

# Corporate Vision

**Shanti Volunteer Association (SVA)**



**Mid-term Action Plan  
2014-2018**

## 1. Developing the Mid-term Action Plan: Background

Shanti Volunteer Association (SVA) was founded in 1981 with the objective of providing relief to Cambodian refugees who had been driven from their homeland. We began, a single picture book in hand, by becoming playmates for children living in refugee camps. We sought to stand alongside those who were in danger of losing hope for a better tomorrow, to lend a caring ear, and to actively join in contemplating what could and should be done for Cambodian refugees.

Thirty-three years later, SVA continues its activities in diverse settings ranging from country villages and mountain regions, to disaster-affected areas and urban slums. SVA seeks to provide support to those suffering from poverty, discrimination and psychological ramifications. In particular, SVA focuses its activities on historically marginalized groups such as children, women, and minorities. We strive to make access to education a right, and provide books as a means for individuals to maximize their opportunities for a brighter and better future.

In this age of globalization, the world faces far-ranging problems such as environmental destruction and pollution, and the widening gap between rich and poor. These problems are of such a scale that it is difficult for a single country to tackle them by itself. The United Nations Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) were established so that national governments, international organizations, NGOs and civil societies could work together to address these issues. Today, as we approach the 2015 target date for the MDGs, there is increased discussion regarding the post-2015 global development agenda, including the promotion of human rights and fundamental freedoms for all. We feel that this is in line with SVA's mission to realize a peaceful society in which humanity's dignity and diversity are respected, and in which we can live and learn alongside one another.

In this year 2014, SVA has developed a mid-term action plan for the period 2014-2018, reflecting what we believe the organization should strive to achieve within the next five years. The mid-term action plan consists of two primary objectives, as follows:

1. To promote libraries and reading, so that even those in difficult or disadvantaged situations may utilize literacy and access to books to cultivate their ability to think critically and solve problems.
2. To advocate the mainstreaming of libraries and reading promotion in the education policies of national and regional governments, as well as related institutions.

Reading promotion and libraries can be considered central pillars in the education development activities undertaken by SVA thus far. We wish to continue to communicate to even more people the immense potential of books and reading for creating new opportunities and fashioning a brighter future.

Through learning to recognize letters, remembering new words and gaining knowledge, reading books teaches not only the joy of learning, but also critical thinking and problem solving. In passing down the culture and history of our predecessors, books allow us to broaden our horizons regarding the world. Finally, through exposing us to different beliefs and value systems, books help foster consideration and respect for others as well as inspire *joie de vivre* and pride.

Toward a world in which "unfamiliarity with books" does not exist.

## 2. Our Mission, Vision and Values

### Our Mission

We aspire to build a society in which the people of the world are able to live together and learn together in peace (*shanti*), respecting human dignity and diversity.

### Our Vision

We seek to become an NGO that works alongside individuals, and empowers them to think critically and creatively in finding solutions for both personal and societal issues/problems.

### Our Values

1. To share the pain, sorrows and joys of those we serve by walking alongside them and moving forward, hand in hand.
2. To respect each region's traditional cultures, peoples, religions, and languages/dialects.
3. To embrace "development" directed and sustained by the local community.
4. To act as a catalyst for social development and interconnection.

### Mid-term Goals

By the end of the year 2018, SVA will:

1. Promote libraries and reading, so that even those in difficult or disadvantaged situations may utilize literacy and access to books to cultivate their ability to think critically and solve problems.

Indicators: 1. Inclusion of the most vulnerable populations in the target group  
2. Number of participants/users

2. Advocate the mainstreaming of libraries and reading promotion in the education policies of national and regional governments, as well as related institutions.

Indicators: 1. Existence of such a policy, and the contents of the policy  
2. Extent of policy implementation

### 3. Priority Areas and Targets

In order to work toward these goals, SVA will set down the following priority areas and targets.

#### 1 Program Development and Operations

Education and culture continue to be central to SVA's programs. Our domestic and overseas offices have undertaken a wide range of formal and non-formal education initiatives in relation to the promotion of reading and libraries.

##### 1.1) Developing Projects with a Clear Purpose and Direction

- ◆ Our projects in all countries will be designed to incorporate activities that clearly reflect and further our objective of library and reading promotion.
- ◆ Guiding principles will be established for each project area to maintain coherency.

##### 1.2) Strengthening Expertise in Education and Culture Programs

- ◆ In all offices, systematic education and training will be conducted in order to nurture and develop the abilities of staff members.
- ◆ Plans for programs to promote libraries will be formulated and executed according to standards in line with country guidelines designated by SVA.
- ◆ Special advisors (such as teachers, librarians, architects, writers, editors, designers and system engineers) will be strategically consulted and utilized in planning and implementing programs.

##### 1.3) Strengthening Program Oversight Management and Improving the Quality of Project Outcomes

- ◆ Program oversight management will be strengthened so that for all projects, the current progress of activities, the degree to which goals are reached, and any issues can be clearly grasped, such that any necessary measures to succeed in goal achievement are evident and can be pursued.
- ◆ The responsible persons for programs in all international offices will master basic knowledge regarding the rights-based approach to development and education.

##### 1.4) Establishing a New Development Policy for International Programs and Emergency Relief Efforts

- ◆ The direction of program development and involvement in countries where SVA is newly active will be decided in the near future.
- ◆ By the end of 2015, SVA will conclude its direct activities in Northern Japan related to the 2011 Great East Japan Earthquake and Tsunami, with some activities being handed over to local NPOs, community organizations, and public institutions. The definite direction of relief efforts in Fukushima will be established within the year 2014.
- ◆ SVA will continually and proactively develop both domestic and international emergency relief programs.

#### 2 Networking and Advocacy

SVA cannot alone achieve its vision of a world in which both children and adults are guaranteed access to libraries and opportunities for reading; networking and cooperation with government agencies, libraries, other NGOs, and community organizations are indispensable to making headway. Furthermore, in order for such a world to be realized, the idea that access to

libraries and opportunities for reading is a human right, and the conviction that it is the responsibility of governments to guarantee that right, must first be understood and reflected in the laws of each country. Therefore, it is SVA's ambition, as well as the objective of its networking, to spread the idea that access for both children and adults to libraries and opportunities for reading is a right, regardless of the region's situation (emergency, recovery, development, etc.). SVA will strive to achieve this by the following means:

### **2.1) Promoting the Human Right of Access to Libraries and Books among Governments and Aid Agencies**

- ◆ Advocacy specialists will be stationed at each overseas office as well as in the Tokyo office's Planning and Research Unit, who will head the organization and delivery of policy advocacy and campaigns.
- ◆ Cooperation will be actively pursued and cultivated with other NGOs and library organizations involved in reading promotion and libraries.

## **3 Public Relations, Finances and Fundraising**

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SVA will dedicate extra resources to publicity in order to increase public awareness of the importance of promoting reading and library access, as well as of the relevant circumstances and issues in our target countries. We hope to widen support and participation. To achieve this goal, we will strive to meet the following targets:

### **3.1) Increasing Recognition of SVA and Enlarging the Donor Base**

- ◆ Through the development of our publicity activities, we will aim to increase the number of donors by 2,000 individuals, organizations and companies each year: this means 4,000 new donors by 2015 and 10,000 new donors by the end of 2018. We will also aim to increase the percentage of donors in the 20-30 age bracket from 14% (as of the end of 2012) to 25%.
- ◆ We will promote two-way communication with our donors. By proposing and providing easily accessible opportunities for donor participation, we will strive to increase the current repeat rate for donations from 30% to 40%.

### **3.2) Diversifying Funding Sources and Strengthening Fundraising Capacity**

- ◆ In addition to posting specialist staff in PR and fund-raising, who will act as the driving force behind marketing reform in our organization, we will proactively incorporate support from the board of directors and expert advisors to develop a system of fundraising promotion.
- ◆ We will aim to increase general donations by 5,000,000 yen every year. The target for the end of 2018 is an increase of 25,000,000 yen in donations compared to donations in 2013.
- ◆ An increased focus will be placed on fundraising. In addition to planning and developing new fundraising programs, the present "donation menu" (options for donating to the cause of the donor's choice as well as the type of contribution) and revenue strategy will be updated and managed as necessary.

### **3.3) Strengthening Local Fundraising by Overseas SVA Offices**

- ◆ By the time that the next term's Policy for Localization of Management in Overseas Offices (2016-2018) is drawn up, each SVA office will have determined an appropriate fundraising goal and strategy for that country, commencing a "fundraising challenge" to raise that amount from local contributions.

## **4 Organizational Management and Administration**

SVA will continue to nurture its organizational strength and the talents of its personnel so that it may better respond to the needs of the people it serves and more efficiently achieve results. In doing so, SVA hopes to maximize how many people it reaches, assist them to bring about positive change themselves, and provide support during that process of transformation and growth. Central to our efforts will be systematic development of the organization, creation of a management policy that anticipates future trends and issues, nurturing of organizational capacity, and working toward a self-sufficient administration.

### **4.1) Strengthening Organizational and Project Management Capacity**

- ◆ SVA will make use of a system of delegated responsibilities and subcommittee meetings for the board of directors, which will coordinate with the secretariat regarding the direction and desired character of projects overseas and in Japan, and draw up a revamped basic strategy for fundraising and marketing.
- ◆ Evaluation will be carried out periodically to monitor the progress of goals and targets set out in this mid-term action plan.

### **4.2) Promoting Localization of Management in Overseas Offices**

- ◆ The Sikkha Asia Foundation (Thailand) will be established as an independent, self-supporting entity by the end of 2014.
- ◆ SVA will continue to further implement the initial 2013-2015 Policy for Localization of Management in Overseas Offices, and boost efforts spearheaded by local staff to expand SVA's programs and active territories. SVA will review progress and draw up the next term's Policy for Localization of Management in Overseas Offices accordingly.
- ◆ In line with the 2013-2015 Organizational Capacity Building Plan, efforts centered on the Tokyo Office will be made to systematically strengthen SVA's program administration, policy proposals, finances, organizational management, human resources development, and information management.

### **4.3) Improving Organizational Efficiency through Information and Experience Sharing**

- ◆ By the end of 2015, all important documents will be translated into English. From 2016, it will be a matter of policy that documents be available in both Japanese and English.
- ◆ An Information Sharing Taskforce will be established responsible for creating (virtual) access to documents from all SVA offices.

### **4.4) Promoting Gender Mainstreaming**

- ◆ A gender equality policy will be established by the end of 2014 in order to promote gender equality within the organization administration. Action will be taken to remedy the imbalance of the male to female ratio in managerial positions and the board of directors, so as to increase female representation.
- ◆ To promote gender equality within project design and implementation, a gender mainstreaming checklist to be used from the time of project design will be regularly consulted.

## **5 Human Resources Development**

An indispensable component in realizing SVA's mission is the cultivation of the talents of our domestic and international staff. As of 1 April 2013, there are 150 individuals working as SVA staff (85 abroad and 65 domestically). So that staff may continue to develop their capacity mutually respect and value one another, as well as feel pride and joy in their work, the following will be undertaken:

- ◆ During the year 2014, SVA will devise a Fundamental Policy for Human Resources Development, stipulating how best to cultivate the talents of staff and foster model employees.
- ◆ For overseas offices, a Human Resources Development Plan will be devised and updated every three years in accordance with the Fundamental Policy for Human Resources Development and the Policy for Localization of Management in Overseas Offices (created November 2011).

For domestic offices, a Human Resources Development Plan will be devised based on the Fundamental Policy for Human Resources Development. This will be put into effect in 2015, and its results will be monitored.