SOCIETY OF SAINT VINCENT DE PAUL

COUNCIL GENERAL INTERNATIONAL

SSVP PLUS PROJECT

PROJECT MANUAL

September 2021

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1 - MOTIVATION

"I want to gather the whole world in a great Network of Charity" (Antoine Frederic Ozanam). The wish of the principal co-founder of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul has always inspired the International General Council (CGI). This is expressed in the CGI Strategic Plan:

> **7. EXPANSION**
>
> *Presence in all countries of the world.*

A key element of the Strategic Plan, the SSVP PLUS Project was initiated by the CGI Board to bring together efforts of the International Structure aimed at establishing the Society in those countries where it is not present.

This document establishes the procedures for the SSVP PLUS Project, the roles of the International Structure members and the process for accessing the resources necessary.

2 - STAKEHOLDERS

The SSVP PLUS Project engages the following members of the SSVP International Structure:

2.1 – International General President (IGP) - Principal project sponsor, responsible for guiding the strategic direction and allocating the resources necessary for the execution of the project.

2.2 – International Vice-President for Structure - Responsible for coordinating the International Structure to collaborate in the execution of the project.

2.3 - SSVP PLUS Project General Coordinator - Project Manager, responsible for managing the project, establishing priorities, and reporting the outcomes to the CGI board.

2.4 – International Territorial Vice President (ITVP) – Responsible for the execution of the project in the field, for contacting the project supporters in each country and organizing the tasks to be undertaken.

2.5 - Zone Coordinator - Member of the ITVP's team, supports the ITVP in coordinating actions in each country, and may participate in visitation.

2.6 - Thematic Coordinator – A member of the ITVP's team responsible for the coordination of Formation and Training, Special Projects or Youth, who supports the ITVP in the coordination of

actions in a country, participating in visitation, especially focused on training the new Conference members.

2.7 – Partner National Council – National Councils within the Zone that collaborate with CGI by supporting the project with materials and funds.

2.8 – Vincentian Family – The branches of the Vincentian Family in the countries identified for the SSVP PLUS Project that can be contacted for support of the project, especially in contacting the local Church, suggesting opportunities for visitation and helping to identify people who may be interested in participating in the SSVP.

3 – IMPLEMENTATION

3.1 - Eligible Countries

The SSVP PLUS Project aims to take the SSVP to countries where the Society is not yet present. The prime objective of the project is to found at least one Conference in each country. Countries where the Society has been active but are currently without any Conference activity are within the scope of the project.

Countries where the SSVP is weak and/or in need of restructuring do not fall within the scope of the project, and the reinforcement/restructuring actions must be undertaken by the ITVP responsible for the area where the country is located, using the resources available for this type of action, such as projects financed by the International Commission for Aid and Development (CIAD) or through financial support from another SSVP National Council.

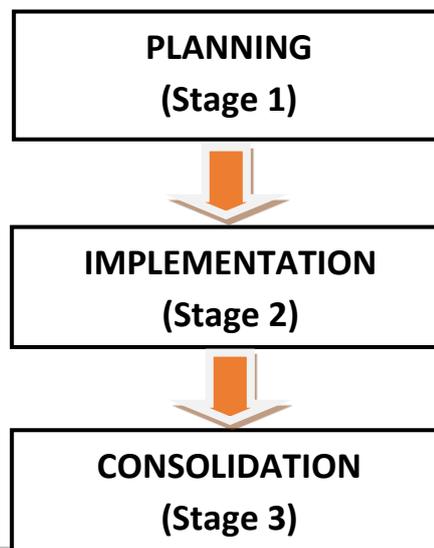The countries where the SSVP PLUS Project will be focused have been assigned one of 3 priorities:
- Priority 1 - Countries with a good chance of success.
- Priority 2 - Countries with a medium chance of success.
- Priority 3 - Countries with little chance of success.

The prioritizing considers the Catholic percentage of the population and the presence of a branch of the Vincentian Family that could support establishing the first SSVP Conference in the country.

The list of countries included in the project is in Annex 1.

3.2 - Project Execution

Implementing the SSVP in a new country should follow three stages:

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        PLANNING
        (Stage 1)
           ↓
      IMPLEMENTATION
        (Stage 2)
           ↓
      CONSOLIDATION
        (Stage 3)
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3.2.1 - Planning

The key objective of this stage is to develop a plan for the first visitation. This will include establishing what local support may exist to identify people who could become the first SSVP Conference, facilitate contacts with the Catholic Church hierarchy and the local community and identify other factors that may facilitate or impede the team's action.

During the planning stage the team should complete the following steps:

- Study the country to become familiar with its culture, religiosity, political situation, and economic conditions, especially concerning poverty.
- Know the structure of the local Church: dioceses, parishes, and social actions.
- Examine the policies of the local Bishops as expressed through pastoral documents. See if they have published any public statements about social action for the poor.
- Identify the presence of branches of the Vincentian Family, especially the Congregation of the Mission (CM), Daughters of Charity (DC) and Vincentian Marian Youth (VMY) in the country.
- Establish contact with the branches of Vincentian Family and inform them of our intention to establish the SSVP in the country. Contact other groups suggested by members of the Vincentian Family in the country.

- Develop good relationships with local contacts to follow up on the planning. Make known the actions of the international SSVP through the CGI homepage and the electronic newsletter Ozanam Network.

- Prepare reports, folders, banners, and other promotional materials to be distributed in advance or during visitation or to be displayed in local parishes. This promotional material must be prepared in the language of the country and, if possible, customized in the colors of the country or the local Church. It is also recommended to take copies of the SSVP Rule and books on the SSVP, San Vincent de Paul and the seven SSVP Founders during visitation.

- Prepare guidelines for establishing the first Conference that can be used by the people who agree to form it so that they have resources to assist them in functioning as a Conference.

- Communicate with the bishop of the diocese and arrange to visit him at the first opportunity. This visit should include a presentation about the SSVP, its mission to serve the poorest and our objectives in the country. Present to him a letter from SSVP International General President and, if appropriate, from the Congregation of the Mission (CM). The bishop's formal support for the establishment of the SSVP in his diocese must be sought.

- Identify any existing services to the poor promoted by the local Church, such as Caritas, and develop a plan to manage the relationship between the Society and any such services.

- Conduct a SWOT analysis to identify the Strength, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats that may arise in establishing the Society in the country. This analysis should include religious, political, cultural, social, language and economic factors.

- Consideration of the governance structure and process for the Society in the country. How will the Conference be supported initially? What is the likelihood of developing more than one Conference reasonably quickly and establishing a local Council that could unite the Conferences and become a National Council? What legal entity must be considered for the new Society consistent with local law? What requirements or limitations exist for establishing a bank account for the Society?

- Prepare the program for the first visit to the country.

The plan will include a schedule of activities including visits to parishes to seek the support of priests, meetings with local supporters and meetings with previously identified people, especially

those who may constitute the core of the first SSVP Conference. It is highly desirable to include visits to local media (newspaper, magazine, radio program or TV), especially media from the Catholic community.

The planning stage may include a preliminary visit to the country to consolidate and validate the planning. This visit should be no more than 3 days, and by one or two people and include:

- The visit to the bishop of the Diocese where the first Conference will be founded.
- Visiting contacts from the Vincentian Family or the local Church who support establishing the SSVP in the country to discuss with them the plans for establishing the Society. Listen carefully and record any feedback or advice and include such advice in the visit report.
- Visit other relevant contacts if appropriate.

The plan developed during this stage must be sent to the SSVP Plus Coordinator. If a preliminary visit is made, then the visit report must also be provided.

3.2.2 - Implementation

In this stage the team visits the country to carry out the plan to promote the SSVP's work. A key outcome of the visit is to establish one or more groups ready to start the process to become a SSVP Conference.

The visitation team may comprise ITVP team members or a specially trained team as decided by the ITVP after consulting the SSVP PLUS Project General Coordinator.

The visitation team should bring material produced for promoting the SSVP such as banners, folders, Vincentian training materials and other information.

The visit for establishing the first SSVP Conference could take from 7 to 10 days but may require less time according to the local circumstances.

When a group to form a new Conference is identified, the team should spend time with them to ensure they understand what is required and what support they will receive. The team should provide the group with all the materials necessary for the establishment of the new Conference.

At the end of this visit a report must be provided to the SSVP Project Coordinator.

3.2.3 – Consolidation

This stage includes holding preparatory meetings for adopting the SSVP Conference model, formally founding the new Conference, and training of the new SSVP members.

Soon after the visit to establish the first SSVP Conference, the new group should start preparatory meetings to become a SSVP Conference. These meetings should follow the structure of a Conference meeting according to the guidelines provided by the visitation team. The meetings should be focused on:

- Prayer according to Vincentian practice.
- Spiritual reflection.
- Discussion of the nature and needs of poverty in the area.
- Discussion of opportunities to respond to those needs,
- Discussion of resources needed to respond to those needs and how they might be acquired.
- Fraternal sharing (Secret collection).
- Discussion of Vincentian values and how they are reflected in our approaches to people, and
- The relationship between the work of the Society and the values of Catholic teaching.

It is recommended that the group hold 6 to 10 weekly preparatory meetings before the formal foundation of the new SSVP Conference. In these meetings the group will take the first steps to evolve into the SSVP Conference format. The Zone Coordinator should support these meetings by providing materials, agenda proposals, themes for group reflection and general information on Vincentian work. This support can be delivered using virtual meetings tool.

After the preparatory meetings, the ITVP should, with the agreement of the new group, schedule a date for the formal foundation of the new Conference and training for the new SSVP members.

A follow-up visit should be arranged for the foundation ceremony of the new Conference. The team should comprise the ITVP, Zone Coordinator and Formation and Training Coordinator. In

addition to helping the new SSVP Conference organize the foundation ceremony, they should conduct initial training of the new members, preferably using the formation and training modules produced by CGI. It is also recommended that the team provide the group with all the materials necessary for the regular Conference meetings.

With the founding of the new SSVP Conference a new country will be connected to the SSVP International Confederation and the ITVP will support this new national representation.

4 - RESOURCES

To carry out the activities of the SSVP PLUS Project, CGI has a budget specially allocated for project expenses.

The SSVP PLUS Project can also be financed by donations from National Councils who wish to collaborate (Partner National Council).

These resources can be used for travel expenses (air tickets, hotels, food) as well as for the production of materials to promote the SSVP (materials in the language of the country, for example) and sending training materials to the members of the new SSVP Conference.

The request for resources for the SSVP PLUS project must be forwarded by the ITVP for approval by the SSVP PLUS Project General Coordinator, with a copy to the International Vice-President for Structure. At the end of the project, the ITVP shall forward a report of expenditure to the CGI Treasurer.

5 - COMMUNICATION

Throughout the process of establishing contacts and visitation, constant communication with the SSVP PLUS Project General Coordinator is essential. Reports at each stage must be provided to the Coordinator and feedback welcomed.

The SSVP PLUS Project General Coordinator will present periodic reports on the project to the CGI board. ITVPs and their teams report regularly on the achievements and difficulties encountered to the General Coordinator.

After each visit a detailed report is to be sent, which will be used to inform CGI of the project's progress and for publication in CGI media.

6 - MAINTENANCE

Following the foundation of the new SSVP Conference and the initial training of new SSVP members, the task under the SSVP PLUS Project will be complete. From then, the ITVP assumes responsibility of supporting the new Conference and ensuring that the SSVP grows in its service to the poorest in the new country.

The ITVP will assign a Zone Coordinator for the new country and inform CGI's Head Office about the new national representation including the name of the new SSVP Conference, the name of the President, contact details and information on the start and end of the mandate.

Preparation:

      Brother Júlio César Marques de Lima

      SSVP PLUS Project General Coordinator - CGI

7 - ANNEX

SSVP PLUS PROJECT

COUNTRIES AND PRIORITIES

Country	FamVin	Catholic Church	% Catholic	Majority	Language	Priority	ITVP
Cape Verde	N	Y	90%	Christian	Portuguese	1	AF2
Comoros	N	Y	0.5%	Islamic	French	3	AF3
Djibouti	N	Y	1.0%	Islamic	French	3	AF3
Gabon	N	Y	50.0%	Christian	French	1	AF3
Guinea-Conakry	Y	Y	9,7%	Islamic	French	2	AF3
Equatorial Guinea	Y	Y	87.0%	Christian	Spanish, Portuguese French	2	AF2
Libya	N	Y	0,7%	Islamic	English	3	MENA
Marocco	Y	Y	0,1%	Islamic	French	2	MENA
Mauritania	Y	Y	0.5%	Islamic	French	3	AF3
Niger	N	Y	0,1%	Islamic	English	3	AF3
Seychelles	N	Y	76,0%	Christian	French	1	AF3
Somalia	N	N	0,0%	Islamic	English	3	AF2
Tunisia	Y	Y	0,2%	Islamic	French	2	MENA
Afghanistan	N	N	0,0%	Islamic	English	3	AS1
Saudi Arabia	N	Y	2,5%	Islamic	English	3	MENA
Bahrain	N	Y	8,9%	Islamic	English	3	MENA
Bhutan	N	Y	0,1%	Buddhist	English	3	AS1
China	Y	Y	0,7%	Irreligion, Hindu, Buddhist	English	1	AS2
North Korea	N	N	0,0%	Irreligion	English	3	AS2
Utd. Arab. Emirates	N	Y	5,0%	Islamic	English	3	MENA
Iran	Y	Y	0,1%	Islamic	English	2	MENA
Kazakhstan	N	Y	0,6%	Islamic	English	2	EUR2
Kyrgyzstan	N	Y	0,1%	Islamic	English	3	AS1
Kuwait	N	Y	6,1%	Islamic	English	3	MENA
Maldives	N	N	0,0%	Islamic	English	3	AS1
Oman	N	Y	4,1%	Islamic	English	3	MENA
Uzbekistan	N	Y	0,0%	Islamic	English	3	AS1
Qatar	N	Y	5,8%	Islamic	English	3	MENA
Tajikistan	N	N	0,0%	Islamic	English	3	AS1
Turkmenistan	N	N	0,0%	Islamic	English	3	AS1
Yemen	N	N	0,0%	Islamic	English	3	MENA

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COUNTRIES AND PRIORITIES

Country	FamVin	Catholic Church	% Catholic	Majority	Language	Priority	ITVP
Andorra	N	Y	88,2%	Christian	Spanish, French	1	EUR1
Armenia	N	Y	1,0%	Christian	English	2	EUR1
Azerbaijan	N	N	0,0%	Islamic	English	3	AS1
Belarus	Y	Y	7,1%	Christian	English	2	EUR2
Bulgaria	Y	Y	0,5%	Christian	English	2	EUR2
Denmark	Y	Y	0,7%	Christian	English	2	EUR1
Estonia	N	Y	0,3%	Irreligion	English	2	EUR2
Finland	N	Y	0,2%	Christian	English	2	EUR1
Georgia	N	Y	0,8%	Christian	English	2	EUR2
Greece	N	Y	0,4%	Christian	English	1	EUR1
Iceland	N	Y	78,3%	Christian	English	2	EUR1
Latvia	N	Y	19,1%	Christian	English	2	EUR2
Liechtenstein	N	Y	75,9%	Christian	English	2	EUR1
Moldova	Y	Y	0,5%	Christian	English	2	EUR2
Montenegro	Y	Y	3,4%	Christian	English	2	EUR2
Norway	Y	Y	2,4%	Christian	English	2	EUR1
San Marino	N	Y	90,5%	Christian	English	2	EUR1
Slovenia	Y	Y	53,1%	Christian	English	1	EUR2
Sweden	Y	Y	1,6%	Christian	English	2	EUR1
Marshall Islands	N	Y	8,4%	Christian	English	2	OCN
Nauru	N	Y	33,2%	Christian	English	2	OCN
Palau	N	Y	41,6%	Christian	English	2	OCN
Papua New Guinea	Y	Y	27,0%	Christian	English	1	OCN
Tuvalu	N	Y	1,0%	Christian	English	2	OCN