

From the Author

Creating a strategy for an organisation like ours presents you with a number of interesting challenges.

The first challenge you encounter is getting all the interested parties to understand why we need a strategy and why they need to contribute.

The next challenge is to try to get everyone on the same page as to the understanding of a strategy and how it differs from an organisation's Vision, from its Mission Statement and from an actual action plan.

One of the other challenges that you encounter is the fact that all of the above tends to be seen from different points of view – depending where the respondent/s stand in the organisational chart.

In summarising the data received from three workshops and twenty three feedback documents, I am conscious of the fact that I have channelled and grouped some of the suggestions and ideas into common themes for the sake of being able to categorise the data into one coherent document. Wherever I needed to do this, I did my best to look at the situation from an unbiased point of view, and I have also included contrasting opinions to portray the true message behind the feedback.

There were some very good ideas that were presented on specific topics and these will be used at a later stage in the process once we would have agreed on the general strategy of the Association and we then go into the detail of specific action plans.

I would like to thank all those of you who have taken the time to contribute in one way or another to this document. I hope that the end result will help us take our Association forward.

Yours in Scouting

Kevin Camilleri
National Scout Council Member & International Commissioner

30th November 2013

How this document is laid out

This document is split into two main parts.

The first part contains the summary of the feedback received from the original Strategy Document that was published in May 2013. The purpose of this part of the document is to summarise all the comments that have been in a format that is easy to read, so that one can understand the main points where there is most agreement.

The second part of the document is intentionally very short. As a result of the exercise of consultation and discussion about strategy, this part of the document presents a proposed Vision, Mission Statement, and a 5 year Strategic Plan for the Association. The proposals in this part of the document are by no means final, but they are a result of seven months of workshops, meetings, feedback documents and many, many emails.

The next step is for the proposed Vision, Mission and Strategy to be adopted by the Association so that we can start putting plans into action to achieve our strategic objectives.

Part 1

Summary of Feedback Received

The first strategy discussion document was published in May 2013 and distributed at the General Assembly on the 16th May and also electronically via ScoutKeeper. To date, the document was downloaded 107 times.

After various articles and email reminders, we eventually received a total of 23 feedback documents. 10 were from individuals and 13 were sent on behalf of Groups. This document includes all the feedback received by the end of October 2013.

The major points mentioned in the feedback documents are summarised below.

The feedback is ranked based on the number of times that the specific idea is mentioned in the feedback documents. 1 to 5 mentions equals one star, 6 to 10 equals two stars, 11-15 mentions equals three stars and 16 to 20 mentions equals four stars. Green stars signal agreement and red stars signal disagreement.

We decided to use this system of ranking the ideas mentioned because there were no specific questions made or specific answers expected in the feedback. The system still gives a good idea of which concepts are thought to be important and others that may not be so.

Administration	Agree	Disagree
IHQ should offer services like auditing, risk assessment etc to groups	★ ★ ★ ★	
IHQ's main focus should be on service to groups, not members	★ ★	
We should have a National Resource Centre to support Leaders	★ ★	
We should have official templates of documents that can be downloaded and used by everyone, possibly with Maltese translations	★	
Decisions take too long to implement. We need to review how we manage projects.	★	
We need to reduce and simplify bureaucracy	★	
IHQ could open daily to act as an information centre	★	

Awards for Leaders	Agree	Disagree
The present Leader awards system needs to be overhauled	★ ★ ★ ★	

Building in Floriana	Agree	Disagree
IHQ building needs to be updated to cater for today's needs	★ ★ ★	★

Chief Scout and Chief Commissioner Elections	Agree	Disagree
CS elected, CC appointed	★	★
System should stay as it is	★	
Both CS and CC elected - but only one overall Chief	★	
Commissioners appointed based on their competences and skills	★	
All commissioners should be elected	★	
The top structures at IHQ need to be streamlined	★	
Elected CC & Commissioners who then elect the CS who has no executive powers	★	
Roles are unclear and it is hard to know who to vote for	★	

District Setup	Agree	Disagree
Districts to focus more on groups tailored support	★ ★	
Districts should remain as they are	★	★
DC to be abolished replaced by an HR manager as IHQ District liaison	★	
Districts should change to smaller clusters that are divided according to the resources available	★	
Smaller districts with a GSL as representative on rotation	★	
Redistribution of Groups	★	★
District Ventures or Rovers to support the whole district	★	

Federation with the Malta Girl Guides	Agree	Disagree
Federation with Guides	★ ★	★ ★

Feedback Mechanisms	Agree	Disagree
Feedback mechanisms e.g. an annual questionnaire to all members	★★	

Finance Department	Agree	Disagree
We need a Person or Team in charge of obtaining funds and supporting groups with obtaining funds. Finance is no longer only about bookkeeping.	★★★★	
IHQ should take control of scout shop	★	

Groups	Agree	Disagree
Minimum Quality Standards for Groups (though sometimes this may not always be practical)	★★★★	
There should be a term of office for the GSL. This should be extended to every leader.	★★★	★
Group Leaders & Section Leaders must be accountable for non-performance and non-compliance with regulations.	★★	
Monitoring of progress in Groups by IHQ is necessary.	★★	
A common enforced standard on records, accounts etc should be enforced and monitored	★★	
There should be a guide on how to run a scout group properly	★	
Quality charter for our members	★	★
There should be a formal mechanism of how to choose a GSL	★	

Image	Agree	Disagree
A good quality, professional magazine will help raise our image	★★	★
The branding exercise was done wrongly – there were too many options and the cost was substantial	★★	
We need a good advertising campaign	★	★
Branding should be strengthened and enforced	★	
Branding is necessary for Scouting in Malta to move ahead	★	★
Branding should give more space for group identity	★	
We need a dedicated team for our image	★	

Getting feedback through blogs, live cams also promotes branding	★	
We should have ONE facebook page	★	
Social Media should be used to attract young members	★	

Leaders	Agree	Disagree
Proper Role description on signing of appointment. We should never allow a conflict of interest when taking two roles.	★★	
Our leaders should be better recognised for their efforts and time	★★	★
Section Leaders without official appointments must be abolished	★	

ScoutKeeper	Agree	Disagree
Continue developing ScoutKeeper	★★	
Outsource ScoutKeeper to a commercial company	★	

Staff	Agree	Disagree
Employment of full time administrative staff	★★★★★	
A person is needed to monitor and report back on our strategy	★★★	★
A person is needed to handle the Human Resources of our organisation	★	

Strategy	Agree	Disagree
We need a proper communication strategy that includes Branding and social media	★★	
A strategy for recruiting and managing leaders is necessary	★	



Training and Programme	Agree	Disagree
Untrained leaders must be abolished	★★★★	
Generally happy with the youth programme	★★	
Refresher courses are important, but use “compulsory” as little as possible	★★	

Our courses must be recognised nationally	★★	
Our leader training is professional	★★	
We need support on how to handle kids with Autism etc	★	
Adult training should focus more on the needs of kids today	★	
The youth programme age ranges and sectional changeover need to be explained better	★	★
Length of Woodbadge refresher courses is too long	★	
Training needs to be a bit more tailored to the individual with a holistic approach	★	
We need self-learning / online training	★	
Coffee-to-go events are good !	★	★
Separate Leaders Training and Youth Programme	★	
Training should include a GSL assessment as part of the system ?	★	
Youth Programmes needs a continuous review ?	★	
More attention to conflicts with University exams	★	
Compulsory training should qualify a leader for insurance coverage	★	

Uniform	Agree	Disagree
Uniform must be updated to make it more user friendly	★★	★
Some sort of uniform must remain	★★	
Uniforms must also cater for women (in terms of the cut)	★	
Changing uniforms is a joke because we never do anything about it, just talk	★	
All additional accessories must be removed from uniform (daggers, tigers...)	★	
Amount of variances has become ridiculous	★	

Voice	Agree	Disagree
Government must take us more seriously	★★★★	
The Government should give us a yearly grant	★	

Youth	Agree	Disagree
The Association should include the opinions of young people in its decision-making process	★★★★★	

Unless the concept of a Patrol leaders Council is standardised across the board, young members cannot provide feedback		
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Conclusions

The top 10 concepts that emerge from the feedback are as follows:

1. Employment of full time administrative staff to ensure continuity and stability of our operations, and to increase our capacity to take on projects.
2. A team or person specifically in charge of obtaining (EU and other) funds and providing the necessary administrative support to scout groups. This implies an overhaul of the way we think of finance and how we do our bookkeeping and reporting.
3. A Minimum Quality Standard for Scout Groups. This should be a realistic standard that can be achieved by all groups with a bit of effort, but at the same time the level has to be high enough to cover our legal and governance responsibilities. This is also linked to the concept of monitoring the progress of Groups and discussing the group plan with the GSL and the Scouters who are responsible for implementing it.
4. The association should include the opinions of young people in its decision-making processes. Apart from creating these opportunities, experience has shown that we also need to train our young people in the importance of their involvement.
5. IHQ should offer services like auditing, risk assessment and so on to scout groups. This concept needs to be linked with the structure and function of Districts as an integral part of IHQ.
6. IHQ building needs to be updated to be able to cater for the needs of a modern Scout Association. Many have suggested that a new or renovated building could include fully equipped training rooms, meeting rooms, a conference hall, administrative offices and other facilities that would support the services offered at IHQ. This idea must also be grounded in the financial and funding realities that we face today.
7. Untrained leaders must be a thing of the past. There is wide agreement that the single common factor that directly contributes to the quality of the product we offer to our members is the training of our leaders. The fact that we are a voluntary organisation should not be used as an excuse to be an amateur one.
8. The present Leader awards system needs to be overhauled. Apart from a re-think of whether we thank and motivate our leaders with badges, medals, certificates, pin-badges or some other memento, we also need to motivate our leaders by making our leader training

valuable in terms of the individual's curriculum vitae. This links with the point being made above as well as the idea that a trained leader should earn the right to be insured by the Association – in sharp contrast with someone who is not trained.

9. A term of office for the GSL and other Scouters. More than just thinking about the term of office for one particular post within the scout group, it has been suggested that we take this further and take into consideration whether we implement a proper succession plan within our structures. Taking on the post of GSL (or Commissioner or Section Leader) is a matter of responsibility and commitment. Apart from asking whether a person is prepared to commit to the job for a certain amount of time, we should also ask whether there are properly trained and prepared for the role.
10. Finally, we need a cohesive plan that links our image, our branding, our relations with the authorities, our links with other organisations, and the way in which we communicate both internally and externally. It would include feedback mechanisms that would help us understand in which areas we are doing well and in which areas we need improvement.

A Global Perspective from WOSM

Over the past months, WOSM has been working on an initiative that will help it assess each and every National Scout Association in the World against a fixed set of criteria to be able to understand how well Scouting is being run worldwide. It is estimated that each Scout Organisation would be assessed in a period of four years. The initiative, known as the Global Support Assessment Tool, is expected to be finalised by mid-2014.

The GSAT initiative has no direct bearing on the formulation of our strategy, however it puts into perspective the importance of proper governance principles.

A good example here is the strong lack of understanding in the feedback documents of the difference between the policy-making body and the executive body of the Association and why they must be separate and independent. The multitude of different suggestions for how the Chief Scout and the Chief Commissioner (and in some cases also all the commissioners) should be elected or appointed, and what their role should be made this very clear.

Part 2

Our Vision

To be the leading youth organisation in Malta

Our Mission Statement

**To make a positive impact on society
by providing our Members with a fun and engaging programme,
run by well-trained and motivated Leaders,
in organised and caring Scout Groups,
supported by a well-funded, efficient and effective organisation,
that embraces the principles of Scouting in everything that it does,
and that acts upon to the voice of its members and the needs of society.**

Our Strategy for the next 5 years

- i. To empower our youth members with the opportunity to voice their opinion and ideas in our Group and National Structures, and to give them the necessary knowledge and training to be able to do so effectively.
- ii. To continue to review and update our Youth Programme so that it meets the needs of our youth members, and to monitor and support its implementation and delivery in all our Scout Groups.
- iii. To motivate our leaders by making sure that their training is properly recognised by national authorities and their leadership and service is suitably awarded.
- iv. To strengthen the training of leaders by continuing to make it more accessible, relevant and advantageous; and to set up a National Resource Centre for Leaders to act as a hub for the sharing of ideas and information.
- v. To strengthen our Scout Groups by implementing a Minimum Quality Standard and providing the necessary support for them to achieve and surpass these requirements.
- vi. To assure administrative continuity and good governance by addressing the need for full-time staff, a human resources management function, and by reassessing the structure of Districts and National Teams to make our processes more efficient.
- vii. To strengthen the service offered to Groups by IHQ by providing the necessary training, resources and facilities to national commissioners, staff and officers, so that they can meet and exceed the expectations of our members.

- viii. To assure the financial viability of the organisation by setting up the proper structures for us to tap into available funding, maximise our resources and commercialise some of our operations to support our activities.
- ix. To implement a holistic plan to improve our image with our stakeholders and members, including aspects like our brand, our uniform, our logos, our web-presence, our social media presence, how we ask for and collect feedback, and our communications practices.
- x. To strengthen our relations with the authorities with a view to achieve better recognition for our contribution in society.

The next step

The objective of this project is to propose a strategy to the Scout Association of Malta based on an open discussion and feedback mechanism.

The next steps in the process are:

- To adopt the mission, vision and strategy (amending as necessary);
- To appoint a person or body that will be responsible for reporting back to the General Assembly on the progress made with the proposed strategy;
- To formulate one or more plans that will address the strategy, which would include objectives which are:
 - assigned to a person or entity,
 - specific,
 - measureable,
 - achievable,
 - realistic and
 - time bound;
- The implementation plan would also include a feedback mechanism so that we can periodically check for progress and assess whether the plan is actually helping us achieve the strategic objective – otherwise we would need to step back and re-think the plan.