



CWY Experience: Worth its Weight in Gold!

Having your CWY
experience recognized
by your school or employer

**Canada
World
Youth**



**Jeunesse
Canada
Monde**

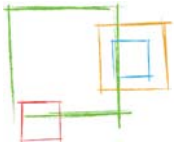


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Introduction

Do you want to obtain credits from your school or have a potential employer recognize the value of your CWY experience?

Then this document is for you!

We have put together some tools which will help you present your CWY experience to your educational institution or employer and highlight the knowledge and skills that you will have acquired during the program. Each young volunteer's experience is different; what you learn will not necessarily be identical to what other young volunteers learn. However, there is a specific set of knowledge and skills that young volunteers develop as a result of CWY's educational approach.

There are **four main sections** to this document:

- 1) A brief overview of Canada World Youth
- 2) A summary of what young volunteers learn from the program, with a breakdown by academic discipline
- 3) Examples of post-secondary institutions that have formally recognized the Canada World Youth experience
- 4) Advice on the process you might need to start with your school before you take part in the CWY program

We would like to help you gain recognition for the knowledge and skills that you will develop through your CWY experience, by describing them in academic terms. This document will help you in this process, but it remains your responsibility at the end of the program to identify what you have learned and how to present this to your school or employer.

We strongly encourage you to talk about your CWY experience and highlight its value as an educational program. It may take some effort and determination, but it is possible to have your experience recognized officially. However, we suggest that you approach your school **before the program starts**. It is much easier for an educational institution to grant credits if an understanding has been reached ahead of time. If you don't manage to do this, don't despair! You may still be able to obtain credits by talking about your experience to someone at your school after you have finished the CWY program.

Research and Programming Department, CANADA WORLD YOUTH



Canada World Youth

Canada World Youth (CWY) aims to prepare a new generation of global citizens through its international educational programs for people aged 17 to 24. Since 1971, more than 31 000 young people from Canada and around the world have participated in CWY programs in 67 countries.

With CWY, you will have an opportunity to enjoy a fulfilling international experience, acquire useful skills for the future, gain a better understanding of global issues, and contribute to the well-being of your community, as well as that of your host communities in the program, in Canada and overseas.

The nature of the experience

Canada World Youth offers a variety of programs which are between three and six months long. For the *Youth Leaders in Action Program*, a group of 18 young volunteers from different cultures live in host families and work as volunteers for a total of six months: three months in a community in Canada and three in an exchange country community.

This experience is demanding, unique and exciting. As a young volunteer, you will be encouraged to become actively involved in your own learning, and will have numerous opportunities to use your creativity and energy to further enrich your experience.

A program based on non-formal education

Most people, when they hear the word “**education**,” think of school and formal education. However, the type of education offered by Canada World Youth is non-formal and experiential. Because there is some structure to the learning and some awareness of objectives, goals and learning processes, this educational approach occupies a middle-ground between formal education and informal education.

Here are some of the basic characteristics of experiential education:

- Learning is derived from real-life situations where you must adapt and reflect.
- You are responsible for your own learning.
- Learning is a collaborative experience whereby everyone learns from one another.
- A facilitator is needed to guide the learning process and offer young volunteers an educational framework.

Qualified **project supervisors** provide you with support throughout the program and guide you in your learning process. They develop an educational plan based on the learning objectives of CWY as well as those of the partner organizations, in which they identify specific program objectives, desired outcomes, and means for reaching these objectives within the context of the host communities and the opportunity for learning which they offer.

What is the Learning folder?

The Learning folder is a tool which will accompany you in your exploration, guiding you in your reflections throughout the program and even afterwards! By encouraging you to ask questions and sharpen your critical thinking skills, this tool will help you take stock of your learning. There is also a self-evaluation questionnaire that will allow you to identify your strengths and weaknesses, define your learning objectives, and continually evaluate your progress.

The areas of learning that are common to the majority of our programs are:

- learning how to learn
- sustainable community development (economic development, civil society and citizenship)
- personal growth (self-esteem, initiative and self-confidence)
- intercultural sensitivity
- responsibility
- critical analysis
- organization
- teamwork and leadership
- intercultural communication
- adaptability and flexibility
- language learning



Young volunteer learning

The program consists of several elements, each of which is conducive to specific types of learning. The following is a summary of the main **educational components** that make up the CWY program; this list will be useful in helping you discuss your CWY experience with schools and potential employers.

Learning folder

- questions and activities on: history, economy, environment and sustainable development, the media, arts, reflection on what it means to be human, government, social services, community, skills, learning environment, intercultural relations and perspectives

Young volunteer orientation

- cross-cultural skills, interpersonal relations in a cross-cultural situation, communication skills (verbal and non-verbal), cultural differences;
- leadership, group moderation, group dynamics/process skills;
- basic principles of Canada World Youth's experiential education program:
 - learning through direct life experiences
 - having a sense of responsibility for one's own learning
 - maximizing personal interactions
 - reflecting on one's experiences
- problem solving techniques in interpersonal relations/cross-cultural settings, conflict resolution.

Canadian phase

Host family

- development of social skills, adaptability, compromise, interpersonal communication
- learning from one another: young volunteers and family - a framework for questions and analysis

- language learning
- cross-cultural skills, adaptability
- values, ethics (comparison between cultures)
- sociology of the family - the family in its community, region and nation
- cultural anthropology - community, region, native people, colonization
- history: of the community, the region, and social, political and economic factors
- problem solving, conflict resolution

Work experience:

- employability skills (adaptability, analysis, teamwork)
- socio-economic structures of community; cultural differences: work ethics, styles, productivity
- economic life of a community/ region
- sociology of the workplace (structures, systems)
- job skills (i.e. wide potential variety)
- human relations, interpersonal skills, communication skills
- integration into work environments
- knowledge of an organization's operations

Educational activities

- principles of learning, the educational process
- planning, organizational and facilitation skills
- skills in research, analysis, synthesis and presentation
- skills in group dynamics/process, leadership, debating ("thinking on one's feet")
- language learning
- intensive and in-depth study of community through families, work placements, institutions, history and ongoing community development processes
- learning about recreational and cultural life through direct participation
- review of program experiences, identification and synthesis of learning
- critical thinking and analysis skills
- oral and written communication skills

- time management, stress reduction
- problem solving, conflict resolution
- creative thinking, independent (self-reliant) thinking
- introduction to and elaboration of concepts and theories of community development (providing a theoretical framework for similar study in exchange country) based upon young volunteers' concrete observations/experiences in the community and region
- understanding the nature and use of theoretical frameworks and other synthesis/analysis tools
- attitudes of openness/receptivity, an inquiring mind, inquiry skills
- environment and ecology

Counterpart (exchange country young volunteer)

- direct experience with an individual from the exchange country
- language, communication, interpersonal and intercultural skills
- factual learning about the exchange country
- introduction to the exchange country and its people in a general way
- cultural sensitivity

Community at large

- values, lifestyles, social structures, role of religion in a community
- impact/role of media
- large and small communities, homogeneous/heterogeneous communities
- how social problems are perceived and dealt with
- consumerism, materialism
- organizations, recreation/leisure, respective roles of social groups, e.g. youth, the aged, women, etc.
- governance

Exchange country phase

- repeat of everything above, in the setting of the exchange country
- increasingly in-depth learning as the program progresses
- strengthening of critical thinking with the change of perspective

Return to Canada

Re-entry session (immediately upon return)

- readaptation and reintegration skills
- self-analysis, coping strategies and skills
- questioning values, attitudes and behaviours
- review/synthesis of experience
- self-determination, personal development planning
- putting the experience into words
- new awareness of the role of active and involved citizens

Sharing experience with community of origin

- understanding of cross-cultural communications, presentation skills, practical application: how to convey the reality of one's experiences in a different culture to people in one's own community
- ability to describe the experience in simple and accessible language
- contrast of Canadian and exchange country communities
- clarification of values: thinking tools
- understanding of one's own experience, motivational force, need to "digest" the experience calmly over time (increased level of self-awareness)

Active participation in an alumni network

- continuing training, education, and resource-sharing opportunities
- develop socio-professional networks through CWY and the Global Citizens for Change coalition
- ability to apply leadership and communication skills to concrete initiatives volunteer opportunities at CWY
- Apply new skills and knowledge while participating in public engagement activities, raising awareness about local, national and global issues
- reflection and action on ways to get involved in the community



Impact assessment 1993-2003

A program that marks you for life

When the Honourable Jacques Hébert (1923-2007) founded Canada World Youth in 1971, he wanted to offer young people from Canada and around the world an opportunity to open themselves to other cultures while acquiring the knowledge and skills needed to become active, engaged citizens of the world.

Thirty-five years later, CWY wanted to find out if its programs were still fulfilling its mission and objectives. We therefore undertook an ambitious process of self-evaluation to determine the impact of our programs on young volunteers and society as a whole. It was a complex process, but our teams rose enthusiastically to the challenge. And the conclusions of the study speak volumes: through its innovative model based on non-formal education, the CWY program **has a profound long-lasting impact** on the young volunteers and members of the host communities. This report is sprinkled with excerpts from the feedback we received from these people, indicating just how strongly the CWY programs affected them for life.

"I was a shy person before this program. I found it hard to make new friends and was cautious about trying new things. The program allowed me to take risks and meet new people, while still in a structured and comforting environment. I grew much more confident about myself as a person, and discovered skills I never knew I had before."

- Canadian young volunteer

A study carried out in five countries

The 2006 assessment was carried out with 578 people, including youths and members of host communities who participated in CWY programs between 1993 and 2003. The sample included Beninese, Cubans, Thais, Ukrainians, and Canadians. The participatory approach adopted provided an avant-garde framework for discussion and analysis in keeping with the principles of non-formal education adopted by CWY. In each country, our university and government partners fully supported this initiative.

What has CWY provided to young volunteers?

The alumni that participated in this study agreed that the CWY program had a **strong, positive** impact on their lives. Through its model of non-formal education, CWY had a remarkable impact on the **values and attitudes** of young people (greater open-mindedness and improved self-confidence) as well as on their **knowledge** (better understanding of themselves and of other countries). CWY also allowed young volunteers to hone their **skills** (communication, learning, and organization) and enabled them to forge **friendships** and make **professional contacts** that will prove useful to them long after the programs ended.

"The knowledge we acquired allowed us to have another vision of the realities of our own country and of the outside world: for example, the host community, the Canadian economy, and economic and political relations between Canada and the United States."

- Beninese young volunteer

In short, this was an experience with a profound impact on the young people's fundamental values, attitudes, and knowledge. It also oriented their choices in terms of study, work, and social action. These are exceptional results, indicating that we are indeed fulfilling our mission: to increase the ability of young people to participate actively in the development of just, harmonious, and sustainable societies.

Non-formal education – a model that has proven its worth

The feedback from alumni and host communities provides conclusive evidence of the benefits of non-formal education. We can be proud of this success, which confirms yet again our international expertise in this area.

The executive summary and synthesis final of the impact assessment are available on our Web site.



Specific learning disciplines

During the program, most young volunteers learn a new language or develop already-existing language skills. However, the other sectors in which young volunteers learn can vary. For example, learning in areas such as social psychology and the anthropology of development may be influenced by the young volunteer's exchange country, work projects, personal interests, and the types of research carried out for educational activities.

During your CWY experience, you will gain knowledge in areas that are directly linked to certain academic disciplines. Even if you do not learn the specific terminology which you would have learned in a more formal setting (such as in a classroom), you will be acquiring equivalent knowledge which may make it possible for you to obtain credits for your CWY program.

Do not hesitate to mention this when discussing your experience with your school or potential employers. Together, you and your school may be able to find a solution (such as writing a special paper for example), which will enable you to make up for your lack of theoretical knowledge and obtain academic credits in exchange.

Take a look at what you might learn during your program. You never know: it might pay off!

Language learning

- Young volunteers acquire a minimum basic vocabulary of 1000 words in a new language (depending on the program). They learn expressions, sentence structures and verb tenses and can apply them to most everyday conversations at home, in the workplace, and at social, cultural or educational events.
- Young volunteers acquire strong practical verbal skills (with an emphasis on communicating complete thoughts and ideas), and corresponding listening skills (enough to be able to understand native speakers of the language).
- Young volunteers acquire some written and grammatical skills, and many actually exceed the basic minimums above.
- The program takes place entirely in the language of the host community; young volunteers experience a complete linguistic and cultural "immersion."

- Language is acquired through a combination of formal methods, independent study, and non-formal (but planned and structured) activities for group or independent learning. Families and counterparts play a major role in this process.

N.B. It is not uncommon for young volunteers to receive credits from universities and colleges for introductory-level language courses.

Human relations

Young volunteers learn about factors which influence interpersonal relations within small groups, and explore appropriate techniques for functioning in such groups.

- The individual: Young volunteers acquire principal notions of personal growth and development, verbal and non-verbal communication, listening and giving feedback, confidence, cooperation, empathy, creativity, tolerance, adaptability, and compromise.
- Diversity : learning of concepts associated to diversity; deconstruction of prejudices, ethnocentrism and racism;
- Gender-based approaches: learning of basic concepts, capacity to analyze the different opportunities offered to men and women, the roles that are socially assigned to them and the relations that exist between them;
- Learning/training groups: Young volunteers learn first-hand about factors such as cohesion, participation, leadership, membership, and obstacles to communication.
- Work in small groups: Young volunteers learn to carry out needs assessments, identify objectives, and facilitate and evaluate their activities.
- Young volunteers gain skills in conflict resolution.
- Young volunteers also sharpen their skills in observation, facilitation and small-group analysis.

Social psychology and human relations

- Young volunteers acquire notions of elementary cultural psychology through an understanding of the factors affecting human relations, and through an improved comprehension of communication techniques and social phenomena.

- Young volunteers explore the roles of attitudes, opinions, prejudices, propaganda, publicity, and rumours in human relations.
- Young volunteers learn about the psychology of groups and group dynamics, and acquire skills in leadership and teamwork.
- Young volunteers are able to apply these techniques and methods to other group situations.

Social psychology and cross-cultural relations

- Young volunteers carry out an analysis of the processes of interpersonal contact and develop the ability to establish and maintain contacts with others.
- This analysis includes an understanding of the process of communication: the speaker, the receiver and the message, obstacles to communication and ways of overcoming them, the circumstances of the contact (special variations according to the circumstances), and individual and group contact.
- Young volunteers learn about the affective climate of contact.
- Factors of time, place, and social framework are explored.
- Young volunteers learn the importance of internal and psychological factors, such as personal perspectives, first impressions, emotions, personal attitudes and motivation.
- Young volunteers learn the importance of variables of age, gender and hierarchy.
- Young volunteers are able to distinguish between personal identity and cultural identity.
- Young volunteers explore ways of overcoming specific difficulties.

Social and cultural anthropology

- Young volunteers gain an understanding of cultural relativism through knowledge of other societies, leading to a comprehension of the principles by which culture is organized. They explore the relationships between various elements of culture and carry out a comparative overview of two cultures.
- Young volunteers learn basic concepts of culture, evolution, structure and function, and develop their observation and analytical skills both in a theoretical framework and through the study of specific cultural phenomena of Canadian and exchange country societies.

Anthropology of development

- Young volunteers gain an understanding of the complexity of development by identifying the internal and external forces that affect it and by exploring diverse approaches to solving development problems.
- Shared responsibility; relations between “developing” and “developed” countries.
- Young volunteers carry out a critical analysis of their case study country in terms of:
 - its geography and demography
 - its history (a review of pre-colonial, colonial and modern history, including a look at history from the viewpoint of the colonized)
 - its socio-economic situation, utilization of resources, etc.

Geography (Canada and exchange country)

- Young volunteers acquire a methodology for understanding the essence of a geographic region and the relationships which bind the diverse components of an area.
- Young volunteers reflect on and define the notion of “region,” recognize different types of regions, learn about how to study them, and carry out a parallel comparative study of Canada and the exchange country region.

Development

- Young volunteers make a critical analysis of the various factors that impede development and of the existence of major inequalities in the economies of developing countries. Young volunteers carry out a case study/comparative study of Canada and the exchange country.
- Young volunteers reflect on definitions of “development” and “under-development” and on the various aspects which come into play: geography and demographics, the economic character of the region, the socio-cultural and political character of the region, etc.
- Young volunteers explore possible solutions to problems of under-development, such as short and long-term planning, international cooperation (and the problems that come along with it), etc.

Politics

- Young volunteers develop an awareness of the many types of existing political systems, and of the relationships between a system and its socio-economic context. A comparative look at Canada and the exchange country is taken.
- Young volunteers also explore the socio-cultural factors of political systems and gain an understanding of the internal logic of a given political system by virtue of the historical, social and economic context within which it exists.

Communications (group facilitation skills)

- Young volunteers gain a practical understanding of various teaching and learning styles and their cultural derivations, and how to deal with these differences.
- Young volunteers develop skills in planning, preparing and delivering oral and visual presentations.
- This often includes an involvement in audio-visual productions (video or slide/sound shows).
- Young volunteers gain exposure to the realities of group dynamics and develop skills in group facilitation.



Special program for CWY young volunteers

Cégep Marie-Victorin - Quebec

A partner of Canada World Youth for more than 25 years, Marie-Victorin College ("Cégep") recognizes that Canada World Youth programs give young volunteers a unique experiential educational experience. For this reason, the college offers young volunteers the opportunity to complete certain college-level courses during the program and to receive official recognition for this learning. A team of experienced professors who are familiar with the nature of the program provide teaching material and course guides that are specifically adapted to the learning experience that young volunteers will have. These tools guide the students in their learning and encourage them to be fully involved in the program, for their own personal benefit and for that

of the group. The special methodology for these courses features directed readings and an analysis grid to be completed by each young volunteer on his/her experience. Young volunteers may also register for the following college courses before the start of their program: Cultural Diversity and Intercultural Relations, Arts and Culture, Social Involvement and Cultural Immersion, Environment Exploration, Interaction and Communication, and English and Spanish language courses. Credits for these courses are transferable to other Cégeps in Quebec and are also recognized by universities within and outside of Quebec for the purposes of admission.

Cégep Marie-Victorin has been offering an “Accreditation of Collegiate Studies” (A.E.C.) in community development and intercultural relations since 1996 to Canadian young volunteers who are Quebec residents. Following the presentation of a portfolio that young volunteers prepare during the program, they receive a Diploma of Collegiate Studies in Community Development and Intercultural Relations from the Quebec Ministry of Education, Leisure and Sport. This constitutes an official recognition of the learning acquired during the Canada World Youth program.

For more information:

Dominique Roy at (514) 328-3832 or by email at:

dominique.roy@collegemv.qc.ca

www.collegemv.qc.ca/fr/formation_continue_et_services_aux_entreprises/programmes/46

Dalhousie University – Nova Scotia

Through its International Development Studies (IDS) program, Dalhousie University in Halifax offers credits for “Development Studies through Canada World Youth.” This course is intended for Canada World Youth young volunteers who wish to earn academic credit for their experience. It includes pre-departure consultation (by phone), and requires young volunteers to keep a journal of observations and field notes during the program. Upon returning to Canada, young volunteers are expected to submit a 30 to 40-page field report that follows a detailed outline.

You can also receive credits by registering in the Experiential Learning courses (INTD 3108 in Canada and INTD 3109 abroad).

For more information, please contact the Department of International Development Studies at ids@dal.ca.

Or visit the web site at the following address: <http://www.dal.ca/ids>

Capilano College

Capilano University, in North Vancouver, British Columbia, offers credit for two courses in its program [GLOBAL STEWARDSHIP 101 (1.5 credits) and GLOBAL STEWARDSHIP 201 (1.5 credits)] for students who have completed Canada World Youth and are accepted into the Global Stewardship Program. Young volunteers receive credits by providing a letter certifying that they have completed a CWY program.

For more information:

Cam Sylvester
Convenor, Global Stewardship Program
csylvest@capilanou.ca
604-986-1911 (2463)

www.capilanou.ca/globalstewardship



Advice on accreditation processes

The previous sections have provided useful information for your education institution. The following lines will aim at providing general advice on some of the aspects that your institution will consider. Every institution has a different process and it is advisable to become familiar with it before you take part in the CWY program. In this way, you will be able to foresee your college/university requirements and ask CWY for more information or support.

Most postsecondary education institutions that assess experiential learning agree on the following:

- **Postsecondary institutions assess learning gained through**

experience, as opposed to the experience itself. Stating your CWY program in your résumé and attaching a copy of your certificate is not sufficient, as this step only documents your experience. In contrast, if you identify a specific course and, through a learning portfolio, you demonstrate that you assimilated key concepts, learned problem-solving methods and drew your own conclusions, then you will be in business. You will be capable to demonstrate that you had an equivalent learning to the learning you would have gained with a formal course.

- **Formal education institutions assess conceptual frameworks and transferable skills beyond a single context.** Examining different concepts in a portfolio or an essay that helps you demonstrate that you gained college-level or university-level concepts and skills that can apply to a different context than the CWY program is a good practice that you might want to consider.
- **Postsecondary institutions are increasingly developing expertise and tools to recognize community-based and experiential learning.** Your request for credits for your CWY experience will be assessed by appropriate experts. Your college or university may already have a resource person and tools that can help you foresee all the requirements that you will need to fulfill after you come back from your CWY experience. In this way, you will be able to compile information during your program and adapt your Learning folder to your accreditation needs.

Some of the possibilities for accreditation can be:

- a postsecondary education institution recognizes your learning when reviewing your admission application;
- your college or university might exempt you from taking courses (e.g. reduce the length of a qualifying year of study); or
- your college or university might grant credits within your program of study (e.g. acknowledge your learning as the equivalent of a 3-credit course).



Conclusion

The CWY experience upon which you are about to embark will be rich in emotions and learning. We hope that this document has helped you to understand the full extent of the program's educational potential, and that it will prove useful in having your experience recognized by your school or employer.

Of course, there is much more to gain from this enriching experience than a few academic credits; the program will have a positive impact on many different aspects of your life. At the same time, it is important that educational institutions recognize the value of the CWY experience, so we strongly encourage you to demonstrate the many ways in which the program will be beneficial to you!

If you succeed in getting academic credits other than the ones above, please let us know. We will then be able to communicate this information to other CWY young volunteers who can also benefit from the academic recognition of our programs. You can forward this information to the Volunteer Support Unit at volunteer@cwj-jcm.org.



Appendix

Overview of the experience

Preparation

Several months before their program starts, young volunteers receive several documents that will help them complete their preparation. They fundraise a minimum amount of \$2100 and obtain all the official documents they need for the program. Canada World Youth provides various tools to support them, including presentation letters, access to a preparation Website, access to a toll free number for specific questions, online chat sessions, as well as the opportunity to attend preparation meetings.

The program

Each Canadian young volunteer is paired with a counterpart from the exchange country for the duration of the program. A group consists of nine young volunteers from various regions of Canada, and nine young volunteers from the exchange country. Qualified project supervisors from Canada and the exchange country accompany and supervise the group throughout the program.

Host communities

Family life

Each pair of young volunteers (one from Canada and one from the exchange country) lives with a family in a host community, both in Canada and in the exchange country. These host families have volunteered to become involved in this valuable cross-cultural experience and are generally not the young volunteers' own families. This aspect of the program helps young volunteers integrate into their host communities and to better understand the culture in which their learning takes place.

Work experience

Young volunteers also become integrated into their new milieu by volunteering on work projects in areas such as new media and new information technologies, environment and biodiversity, agriculture and forestry, community development, education, and health. As well as benefiting the host community, these projects provide young volunteers with solid work experience and the opportunity to develop a wide variety of important skills which increase their employability.

By working with others and sharing in their daily lives, young volunteers learn about different cultures and other ways of life, and develop a more profound understanding of issues related to local, regional and international development.

Educational activities

Young volunteers enrich their learning experience by organizing and participating in various educational activities. By asking questions, young volunteers open many doors behind which lie numerous treasure troves of information about their host communities. Young volunteers' questions will

spark communication with their host families and other members of the community, at the same time sharpening their thought processes and critical analysis skills.

These activities, whether they are individual research projects, in-depth team discussions or group community projects, enable young volunteers to examine and explore issues related to their work projects, their host communities, and regional and international development.

Pre-departure meeting

Halfway through the program, teams of young volunteers meet to evaluate and reflect on their experiences and learning. At the same time, they prepare to travel to the other country for the second phase of the program, which follows the same structure as the first phase.

Return to Canada

At the end of the program, Canadian young volunteers carry out a final evaluation of their experience and learning, as they prepare to return home and share their experiences with the individuals and groups that supported them.

The future

Canada World Youth young volunteers learn about different cultures and values, and gain valuable knowledge and skills while contributing to the development of communities. At the same time, they develop a greater sense of confidence in their ability to effect change and are inspired to become more active citizens.

Vision statement

Canada World Youth envisions a world of active, engaged global citizens who share responsibility for the well-being of all people and the planet.

Mission statement

Canada World Youth's mission is to increase the ability of people, and especially youth, to participate actively in the development of just, harmonious and sustainable societies.

Organizational goals

1. To foster the acquisition of the knowledge, skills, attitudes and values necessary for active community involvement.
2. To create a network of people of different backgrounds and cultures united by mutual respect and understanding.
3. To establish partnerships with countries, organizations, communities, groups and individuals that will serve as a basis for effective action.

Statement of Values

We believe that as an organization we must reflect the following values in all of our relationships, policies and structures:

1. Everyone is capable of learning and changing.
2. People of different backgrounds and cultures can learn to understand and respect one another.
3. A true development process is one that:
 - a) ensures all youth the right and opportunity to play active roles;
 - b) promotes the full and equal participation of women;
 - c) is inclusive of people in all of their diversity;
 - d) respects cultures and local realities, and affirms the Universal Declaration of Human Rights;
 - e) builds sustainable social and economic life that meets everyone's basic needs;
 - f) respects the environment;
 - g) creates greater peace, justice, dignity and equality for all human beings.