



Service Civil International

**Incoming Program 2008**  
**"Food and Globalisation, without borders?"**



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## 1. SCI

Service Civil International is an international peace organisation with 43 branches and a growing number of partner organisations worldwide. It was founded in 1920 as a response to the violence and destruction of World War I. The goal of SCI is to promote peace and intercultural understanding through volunteering and international voluntary projects.

Today SCI organises international workcamps in more than 80 countries. In Germany, from 50 to 60 workcamps take place each year. Workcamps offer a positive and practical way of bringing people from different countries and cultures, to live and work together on projects, which benefit local communities and other voluntary organisations, which are working for a more just and peaceful society.

## 2. The Incoming Program

### What is the “Incoming Program?”

The Incoming Program is an exchange programme with our SCI branches in Asia and with our partner organisations in Africa, Latin America and Middle East. Each year, volunteers from the South get the opportunity to stay for 2 months in Europe, hosting by different SCI branches. Thereby, the exchange of volunteers is not only from the North to the South but also in the other way.

This program involves interaction between people with different conceptions about life, different ways of perceiving things and with different point of view. It promotes mutual understanding among nations and shows that people can live and work peacefully towards one common goal.

In September, international volunteers joined in Cologne to exchange and discuss their ideas and knowledge, and live new experiences together.

During one month, the volunteers worked on educational project. They created workshops about a special topic and presented them at schools. This year the topic was “Food and Globalisation: without borders?”

### The participants

16 volunteers participated in the workcamp:

- Jaba and Bhola from India
- Jayanthi from Sri Lanka
- Namatama from Zambia
- Godrick from Kenya
- Komi from Togo
- Yamila from Argentina
- Mahmoud from Jordan
- Christina, Raphaela, Gökce, Susanna, Sarah, Sam, Lisa and Melanie from Germany



4 campleaders – Astrid, Mara, Andre and Carole- took part in the program, coordinated the camp and led some training sessions.

All the participants were already deeply involved in their respective organisations. We had the chance to host very experienced people in the field of youth and volunteering work which created a very rich exchange of experience.

### **3. The topic : “Food and Globalisation: without borders?”**

This year, the topic of the Incoming Program was “*Food and Globalisation: without borders?*”. Since 2007, the rise of prices plunged many areas of the world into a crisis, leading to many riots and instability all over the world. In order to understand the causes and consequences of this crisis, the project was divided in several parts. During the first 10 days, the participants got some knowledge and theoretical background about the topic, as well as educational methods to create the workshops they will perform at schools the following weeks.

#### **The training**

Where is our food produced and consumed? Which are the consequences of our food consumption on the different part of the world? Which problems are faced by North and South countries?

To answer these questions, the participants assisted a training, led by the campleaders, specialists and teachers.

The first day was dedicated to team building and getting to know each other. As we realised that the participants had a lot of knowledge, we tried to integrate them in the different activities and workshops.

To introduce the topic, we started by the consumption analysis and the calculation of the ecological footprint of the group

(which permits to measure the environmental impact of an individual or a population according to their consumption). Then we focused on food production and chose two products (milk and sugar) to illustrate the process and understand the mechanisms of the food industry.

A specialist also introduced the group to the topic of bio fuel, which was very interesting as most of the participants were not familiar with the topic.

One part of the training was also dedicated to the solutions of the food crisis and alternatives to our food consumption. The participants had the opportunity to think about their role of citizen and the actions, which were possible to be taken.

#### **The theatre workshop**

The training also included three sessions of theatre. The two pedagogues used a specific approach called “theatre of the oppressed” where the actors and the audience can participate in the play. It creates a group dynamic as everybody is involved and it impulses discussion among the participants. It was also an opportunity to present the topic in an active way with “image theatre” where the participants developed little scenes out of images about the food crisis.

It enables the participants to increase their confidence and to be prepared to talk in front of the students.





Another derivative of drama was the role-play workshop. The participants also got the opportunity to perform a role-play about the sugar industry and trade. Then they took part in a role-play workshop to learn the different elements to create their own game. The main goal of this workshop was to transform what they learned into an interactive process. They set up a situation of conflict where the participants must be actively engaged to resolve it by negotiating and establishing understanding. It allowed the participants to understand different point of views by playing a character who can be in total self-contradiction.

The week of training finished with the presentation of the German school system in order to have a better understanding of the schools they were going to visit.

Living together for one month was also an opportunity to discover the eating habits in the different part of world. We had the chance to discover the traditional food and habits from the volunteer's countries. The group also tried to adopt a responsible consumption behaviour by buying fair trade, organic and local products.

## Designing the workshops

At the end of the training week, the participants designed their own workshops during three days. They split into 3 groups of 5 or 6 members including representatives of each continent. All of them chose the topic of the food crisis and each group developed the subject in their own way, focusing on different aspects. The volunteers used a lot of methods taught during the training. A group chose the role-play, another one the theatre and the last one some educational games. The participants felt comfortable with the topic and confident to present it to the students.

## 4. Workshops at schools

During the third and fourth weeks the 3 groups of volunteers led their workshop at schools. The purpose was to raise awareness and educate students to the food crisis issue. It is an important tool to encourage change of thinking and behaviour toward citizenship and promotion of sustainable development.

The volunteers visited 7 schools in the area of Cologne and met between 50 and 60 students each time. The students were divided into 3 groups in order to join the workshop, which lasted 4 hours. Since the workshops were realised in English, only pupils from the 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grade could participate.





Example of some activities proposed at schools by the volunteers:

- A presentation about the issue of bio fuels
- A role-play in which the students were playing UN conference about the food crisis.
- An active theatre play to understand the difference in North and South countries.
- A questionnaire about starvation in the world
- An educational game to understand the causes and consequences of food crisis
- A discussion in small groups to find individual solutions to the food crisis.

The Incoming participants introduced games and songs from their countries to warm up and make the group comfortable.

After the first visit to schools, the volunteers worked again on their workshop in order to improve their methods and organisation, manage the time and share the tasks within the group.

Apart from the educational work, the visits to schools were also an opportunity for intercultural exchange between the students and the international participants. Their testimony gave a more concrete insight into the topic and into the realities in South countries.

We were invited by one of the school to their annual party. During one afternoon, we presented the workshops about the

food crisis, we organised some creative activities and sold world food prepared by the group.

## 5. Study part

A cultural program was organised during the free time to discover the German culture and the area of Cologne and Bonn.

We did some visits connected to the topic of “food and globalisation” by visiting and working in ecological farms.

The group had the possibility to visit the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development and discuss cooperation issues and development aids.

The international participants contributed to the preparation seminar for German volunteers where they presented their countries and respective organisations.



The free evenings gave the opportunity for intercultural exchange with the country presentation. They led to many interesting and instructive discussions.

After 4 weeks together, the participants met again in Belgium for the North-South platform meeting of SCI where they could work on the issues of North-South exchange and cooperation.



## 6. Evaluation and feedback

The program has been evaluated all along its implementation. After each session (the training, design the workshop, visit to school), the participants gave their feedback and suggestions how to improve the program.

### The training

The timetable of the first week was very busy. The main comment from the participants was the lack of time, especially to go further about some topics. They liked the balance between theory and practise. They also enjoyed the theatre workshop as well as the role

play. They considered these methods as very useful to pass message and communicate with the students in a different way.

### The schools

The participants were very satisfied with the workshops and the interaction with the students. They felt well prepared and appreciated the contribution they could give to the educational work. As they were staying for 4 hours with the pupils, it was easier to create a friendly and confident atmosphere. The most difficult point was the language barrier. The level of participation was depending on English knowledge of pupils and their confidence to speak it. That's why it was sometimes difficult to communicate with them.

It's complicated to really evaluate the impact of the workshops on the students since their knowledge about the topic were very different.

The feedback was positive. The students liked the methods used and got a good general understanding of the topic. Their main questions about the food crisis were answered.

### The group life

The atmosphere was really pleasant during the workcamp. People got along with each other very quickly and managed to cross the cultural differences with patience and openmindness. The main misunderstandings were coming from the languages because of the different level of English and accents. It was solved by the supportive attitude towards each other. One of the request was to focus more on intercultural communication during the first days, in order to avoid these misunderstandings. The participants also really enjoyed the cultural program and the free time activities.

We can say that this experience was very rewarding concerning the topic we have been working on, concerning the educational work and the meeting with the pupils as the participants felt gaining experience and knowledge. Concerning

a personal point of view, this experience enriched everybody by learning from each other.

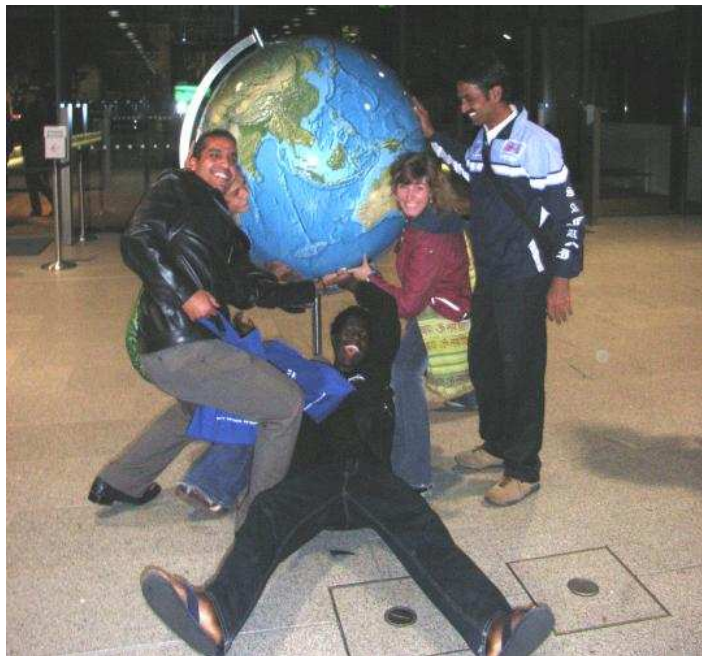
This sentence from a participant represents well the purpose of this program: "With tolerance, consideration and patience you can get along with everyone and deal with everything. You just have to be aware that there are differences".

## 7. Future plans

We want to continue this program next year and the first task will be to find the following topic. The lessons of this year will enable us to improve the program. One of the decision is to create a guideline for camp leaders.

Many ideas have been formed for new project implementation in the South organisations, the participants plan to keep in touch with each other.

Then, a video of the Incoming program was made to promote this project for the another European SCI branches. In this way we would like to welcome more volunteers in the next years.



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