

# International Conference

## *Report*



**CCIVS**  
70 YEARS  
Coordinating Committee for  
International Voluntary Service  
1948-2018



**IVS** for **Climate  
Justice**

Co-funded by the  
Erasmus+ Programme  
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# IVS for Climate Justice Don't just say it! Do it! Volunteering to Create a Network of Knowledge through Ecological & Sustainable Practice

## International Conference Report

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Conference hosted by CCIVS in Paris, France, from 21 to 25 April 2018.

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Project Coordinator



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## Summary

The international conference's main intention was to provide the various organisations present with useful and necessary information and tools to carry out their respective projects over the coming years relating to the IVS for Climate Justice programme.

With the presence of the experts who would lead the workshops and the impact measurement, the event allowed for a rich exchange among the consortium as they agreed on a common way of cooperation, shared information about their local projects as well as common challenges and good practices.

Furthermore, there was an open forum “Just Volunteers: The Transformational Power of International Voluntary Actions for Climate Justice and Freedom of Movement” in Paris, France (23 April 2018) held at UNESCO House under the kind patronage of UNESCO, in which participants would be able to further delve into the importance of volunteering as it relates to fighting climate change.

# Programme

	19	20	21	22 April	23 April	24 April	25
Morning	Arrival team			Introductions What is IVS against Climate Change What are the SDGs	Expectations Sharing on a local level. What are local needs How to approach local communities and engage them in activities	Introduction to monitoring and evaluation tools	Departure pax Evaluation team
Morning				Prep team	Prep team	Coffee Break	
Afternoon	Arrival team			Talking about the broader theme - presentation of the whole project and process	How is natural building and sustainable food production seen on a local level How do we change possibly negative views towards 'old' techniques	How to implement impact measurement on the project - impact measurement tools explained	
Afternoon				Prep team	Arrival pax	Introduction to Sustainable Food Production	
				Lunch			
				Coffee Break			
				Introduction to Bio Construction	Forum UNESCO: Just Volunteers: The Transformational Power of International Voluntary Actions for Climate Justice and Freedom of Movement”	Next Steps Evaluation	
				Evaluation groups			
				Team meeting			
				Dinner		Dinner out	
						Parisian Evening	

## Welcoming Evening

On the arrival day, the representatives of the consortium of the project “IVS for Climate Justice Don’t just say it! Do it! Volunteering to create a network of knowledge through ecological & sustainable practice’ were given the logistics briefing and welcome pack, including the sustainability guidelines during the event.

In the evening, there was a short introductory and ice-breaking session. Participants took the opportunity to take some good rest after the long travel and get prepared for the next days’ programme!



## Day 1 – Building a Solid Cooperation Foundation

### What Is Our Climate Justice Project?

Representatives from partner organisations of the project participated in ice-breaking and team building activities meant to acquaint themselves with one another in an interactive manner, and strengthen the group dynamics.





Once the team building activities were finished, participants were asked to write down, on two separate cards, the ideas they would like to contribute to the conference and the knowledge they would eventually gain (red coloured cards represent their personal contributions whereas the green ones signify the overall and more holistic approach).

They were divided into two groups and discussed about their expectations and contributions. Various ideas emanated from the discussions including:

- Opportunities related to working and celebrating CCIVS' 70th year anniversary
- Actions we (the organisations) can all do in our community
- Gain more insight on the process of the project
- The will to implement more physical action and be more participative
- Acquiring knowledge and plans relating to project ideas
- Contributions to the project (creating green villages)

- Planning for the training and executing their own projects
- Broadening the development of their projects and acquiring more tools to do so
- Climate change and deforestation in various countries
- How bioconstruction will function; learning what bioconstruction really is, letting them (other participants) know how things are done in their respective countries
- Acquiring ideas relating to fighting climate change, methods that will be less effective in terms of a negative connotation to the climate
- Contributing in terms of sharing project ideas and by way of various experiences
- Reducing carbon emissions via campaigning
- Coming up with some concrete actions that organisations can unanimously utilise together.
- Connection between heritage and climate change; in Heritage, natural resources are used (in Uganada) via organic (bio) construction. A desire to build actions which are more relevant to these communities
- More holistic approaches
- Reducing deforestation, find other alternatives
- Acknowledging the differences between local and global actions
- Reducing the consumption of meat; making an attempt to shift cultural norms towards a more sustainable future – meat alternatives etc...

After having given participants a few minutes to discuss and come up with ideas such as these, the expert team presented the schedule for the forthcoming days. Furthermore, they announced that specialists would answer questions and address their concerns at the forum on the 23<sup>rd</sup> of April.

Victoria Lovelock, CCIVS's director, then went on to address the campaigns main goals and give participants a brief overview of its



history; Two or three years ago, a meeting took place regarding climate change. The consensus determined that a project would be created, uniting all the other individual actions together from other organisations. The CCIVS General Assembly determined that a project would be done on sustainable food production and bio-construction; the project proposal was then approved by the CCIVS members. A consensus was also reached that it would also be CCIVS' main subject matter for its 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary.



Moreover, in furtherance of bringing more validity to the project, external expertise would be needed – hence the reason why the forum is being hosted. Another important question was also to valorise the projects and ensure they would actually be ecological and healthy to both people and the environment. Examples of this include the shift away from methods and materials, including concrete construction, to more viable and sustainable alternatives in Argentina.

Additionally, a general debrief was given on the project and its roadmap for the approaching years. This included the two upcoming trainings in Ecuador and India in 2018.

## Establish a Common Working Way and Knowledge Management

Using the World Café method, participants organised themselves into four groups, comprising of two thematic workshop trainings, one being in India, the other in Ecuador. The two other café tables offered participants the chance to better understand the financial aspects and coordination of the project and discuss ways to improve communication and knowledge management amongst each other. The goal of this activity was to get the consortium as familiar as possible with the different dimensions of the project in order to better prepare their organisations for the project as a whole.



### **Workshop Training on Sustainable Food Production in India:**

Regarding the project being hosted in India, Kate Kurtis, one of the experts, outlined the framework of the project, stating that its main focus regards food production. The principle idea is to create a permaculture design via practical demonstrations with a

theoretical implementation on how to design a well-balanced and holistic system. Thus, at the end of the training, participants would be able to choose a small but applicable design and/or action that would be easily attainable.

Various speakers and professionals will assist in the execution of this training including a permaculture teacher and farmer from Nepal. Likewise, they hope to have another expert on natural farming speak to the participants at the training. A follow-up action will then help group participants into small councils of friends via six modules to help increase the likelihood of their ideas actually being implemented. With these modules, they would be able to share ideas effortlessly, allowing them to perhaps even partner up together. To facilitate these actions, a digital package containing useful materials with videos and information will be given with each module too. Assignments will also be attached to the modules, measuring the success and effectiveness of the project thus far; these assignments will also measure how successful or how far the participants have gotten with their respective actions.

Nevertheless, the topics discussed in India will have to be kept generalized due to the internationality of the training; a more inductive approach would also help participants implement similar actions, but in their own respective countries that may vary in climate.

Consequently, there won't be a specific focus on particular countries' needs regarding this specific topic. Instead, the implementation and method(s) will be diversified via crash courses. Furthermore, there will be more of a focus on creating and regenerating forests to quickly produce yield from cash crops.



### **Workshop Training on Bio-construction in Ecuador:**

This café table's goal was to share knowledge in a positive manner and give the participating organisations who would be sending participants an idea of what kind of activities would be incorporated into the training.

The earth is resourceful in nature, hence, the workshop in Ecuador will focus on bio-construction and earth construction and finding viable alternatives to using imported materials. Furthermore, it will also be made clear that it is important for each community to share their local techniques and try to incorporate them into the training with the methodology focusing on both theoretical and practical aspects of the course.

The preliminary stages of the training would focus on the presentation of the course, system, needs, and local techniques while the latter stages of the training would focus on more hands-on activities such as soil and earth construction. Participants would also be taught to recognize and differentiate between the different types of soil present.

Likewise, participants will gain knowledge on what types of soil and construction materials are available in their respective countries, so that they would eventually be able to emulate what had been created in Ecuador.

The participants' knowledge will also be complemented in terms of learning how to create an ecologically friendly edifice; they will be taught how to plaster walls and utilize thermal insulation as a means to reducing energy consumption. Likewise, part of the project will also be focused on utilizing as much space as possible and that means making an attempt at creating green roofs.



### **Coordination and Financial Aspects:**

Participants were given a general debrief on how CCIVS would coordinate and assist them through the planning, implementation and quality monitoring process of the project cycle, as well as the financial guidelines.

It was made clear that the importance of being able to transfer knowledge internally was also important. Hence, the knowledge learnt from this conference should be

transferred back to their team(s) efficiently. Participants were also urged to help facilitate communication between CCIVS and their organisations. Furthermore, general information relating to the standard procedure for calls, fostering interaction between CCIVS and the partners organisations was brought up as an important aspect of being in the consortium.



## Communication and Promotion

Lastly, this group gave participants the chance to share their ideas regarding the internal communication and external promotion actions, including how to raise awareness among their young participants and local communities, to maintain a good relationship with the stakeholders, to identify potential funders etc.



Regardless, the intention of this activity was to demonstrate the positive ideas that emanate from food production.

Subsequently, to give participants an even better understanding of how intertwined food is with the survival of every and any living organism, Kate initiated an activity that everyone participated in called “Everything Eats”. Participants were handed cards with animals and vegetation in which they were meant to make an attempt at connecting to other people’s cards via a string while standing in a circle. This eventually went to show that food and life is intertwined – a sustainable network of various types of food and animals is required to maintain life.

After the activity involving participant’s discovering the importance of food in relation to life, a presentation was given on permaculture, outlining the benefits of implementing this system throughout the participant’s respective countries.

Permaculture, according to Kate, involved working directly with nature instead of contorting its form; it distinguished the relation between people, the economy, businesses, and the nature and minimizes exploitation and harm to animals. Moreover, an activity aimed at facilitating participants’ knowledge of permaculture was conducted; one card was handed out to every three people. This was meant to make them aware of the long-term repercussions that certain bad-practices would entail on our environment. In short, instead of consistently being interim, people should attempt at understanding how these bad-practices, such as industrialized farming, may impact future generations.

Similarly, permaculture exemplifies the idea of living in consciously designed landscapes which mimic natural patterns.

Participants also gained first-hand knowledge regarding different composting and soil improvement practices/techniques available at their disposition and to assist in the initiation of their own projects. Water management was also another subject matter that was brought forward. Many of the issues discussed around water management pertained to various climate-specific strategies as well as learning to design resilient and sustainable solutions. This would be attainable via small-scale, bio-intensive, productive, and interconnected systems. In other words, projects would need to be small-scale, produce yield, and most importantly, they would need to optimize available resources and space as the participants’ countries all contain different soils, environments, and climates.

## On Bio-construction and the Workshop

The final presentation of the day was conducted by Ariel Gonzalez and Josefina Maria Gatti of the University of Santa Fe, Argentina. Their principle focus was on bio-construction, giving participants more knowledge and skills to utilise and implement into practice via projects and local actions.

Firstly, it was made clear that bio-construction doesn't only involve the construction of edifices such as house; it is also relevant to the ways and tools humans use to interact with ecology in general. The main purpose of utilizing bio-construction as an alternative to typical construction methods is to curve climate change through building more environmentally friendly edifices. Regardless of whether living standards have risen, the use of today's methods of construction has led to various ecological and health issues. The intended purpose of recovering natural and more sustainable ways of building would equate to a safer and humane environment.

Participants were given a brief rundown on what bio-construction actually consists of; that is using natural and local indigenous materials. Likewise, an illustration of the greenhouse effect was given to show just how much humans have sped up the rate of climate change.

The presentation outlined five goals for both the participants and society in general to try to aim for:

- 1- Reducing CO<sub>2</sub>;
- 2- Utilizing renewable energy sources;
- 3- Reduction consumption of raw materials;
- 4- Waste Reduction;
- 5- Improvement in quality of life

For example, the use of wood would permit for more efficiency in the designing of houses while green roofs would bring many benefits to the public and private spheres.

Other methods such as Earth Construction, which involve the using bricks made out of clayed earth via the combination of water and straw, have other exceptional advantages such as:

- Economically beneficial
- Reduction of non-renewable materials consumption
- Reduction of waste generation
- Energy consumption and co2 emissions
- Thermal insulation and thermal inertia
- Superior indoor air quality

Participants were also encouraged to ask questions at the end of the presentation. Participants were curious about how excavated areas could be revalorised; the solution that was mentioned was to fill the areas up with water and create ponds. Moreover, one of the main local actions where much of this would be implemented is in Ecuador; the project will take place in the mountains where volunteers will assist in building a village using some of the aforementioned methods.

The day was concluded with dinner shortly after this presentation. The first day was quite informative for participants as it gave them a general debrief and a substantial amount of in-depth knowledge that they would be able to utilize in the coming days and months to implement a local action of their own.

## Day 2 – Institutional Event and the Forum in Unesco

In the morning, participants continued discussing and working on their local actions proposal. Peter Dogse, Co-Chair, Executive Secretariat, and member of the UNESCO Task Team on Climate Change joined the panel discussion with the participants.

Firstly, all participants expressed that it is important that their projects are addressed at a local level and that they have clear and visible ties to climate justice.



Furthermore, participants expressed many concerns such as:

- Laura Vass (SCI Sweden): The need to move towards a more self-sufficient and sustainable future through permaculture and maintaining a tie via social media
- Nicholas Mannoukas (VAP): We speak about two subjects; energy consumption and the need to be self-sustainable. We also need to focus on reforestation, and creating villages with sections specialized in contributing in certain ways while engaging the community as a whole. VAP has already created a community in most of their electricity is created off-grid via wind turbines.

- Kolawole Aganran (VWAN): Massive deforestation and rapid industrialization has led to an increase in pollution and wealth inequality; there are a lack of financial resources. Global warming and climate change haven't been brought to the forefront of people's attention yet, however, this could change via making people more aware of the problems faced in Nigeria.
- Ratherford Mwaruta (ZWA): Food and medicine needs to be more widely available for locals and they also need to be convinced to protect their local indigenous biosphere. Our project will be aimed at connecting the locals' knowledge regarding medicine and linking it to modern-day practices with the involvement of the local youth as well.
- Brinda Mrignaini (SVI Mauritius): Working on diminishing the levels of pollution via the cleaning of lakes, rivers, and beaches. This could also be avoided by educating the local population regarding water pollution and giving them the opportunity to plant trees and other types of vegetation. Most importantly, access to clean water is a human right, therefore water services shouldn't be privatized.

Mr. Peter Dogse answered how they would be able to relate these various local initiatives stated to something more global. The specialist, who had been a part of UNESCO for 30 years, worked in both urban and rural communities, giving him a good contrast between how more developed communities are impacted by climate change in comparison with the poorer and more rural ones. One issue that both communities have in common is education and whether it is easily accessible to people. Regarding medication, the specialist expressed his zeal towards natural solutions; nature provides us with things that can easily heal us. Likewise, the specialist agreed that people aren't really aware of what is happening in terms of climate change as it may not impact them directly yet.

The solution would be to create a long-lasting solution. Unfortunately, many countries have politically appointed commissions in which UNESCO has no official affiliations with. Likewise, most ministries of cultures tend to focus on theoretical aspects regarding climate related issues.

In the afternoon, participants attended the forum “Just Volunteers: The Transformational Power of International Voluntary Actions for Climate Justice and Freedom of Movement” in the Unesco.

The Programme of the Forum:

<p>14:30 – 14:50</p>	<p><b><i>Opening Session</i></b></p> <p><i>Official Speech</i>  <b>Ms Ingrid Danckaerts</b>   President of CCIVS  A Brief Introduction to the Importance of Volunteering in the Field of Peace and Human Rights and for Climate Justice</p> <p><i>Keynote Speaker</i>  <b>Dr. Mechtild Rössler</b>   Director of the UNESCO World Heritage Centre and Secretary to the World Heritage Convention</p>
<p>14:50 – 15:20</p>	<p><b><i>The Impact of International Voluntary Service</i></b></p> <p><b>Mr Francesco Volpini</b>   School of Social Work, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign  " Just Volunteers? The Art of Non Formal Education at Work: A Look at IVS Impact Beyond The Magic"</p>
<p>15:20 – 15:40</p>	<p><b><i>Testimonies from the Field</i></b></p> <p>Volunteers and their Social Engagement</p>
<p>15:40 – 17:15</p>	<p><b><i>Round Table from Past to Future - What are the Challenges for the Future? How can Volunteering Contribute to Human Rights, Peace and Climate Justice</i></b></p> <p><b>Moderator: Mr Bogdan Imre</b>   General Secretary of CCIVS</p> <p><b>Ms Małgorzata Tur</b>   SCI International President  International Voluntary Service: A Historical Perspective</p> <p><b>Ms Katuscia Eroe</b>   Responsible for the Energy Sector Legambiente Onlus International Voluntary Service and its Role in the Fight for Climate Justice</p> <p><b>Ms Kazumi Ikeda-Larhed</b>   Deputy Director Partnerships and South-South Cooperation Division (DPS) - Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)  How Volunteers in the FAO Support the Organisations Strategic Objectives in Relation to Climate Justice</p> <p><b>Dr. Simona Costanzo-Sow</b>   Lead, Policy Coherence, UNSSC Knowledge Centre for Sustainable Development</p>

	<p>The Role of Volunteers and Volunteer Organisations in Contributing to the 2030 Agenda</p> <p><b>Mr Peter Dogse</b>   Co-Chair, Executive Secretariat, UNESCO Task Team on Climate Change  The UNESCO Strategy on Climate Change - How can Volunteers Actively Engage?</p> <p><b>Questions and Interactions with the audience</b></p>
<p>17:15 – 17:30</p>	<p><i>Closing Session</i></p> <p><i>Concluding Remarks</i>  <b>Mr Gianni Orsini</b>   Former President of CCIVS (1998-2004)</p> <p><i>Acknowledgements and Closing</i>  <b>Ms Victoria Lovelock</b>   CCIVS Director</p>

The participants had the opportunity to have a deeper understanding on the climate issue and the insights and actions from different actors and institutions. They also actively participated in the panel discussion with the guest speakers, and advocated their stand.



There was a networking reception session, where the participants could get new contacts, have face-to-face talks with different stakeholders, promote their initiatives and look for new partnership. The exhibition space showcased and highlighted the action camps on climate justice

and how they valorise the harmony with the nature and respect the eco-system through the promotion of traditional and eco-friendly techniques.





## Day 3 – Working Towards A More Sustainable Path

The last day of the international conference offered participants a chance to learn more about how their local actions could be successfully implemented and transmit a message on a global scale.

### Impact Measurement

Francesco Volpini, expert from the University of Illinois hosted an impact measurement workshop throughout the whole morning aimed at giving participants the tools and skills to understand how to measure the success of their projects. The workshop was conducted in a way to that would allow participants to understand the very meaning and methodology of impact measurement.

#### **Impact Measurement:**

- ◇Adaptation: adapt the research to your goals. We need to find what we are interested to find out.
- ◇Impact measurement is to re-assess what you are doing, to make sure that our goals are achieved or even not achieved.
- ◇For volunteers: impact measure makes volunteers realise what they have done, to have some reflection, and to have some feedbacks from the organisation and the community, & to share goals with volunteers and others (organisations & community).
- ◇The themes of the camps have an impact on the projects.

- ◇Counting such as counting ‘emissions/meals to serve’ = part of your research is not related to all the projects but it must be related to your object/ your own project.

Furthermore, it was stated that Questions represent what **we** need to know in relation to our goals. These constituted of:

**1. GOALS:** Why do we need to know that? It is not really the same goals of the research.

- ◇UNDERSTAND: Participants concerns
- ◇IMPROVE: Perceived problems
- ◇VALORISE: Organisational goals: showing others that what we are doing is good like to point out what are volunteers are doing and how beautiful is it or how bad is it.

**2. Research Question:** What do you need to know? Is the impact positive or negative?

**3. Methods:** what kind of data will answer these questions? Do we have a special tool that measure the impact of this project (Are there many people benefited from raising awareness sessions for example?).

- Survey (to respect privacy laws) and online questions. For interviews on a local community (also respecting everyone and do good)
- ◇Research skills and preferred style of research
- ◇Ethical standards
- ◇Research settings

**4. Conceptual framework:** What do you think is going on? It is more about comparisons of the beginning of the project and the middle and then the final product? Less garbage on the beach for ex?

- ◇What contributes? Your experience, volunteers get involved (V -Camp leaders-trainers and so on). Research to measure the work (Cultural learning)
- Organisational experience
- Existing theory and prior research
- Exploratory and pilot research

**5. Validity:** how might you be wrong?



These five questions that one must ask oneself form the principles of what we constitute of impact measurement, according to Francesco. Furthermore, various other questions that participants may have had in mind were answered:

◊ **What do we need to know? (research questions)**

IVS impact on the local communities?

◊◊ **Why do I need to know (goals)?**

To understand, Improve and valorise IVS practice at the community level.

◊◊ **What kind of data will answer the questions?**

Interviews with key local representatives from selected hosting communities.

◊ **Analysis methods**

Coding up and down: Develop a matrix, cross-comparison participatory approach.

Use a simplified tool. Coding: identify themes in the interview through two ways:

**coding down** = you have your codes/pre-organised box & **coding up** = to read the interview and the interviewee tells you something new, surprising and that you would never expect.

◊ **Potential conclusions**

The results of our research: intercultural learning, active participation & conflict management. Technical realisations.

Environmental sustainability & health heritage & inclusion & poverty reduction.

#### ◇◇Validity threats

Researchers bias influencing collection and/or interpretation limited sample and representative. Partners feel obliged to tell only positive things.

Participants were made aware that it is also important to focus more on qualitative research, bringing in multiple perspectives on the events and creating multiple vantage points on a single event. Regarding interviews; interviewees need to be comfortable to ensure the responses are as genuine as possible. What all organisations should look for are for responses to come out on a bell-curve format, evenly distributed along the curve. Participants also need to be selected properly so that data can be collected accordingly.

Other points were brought up such as:

- ◇Lesson on how to properly collect data from participants and volunteers via Excel and other software
- ◇Setting up multiple data points and how to calculate correlations and various other factors and calculations
- How to differentiate between different statistical modules; creating an individualized statistical module tailored to each organization
- ◇Using data to improve and increase the productivity of volunteers; also shedding light on individuals and examining their individual productivity levels

The session on impact measurement came to an end with a workshop conducted with the intention of helping participants implement and test what they had retained from the session. The workshop resulted as follows:

Step 1. Participants Identify Several Categories

Step 2. Macro Categories Are Chosen

Step 3a. Each Group Worked on Two Macro Categories To Define Objectives

## Step 3b. Each Group Creates Questions from The Objectives

### Good Practices Sharing

After lunch, a presentation was given on the projects as good practices sharing. This project, titled “Sustainable Agriculture Project – Kundapur” would focus on developing a sustainable and environmentally friendly farm to grow various types of vegetation.

Various points were brought up throughout the presentation including:

#### **What does Sustainable agriculture mean to us?**

- Holistic approach towards farming
- Respect for nature is a priority
- Optimal use of all natural resources
- No use of chemical fertilizers

#### **Which Natural Resources are going to be used?**

- The sun helps foster growth for flora and fauna

Other techniques and specific details that would assist in the facilitation of this project include:

- Nursery management: convenient, sustainable, practical, and also leads to an increased survival rate amongst the planted vegetation.
- Bee keeping
- Medicinal gardening: meant to raise awareness of the benefits of medicinal planting
- “Azolla” Cultivation: Aquatic plants which would yield high levels of protein; good for cattle and easy to grow
- Organic fertilizers: Includes compost, cow dung, dry leaves, etc...



Participants were also given the floor to briefly share their local action proposals, for example:

- CID – Workcamp in the mountains connected to bioconstruction which will be tied to the Ecuador training; taking back techniques from the region
- UVDA – Constructing a museum but at the same time creating awareness because there are landslides
- VIN – people that want to rebuild their houses that were affected by the earthquake a few years back so they want to initiate projects to rebuild the houses. They train volunteers to rebuild houses. Furthermore, they've already begun the reconstruction of the community learning centers
- VWAN – Bioconstruction of a farmhouse in an eco village in Nigeria; very close to the Atlantic Ocean
- VSA – The aim is to create more harmony between nature and the people, creating more clay houses
- SCI Sweden – Plan to build more houses in an eco-village; with a plan to build a new main house around tiny houses
- ICYE Honduras – No project as of now, however, will begin to build houses with wood and natural resources. Will share this knowledge after the training and implement a similar action in Honduras
- SJ – regional delegations being sent. Welcoming volunteers year-round; creating a project garden
- BVBP Peru – Built a kitchen with clay; built 10 of these co kitchens with Canadian and Peruvian volunteers
- ...



After having discussed their individual projects in relation to the one taking place in Ecuador, the participants were arranged into four groups in which they were able to discuss the challenges.

The first group pointed out that the main challenge is to really put points out to people. They found that it would be easier to write points down on paper which would allow the volunteers and other participants to conceptualize the project.

The second group found that it is incredibly important to have a common action especially with regards to the projects with volunteers and local actions. The third group brought up similar points too, however, they differed with respect to wanting to increase local food production and minimize industrialized foods. The fourth group shared each other's contacts and common difficulties.

Afterwards, Shinichiro Kaizawa from NICE Japan gave a short presentation on his organization's aim and example in relation to combating climate change. NICE's main goal

is to try to reduce emissions of carbon dioxide or greenhouse gasses via a carbon offset project. This would be done via calculation how much carbon is emitted via travel and trying to offset that by using more sustainable alternatives such as train travel instead of air travel.

## Evaluation and Concluding Remarks

Towards the end of the conference, there was an evaluation session in which participants were able to express what benefits had come out of the event for them. Many of them expressed their great joy in meeting people they had previously only spoken to via email; although they may have already known of each other, it was astounding for them to be able to meet, in person. Likewise, people were also able to add additional contacts to their networks and really forge connections and bonds with people and other organisations throughout the globe.

Many of the participants were also very pleased to have gained more insight on the projects themselves and how they would be executed; meetings and conferences such as these are really important and informative as they give participants the chance to have a more in-depth perspective of what is to come.



In conclusion, the participants were extremely satisfied with the conference as they believe it brought energy and life to the IVS for Climate Justice project. It was also fascinating for the participants, coming from every corner of the globe, to have been able to participate in this conference together as it demonstrated, regardless of the differences between their countries, that they all share a common goal.



**We are ready to promote and construct a more sustainable environment!**



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