

Solidarity Action Day Guide for Beginners



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Dear reader,

Welcome to the Solidarity Action Day Guide for Beginners, our manual to support you in organising a Solidarity Action Day.

As you are reading this guide, you might already have had many thoughts about the Solidarity Action Day you want to organise, or you might only have heard of the concept. No matter whether you have a big, national organisation behind you, or just a loosely organised group of passionate friends, this manual is our tool to get you going on the road to a Solidarity Action Day. We designed it to provide answers to many different questions, from the basics of what a Solidarity Action Day actually is to practical questions, like how to deal with insurance for participants. Though circumstances might vary drastically from country to country and from organiser to organiser, we tried to compile experiences of SAME members and general tips and tricks to help you along the way.

All this is due to the fact that we in SAME believe in the importance of the Solidarity Action Day – the importance of youth taking informed action in times when facts sometimes seem as fluid as water and action sometimes feels useless. No matter what the change you want to see is, or how many people you think you can organise, the actions you take are important. When many people act locally while thinking globally, we believe substantial change is possible.

We wish you all the luck in organising your Solidarity Action Day.

Best wishes and kind regards,
your team from SAME

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 SAME - Solidarity Action Day Movement in Europe

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 www.same-network.org

The Solidarity Action Day



The basic idea

The idea of the Solidarity Action Day is simple. Young people swap their normal day at school for a job of their choice. They donate their salaries to youth-related projects from all over the world. About 300,000 young people participate in the Solidarity Action Day annually.

The aim of the Action Day is to establish solidarity between youth during their years of education, including marginalised / oppressed youth – with fewer opportunities – and / or minorities around the world. But that's only half of the story.

The Solidarity Action Day – when organised according to our principles and values – **inspires active citizenship, youth-led development and global solidarity**. At the same time, it is an **impactful instrument to provide access to political education and to raise money for a good cause**.

History of the Solidarity Action Day

The concept of the Solidarity Action Day goes back to 1963 in Sweden, when a group of young people launched 'en dag för Dag'. This day was held in memory of the Swedish Secretary-General of the United Nations Dag Hammarskjöld, who had been killed in a plane crash on his way to a ceasefire negotiation in Congo.

The Solidarity Action Day concept attracted attention and spread quickly across the neighbouring countries: in the following year, 1964, the first edition of Operasjon Dagsverk took place in Norway. Finland followed in 1967. It took a little longer for the Solidarity Action Day to cross the sea, but 1985 saw the creation of Operation Dagsværk in Denmark.

The Scandinavian organisations were active in the entire world and met some people from Belgium and Italy. Their enthusiasm fostered the implementation of the Solidarity Action Day by YOUCA in 2006, and by Operation Daywork in 2007. Also, in 2006 the concept spilt over to Venice, and the organisation Social Day implemented the Solidarity Action Day in the Veneto region for the first time.

In central Europe, the German organisation Schüler*innen Helfen Leben launched its own Solidarity Action Day in 1996 and also spread the Solidarity Action Day idea. Their projects in South Eastern Europe started to implement the Solidarity Action Day as well. Unija Srednjoškolaca Srbije held its first Solidarity Action Day in Serbia in 2003, followed by Asocijacija Srednjoškolaca u Bosni i Hercegovini in Bosnia and Herzegovina in 2016 and Unija Srednjoškolaca Crne Gora in Montenegro in 2017.

The opening of an own office for our network in Lübeck in 2018 provided us with additional resources to further spread the Solidarity Action Day, leading to the first Action Days in Albania (2020), North Macedonia (2021), Kosovo (2023), Armenia (2024) and hopefully many more in the future.

SAME

Solidarity Action Day Movement in Europe

The "first generation" of Solidarity Action Day organisations decided to join forces in 2011. They founded the umbrella organisation 'Solidarity Action Day Movement in Europe', shortly SAME. SAME brings together several youth organisations that carry out an annual Solidarity Action Day in Europe. The network – so far – consists of eleven organisations in ten different countries. All of these organisations are run by, with and for youth.

In times of growing Euroscepticism, SAME encourages young people to stand up for a fair and democratic world by taking up social commitment and showing solidarity. **SAME believes in the power of young people and wants to make their voices heard**. In this spirit, it spreads the idea of the Solidarity Action Day all over Europe and supports new Action Day initiatives.

Furthermore, SAME offers training and education for its members, and the SAME member organisations strengthen each other through the exchange of experience and best practice examples.



A brief history of SAME

In the summer of 2011, a few enthusiastic youngsters from seven different organisations met up in the forest near Oslo, Norway. All of these organisations applied the same concept of students working one day instead of going to school and donating their salaries to their peers from all over the world.

The organisations did not use the same word for this day, did not know about each other's principles and how others organised the concept. During a week of exchange, the youngsters realised that their organisations had more similarities than differences, and that they can learn a lot from each other.

They started building the basis of a Europe-wide youth network, which they later named SAME – Solidarity Action Day Movement in Europe.

Through the years, the network expanded and developed from an informal group of people to an official European youth organisation with an office in Lübeck (Germany) with eleven members and several organisations which are in the process of organising their first Solidarity Action Day.

The network defined a common ground, on which all organisations operate, and principles which guide the work of both the individual organisations and SAME itself. You can find them at the end of the guide as 'Basic Common Principles' and 'Quality Guidelines'.

To get to know each other, inspire each other and learn from each other is at the heart of SAME. Therefore, meeting each other has been essential throughout the history of the network. Every year, SAME organises multiple youth encounters, conferences and seminars for young people from all over Europe.

Our vision

As active citizens, young people act in solidarity with their peers and stand up for democracy, equity, human rights and intercultural understanding.

Our mission

SAME empowers young people to make their voices heard. We believe in the power of youth and encourage them to become a driver of societal change in their local and the global community.

As a movement of young people, we spread the idea and concept of the Solidarity Action Day and support new Solidarity Action Day initiatives. SAME builds a strong network of partners, which strengthen each other in their mission through intercultural exchange and by sharing their expertise. We offer learning possibilities, informal and non-formal education and are continuously learning ourselves. Throughout our work, we act in a sustainable way.

SAME empowers young people to **get informed, take a stand and act.**



Solidarity Action Day organisations



Asocijacija Srednjoškolaca u Bosni i Hercegovini

Location: Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina

First Solidarity Action Day: 2016

Vision

The Association of Secondary School Students in Bosnia and Herzegovina (ASuBiH) aims to improve the status of secondary students in the country and gather all young people attending secondary school in Bosnia and Herzegovina. They want each secondary school student in Bosnia and Herzegovina to be involved in the decision-making process on matters of high school students.

Facebook: Asocijacija srednjoškolaca u Bosni i Hercegovini

Instagram: asubih

Website: www.asubih.ba

E-Mail: asubih@yahoo.com

Address: Mula Mustafe Bašeskije 7, 71000 Sarajevo, Bosna i Hercegovina

Operation Daywork

Location: Bolzano, Italy

First Solidarity Action Day: 2008

Vision

Operation Daywork wants to promote civil activism through its awareness campaign and the Solidarity Action Day. By sharing context-related topics with students, teachers, authorities and the general public, they raise awareness and motivate students to stand up and raise their voices for a fair and sustainable world and human rights.

Facebook: Operation Daywork

Instagram: operation_daywork

Website: www.operationdaywork.org

E-Mail: info@operationdaywork.org

Address: Via Macello 50/a, 39100 Bolzano, Italy.



Unija srednjoškolaca Crne Gore

Location: Podgorica, Montenegro

First Solidarity Action Day: 2017

Vision

A society where young people are a pillar of development and every high school student has the opportunity to realise their potential and aspirations.

Facebook: Unija srednjoškolaca Crne Gore

Instagram: srednjoskolcig

Website: unscg.me

E-Mail: unijasrednjoskolacacg@gmail.com

Address: Bratstva i jedinstva 78, Podgorica, Montenegro



Operation Dagsværk

Location: Copenhagen, Denmark

First Solidarity Action Day: 1985

Vision

Operation Dagsværk Denmark aims to give one day of their education in order to provide that other marginalised youth and / or students receive education. They want to establish solidarity between Danish youth during their years of education and marginalised, poor youth and / or minorities around the world. They believe that education is the most powerful tool that youth can receive as well as the best road to sustainable development.

Facebook: Operation Dagsvaerk

Instagram: operation_dagsvaerk

Website: www.od.dk

E-mail: od@od.dk

Address: Studiestræde 24, 1455 Copenhagen K, Denmark

Operasjon Dagsverk

Location: Oslo, Norway

First Solidarity Action Day: 1964

Vision

Operasjon Dagsverk Norway fights for equal opportunities for all youths throughout the world. They want to provide youth in the Global South with educational opportunities and wish to contribute to a more diversified picture of the Global South. They believe that education must always be the common denominator and that education remains the best road to sustainable development.

Facebook: Operasjon Dagsverk

Instagram: operasjondagsverk

Website: www.od.no

E-mail: od@od.no

Address: Kolstadgata 1, 0652 Oslo, Norway



Schüler*innen Helfen Leben

Location: Neumünster, Germany

First Solidarity Action Day: 1998

Vision

Children and young people take responsibility for themselves and others in society and promote peace, social justice and democracy.

Facebook: Schüler*innen Helfen Leben

Instagram: schueler_helfen_leben

Website: www.schueler-helfen-leben.de

E-mail: info@schueler-helfen-leben.de

Address: Kaiserstraße 12, 24534 Neumünster, Germany



Social Day

Location: Vicenza, Italy

First Solidarity Action Day: 2007

Vision

The main goal and mission of Social Day Italy is to give people involved with Social Day and the supported projects and initiatives the opportunity to achieve important citizenship skills. While being active in Social Day, participating in events, organising workshops etc., youngsters have the opportunity to educate themselves in the fields of feminism, poverty, globalisation, NGOs etc.

Facebook: Social Day

Instagram: social.day

Website: www.socialday.org

E-Mail: info@socialday.org

Address: Strada Cartigliana, 200, 36061 Bassano del Grappa (VI), Italy



YOUCA

Location: Brussels, Belgium

First Solidarity Action Day: 2006

Vision

YOUCA (Youth for Change and Action) is an organisation for, by and with youth. They encourage youth to work towards a sustainable and fair society. They do this by raising awareness about different important social challenges and by supporting social commitment. They make unique encounters with an impact on cultural, business and public life happen.

Facebook: YOUCA

Instagram: youcavzw

Website: www.youca.be

E-mail: info@youca.be

Address: Mundo-J, Nijverheidsstraat 10, 1000 Brussels, Belgium

AS@N

Location: Tirana, Albania

First Solidarity Action Day: 2020

Vision

The focus of the work of the AS@N network is also the engagement and encouragement of young people in their commitment to voluntary initiatives, active engagement in the community to be a catalyst for the change they want to see in society.

Facebook: Rrjeti ASAN

Instagram: rrjetiasan

E-mail: asankontakt@gmail.com



YOUTH CAN

Location: Skopje, Northmacedonia

First Solidarity Action Day: 2021

Vision

Youth Can envisages a society where young people are leaders of the today, not of the tomorrow. Through its years of work, Youth Can has been helping young people build capacities and today is proud to have many skilled volunteers, youth workers, trainers, leaders and project managers within the organisation.

Facebook: Младите Можат - Youth Can

Instagram: youthcan.mk

Website: youthcan.org.mk

E-mail: info@youthcan.org.mk

Address: Mundo-J, Nijverheidsstraat 10, 1000 Brussels, Belgium



TOKA

Location: Prishtina, Kosovo

First Solidarity Action Day: 2023

Vision

Their education and youth development programs – tested and proven by more than 20,000 young girls and boys – use long-term volunteering and learning-by-doing as powerful platforms that enable these young people to grow. And it works!

Facebook: TOKA

Instagram: ojq.toka

Website: toka-ks.org

E-mail: info@toka-ks.org

Address: Meto Bajraktari, Prishtina, Kosovo



YDC

Location: Yerevan, Republic of Armenia

First Solidarity Action Day: 2025

Vision

To empower young people so as to develop them as individuals by enhancing the sense of citizenship and community responsibility through volunteering and social actions meant to contribute to their local communities.

Facebook: Youth Development Center of Armenia

Instagram: ydc_armenia

E-mail: team.ydcarmenia@gmail.com

Planning of the Solidarity Action Day

In this chapter, we will present different aspects that need to be considered while planning the Solidarity Action Day. For example:

- How old should the participants be, and where are they coming from?
- Which projects will be supported with the money, and how are they selected?
- How to advertise the Solidarity Action Day?

All SAME member organisations have adopted the Solidarity Action Day concept slightly differently. That is why we will answer all these questions by showing you examples of the way different member organisations are dealing with these topics.

However, first, we will have a look at the principles and values behind the Solidarity Action Day, which are shared by all our members.

Principles and values

Although all SAME member organisations differ with regards to organising the Solidarity Action Day, all of them follow Basic Common Principles and Quality Guidelines. Both the Quality Guidelines and the Basic Common Principles pose a constant challenge and reminder to all member organisations to improve their work in order to achieve the full potential and impact of the Solidarity Action Day.

Check out the Quality Guidelines and Basic Common Principles online or at the end of this guide.

Solidarity Action Day participants

Students of all ages and various school forms can take part in the Solidarity Action Day. However, some SAME member organisations have decided to focus on specific types of schools and / or specific age groups.

Besides, some of our member organisations are active solely in one region. Only schools within that region take part in the Solidarity Action Day. Others have participating schools from the whole country.

Of course, it is up to you, how many schools you would like to engage with, but we recommend to start small – for instance by attracting schools from one town or region – and to build up from there

Social Day

At Social Day, participants attend both primary and secondary school. Social Day is only active in a specific part of Italy.



Solidarity Action Day jobs



The sky is the limit. Young people can do any job they want to, as long as it is appropriate to their age and not too dangerous (e.g. cleaning the windows of a sky scraper). The type of jobs varies, from being a country's president for a day to sorting out papers in an office, from being steward/ess to taking care of grandma's garden. Some organisations help participants to find jobs, others motivate participants to find jobs on their own, and some do both.

Youth Can

The way Social Day is carried out by Youth Can is that 10 local coordinators across the country connect with companies to establish partnerships, offering positions for young people to participate in. They then make direct contact with high schools and professors, allowing students to apply for the positions they are interested in, based on a pre-arranged list of positions and companies secured by the coordinators.



Asocijacija srednjoškolarca u Bosni i Hercegovini

At ASuBiH, local teams start searching for jobs in their cities. Once they found jobs, pupils can apply for them. Usually there are a few companies who offer these jobs.

YOUCA

YOUCA has created an online job database, the Jobbank. After having registered, employers can offer jobs, and participants can search for these Solidarity Action Day jobs. The employer can answer directly in the Jobbank and accept one of the pupils. Every year, about 4,000 jobs are posted by employers on the Jobbank. Employers vary from politicians and television to city works and administration. However, every year, some pupils find cool jobs by themselves, too. Furthermore, participants can add the information of a job they found by themselves to the Jobbank, the employer then receives an automatic registration e-mail and is connected as well.

Solidarity Action Day projects

SAME member organisations strive to support projects in which youth empowerment, education and youth participation play a key role. However, in terms of topics, scale, criteria and means of implementation, the supported projects vary a lot.

Besides that, organisations usually define a project region. Some organisations support projects in specific regions, others projects from all over the world, and some support projects in their own country.

Operation Daywork

Operation Daywork yearly elects a Human Rights Awards winner. This winner can be an individual person, informal group, or organisation from all over the world. It is crucial that they are engaged in human rights-related contexts. With the Human Rights Awards, Operation Daywork recognises and honours their work and attributes international attention to them.

Schüler*innen Helfen Leben

Schüler*innen Helfen Leben supports projects only in South Eastern Europe, Jordan and Ukraine. They give the money to local NGOs which implement the projects, and they even implement some projects by themselves. To mentor and monitor the projects, they have an offices in Bosnia-Herzegovina, Kosovo and Ukraine. By doing this, they developed, over time, a good knowledge about the project regions and their needs and established a large network of partners.



Albanian Students Abroad Network

AS@N is one of the organisations that support projects in their own country. The following section details, how they are selecting the projects and provides further information on the project selection process in general.

Operasjon Dagsverk

Operasjon Dagsverk supports a new project every year. They do not implement the projects by themselves, but they give the project funds to Norwegian NGOs, like Redd barna, which are cooperating with NGOs from project countries abroad.

TOKA

Students pool their earnings into a Solidarity Action Day Fund for their municipality. They then form a Solidarity Club, meeting six times with a mentor to focus on community engagement, teamwork, and project planning. In Meetings 2–4, they observe their school or community, identify areas for improvement, and decide on a project to implement, either within the school or the broader community.



Project selection process

The selection of projects also differs from organisation to organisation, but all SAME members strive to ensure that youths are involved in that process as much as possible.

In some organisations the General Assembly decides on the projects. In some this is done by a small project election team. Others do not select by themselves. Instead, they delegate the decision to a strong, trust-worthy partner organisation.

Schüler*innen Helfen Leben

Every year, Schüler*innen Helfen Leben publishes a so called 'call for proposals'. With their projects, NGOs can apply for funds from Schüler*innen Helfen Leben. Then, a small working group is in charge of preselecting a couple of projects. The final decision will be made at a big youth conference, where participants of the Solidarity Action Day are invited to select the project.

Albanian Students Abroad Network

As mentioned above, in AS@N uses the Action Day funds to support local/regional projects in Albania. The Solidarity Action Day participants come together at AS@N's General Assembly that takes place after the Action Day, discuss the different proposals or applications, followed by an open election of projects.

Operation Dagsværk

There are several steps within the Danish selection process. First, Danish NGOs write project proposals and send them to the board of OD Denmark. Among these proposals, the board then chooses the best eight projects, based on OD Denmark's project quality guidelines. These projects then produce a two-minute video explaining the project. The videos are sent to all participating schools, and local school groups coordinate a local school election. Voting happens online. The three projects with the most votes are finally presented at the General Assembly of OD Denmark, where the representatives take the final project decision.



Awareness raising campaign

If you want people to get involved with the Solidarity Action Day, you first have to tell them about it and motivate them to take part (obviously). That is why it is especially important to come up with a plan for your campaign work.

Some organisations campaign with a concrete project in mind, some without, but all campaigns are created on the basis of empowerment and advocacy, while they avoid stereotypes. Giving people the opportunity to speak on their own behalf is a key element of most of the campaigns. Besides that, the campaigns have an educational aim.



YOUCA

YOUCA has a very large, comprehensive campaign. In the course of this campaign, young people from the project regions come to Belgium and visit schools to talk about the projects and living conditions in their country / region. They motivate students to find a job for the Solidarity Action Day. Pupils can ask questions and share their ideas. In this way, all pupils have a chance to meet the students behind the projects and learn from each other.

The awareness campaign is shaped by both Belgian youngsters and youngsters representing the projects, who design and implement the presentation or workshop at the participating schools.

Schüler*innen Helfen Leben

Schüler*innen Helfen Leben has two to three full-time volunteers who travel around the country to visit the participating schools, motivate pupils to take part in the Solidarity Action Day and inform them about the project regions. Often they organise workshops for school groups, too. These volunteers are both young people from Germany and from the project regions.

Operation Dagsværk

Each year, volunteers at the Danish office decide on the thematic focus of the awareness campaign. Afterwards, a graphic designer is hired to create the desired look of the posters, stickers, tattoos etc. All this material is spread in the participating schools. Often, this material involves a music video of a famous Danish artist, ideally in cooperation with a musician, who has ties to the project country or topic. You can find the last clip on Youtube (Vi er her – Nina Kreutzmann ft. Tarrak).

Asocijacija Srednjoškolaca u Bosni i Hercegovini

AsuBiH supports projects in their own country. That is of course why the topics of their campaigns do not tackle the Global South or development cooperation, like OD Denmark's campaigns do. By participating in the Solidarity Action Day, young people of Bosnia and Herzegovina get involved with their own society. Therefore, their campaigns rather focus on the value for the community and on the individual job experience of participating pupils.



Educational activities

As mentioned above, campaigns for the Solidarity Action Day have an educational aspect. All organisations offer different non-formal and informal educational activities. With this educational approach, all organisations emphasise important values like solidarity, equity, democracy, anti-discrimination or sustainability.

Operation Daywork

For each awareness campaign, Operation Daywork develops a didactic journal. The journal contains articles in English, Italian and German and deals with issues related to the Human Rights Award winner of that year and their region, comparing the situation there with the situation in South Tyrol-Trentino. It is a co-production of different authors, e.g. board members, volunteers, advisory committee members, teachers, students and experts. The journal therefore is educational for both its authors and its readers. OD spreads the journal in a printed version and digitally.



YOUCA

One of YOUCA's educational activities is the VIP day, which kicks off their campaign. Participants come from all parts of the country, where they organise the Solidarity Action Day at their schools. They get to know the main project, project region and topic of the campaign better, exchange ideas on how to realise actions at their schools and elect two more projects to be supported by the Solidarity Action Day money. Back in their schools, they are the face of YOUCA, answer questions of pupils and provide tips and tricks for the job search.

Operasjon Dagsverk

Once a year, Norway dedicates a whole week to global issues such as poverty, inequality and development. During this week, which is called International Week, the schools abandon their regular curriculum. The International Week promotes the Solidarity Action Day project, and at the end of the week, the Solidarity Action Day takes place.

In addition to that, OD Norway has an educational programme free of charge for all students between 13 and 19 years of age. The programme focuses on global topics, such as solidarity, human rights and education, it provides information on the project and contains several films, booklets and online resources. These are developed in close cooperation with youths from the project country.



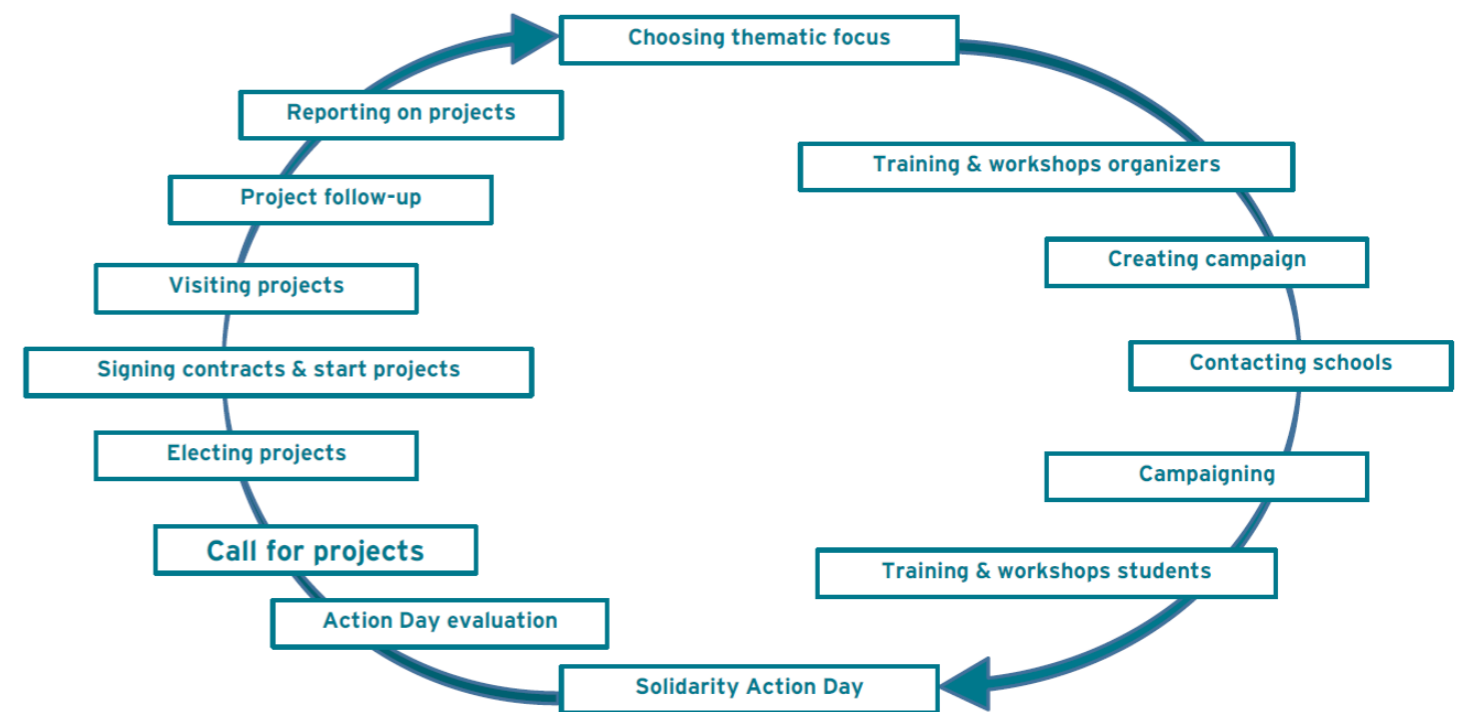
Getting started

The previous parts of the Start-Up Kit focused on examples which might inspire you. In the following part, we focus on your Solidarity Action Day, tips and tricks and questions you might still have about the implementation of the Solidarity Action Day.

A year in a Solidarity Action Day organisation

There is no single right way of organising a Solidarity Action Day. The timing can be adjusted, and what will happen when depends on different decisions you make as an organisation. For example, the question 'Do we want to elect the supported project before or after the Solidarity Action Day?', has great influence on the timeline of your planning.

Below, we present a possible timeline. Some organisations follow the timeline exactly like this, others have implemented theirs differently: Make sure that your timeline makes sense for you and the structure of your organisation!



At our seminars about the Solidarity Action Day we have the single steps printed on cards, hand them out to the participants in a random order and ask them to form a cycle with them. Usually, it looks similar to this suggestion. However, the only ones to decide what step makes most sense at what point of time is always up to yourselves - the organisational team of your Action Day.

Get organised: tasks related to organising a Solidarity Action Day

The Solidarity Action Day can only be organised by a strong team, good vibes and a whole lot of commitment. We have compiled a list of tasks you might want to take care of while organising a Solidarity Action Day.

• Internal coordination

- Knowledge management
- Internal communication and team
- Evaluation
- Contact with SAME

• Job coordination

- Contact person for employers
- Info material for employers
- Contracts
- Searching for jobs?

• Campaign

- Develop flyers / posters / info material / workshops
- Develop a slogan
- Branding

• Participant coordination

- Contact, inform and advise schools and participants

• Supporters

- Networking
- Fundraising

• Public Relations

- Press releases
- Social Media
- Website

• Administration Finances

- Accounting
- EDP system?
- Job database?

• Legal

- Insurance
- National Youth Protection Act and Labour law

• Project coordination

- Call for project proposals
- Selection
- Monitoring
- Follow up
- Reporting

Get started:

tips and tricks



Separate Solidarity Action Day activities and organisation from your regular activities.

Establish 'official' ways of conversation.

Let people choose, how they want to participate.



Trust your fellow activists: delegate tasks.

Give realistic / low threshold opportunities for participation.



Make your Solidarity Action Day different and unique.

Adapt the concept to your own background and ideas.



Define the unique selling points of your Solidarity Action Day. This will help you to promote it to the public.

Take Solidarity Action Day participants and the value of youth participation and democratic decision-making serious within your organisation.

Invest in educational activities.

Take extra good care of internal communication.



Plan ahead, document and take time for evaluation.



Make sure you have a functioning knowledge management system.

Appreciate and recognise the work of volunteers and supporters.

Share motivational and inspiring stories.

Think outside the box, and get creative.



Fail often, fail early.

Use the network you have – get support, where you need it, and build strong alliances.



FAQ

How do you make sure that pupils get one day off school?

In some countries, students can get a day off school for cultural activities, sports, etc. In these countries, getting a day off school shouldn't be a problem. If this doesn't apply to your country, you need to make an important decision, which will influence the way you work. You can decide to work together with schools or with pupils directly. If you work with schools, they register for the Solidarity Action Day, and by doing this they already approve the day off. However, if you are working directly with pupils, you will have to be a bit more creative. You can, for example, talk to the government, like ASuBiH does.

TOKA

This is arranged at the beginning of the project cycle, when TOKA signs a formal agreement with each municipality and school. Together, they officially designate the Solidarity Action Day as an educational activity, allowing students to be excused from classes for that day.

ASuBiH

In Bosnia and Herzegovina, ASuBiH contacts the government of each region and asks them, whether pupils who take part in the Solidarity Action Day can officially get the day off school. In case they do, there is no problem for the student to participate. However, if the regional government doesn't agree, pupils individually have to ask their head master, whether they can participate.

Schüler*innen Helfen Leben

In Germany, only students of a registered school can participate in the Solidarity Action Day. Schools register themselves to participate in the Solidarity Action Day and release participating students from classes for that day. Taking part in the Solidarity Action Day still is voluntary. Students who decide not to take part go to school as usual.

Are contracts necessary?

How to receive the money from employers?

Again, there is not only one way to go. Some organisations provide 'Solidarity Action Day working contracts', which are signed by the participants (and, in case of minors, by their parents) and the employers. These contracts state the bank account details for the bank transfer of wages. Other organisations have even set up an EDP system to administrate these processes.

No matter whether you decide to use online tools, rely on hand-shakes, or provide written contracts, you should make sure that you have a bank account, to which employers can transfer the money, and to inform employers on the banking details in any way.

Youth Can

With each company that joins the project, we conclude a Memorandum of Cooperation, which both parties sign, whereby each party is informed of its rights and obligations regarding the project. Then, after the end of the Social Day, based on the memorandum, we prepare an invoice for them, which they pay accordingly based on the positions provided, in the above-mentioned fund for Social Day, on a separate bank account administered by Youth Can.

Schüler*innen Helfen Leben

Schüler*innen Helfen Leben send out written paper contracts to the participating schools. Every participant and their employer have to fill in and sign these contracts and sent them back to Schüler*innen Helfen Leben. Employers can find the bank account details in these contracts, too.

Operation Dagsværk

Operation Dagsværk has set up an EDP system where every participant has to register online. The system automatically creates a contract, also known as a work card, which can be downloaded and printed out, and which is later on signed by the participant and their employer (s. picture of work card). Every work card states an individual number. When the employer pays the wage for the Solidarity Action Day, they include this number in the transaction. The system then automatically registers the student payment as received. In that way, Operation Dagsværk is able to keep track of all incoming money.

YOUCA

We have already mentioned YOUCA's Jobbank, which is the beating heart and breathing lungs behind the organisation of the Solidarity Action Day in Belgium. YOUCA uses the system not only to help participants find jobs, but also to register participants and employers and to manage and keep track of bank transfers.

After registering for the Solidarity Action Day at the Jobbank, pupils gain access to the job database and can search and apply for jobs offered by registered employers. The employer can reply directly via the Jobbank and accept one of the pupils. Then, the employer automatically receives an invoice with the banking details. If they don't pay in time, they will receive a reminder.

Hence, YOUCA staff has an overview of all the participants and employers, of who has already found a job and who has already paid.

How much do pupils earn during the Solidarity Action Day?

We cannot give you an exact amount of money participants earn per hour. Wages differ a lot from Action Day country to Action Day country, because of the different average salaries. Nevertheless, the wage of the Action Day participant should not undercut the general wage level of your country and by that turn into a means of social dumping. If you want to give employers some guidance regarding that question, look up average earnings of your target group, and remember that it is not only a wage for a job, but also a donation for a good cause.

What kind of jobs can small children (6-10 years old) do?

As mentioned above, participants should do jobs that are appropriate to their age, for example helping their families. Others organise group activities together with their teachers (e.g. charity runs, selling cookies or cleaning public areas).

How do you make sure that insurance is provided for all participants?

There are two main ways by which organisations take care of insurance of their participants during the Solidarity Action Day. The first way is to insure participants via the employers, for both health and liability. Another way is to provide health insurance via the participants' schools and add an extra liability insurance as an organisation.

Operation Daywork

The Solidarity Action Day is part of the 'extra-curricular school projects', and therefore, the students are automatically insured via their school. Additionally, Operation Daywork provides a liability insurance for each Solidarity Action Day participant, which is needed in case of damage done to a third party (in this case the employer and their company). Insurance costs are covered by funds from the local government.

Operation Dagsvaerk

During the Solidarity Action Day, the insurance of the individual employer or company / firm / business covers the Solidarity Action Day participants.

How is participating in the Solidarity Action Day different from child labour?

Working on the Action Day can hardly be considered child labour, since it is not about the work during that day, but about showing solidarity with young people around the world. It is a form of youth participation and social commitment. Nevertheless, each student should do a job that suits their age (e.g. a 9-year-old should not work in a liquor shop and sell alcohol).

Check your national labour law about age restrictions and consult your government.

To be on the safe side, you can also decide that participants must have the legal age to do a student or similar job and may not be younger.

Schüler*innen Helfen Leben

In Germany, the question whether this is child labour or not sparked a big debate. Therefore, Schüler*innen Helfen Leben contacted the governments of each region, who issued an official document stating that the Solidarity Action Day is not child labour, and that younger students may participate, too. Schüler*innen Helfen Leben also uses this as an argument, when people ask whether it is child labour.

When do you elect the project, before or after the Action Day?

Upon deciding when to elect the Action Day project(s), there are two main things to consider. If you elect the project before the Action Day, you can make the project(s) topic a part of the campaign, but you won't know, how much money you will collect. If you choose to elect the project after the Action Day, you will know exactly how much money you have for projects. Also, in the case that the projects are to be written / proposed by students, you can advertise the call for proposals during the campaign.

How do you deal with the government?

The support of the government is important when organising the Solidarity Action Day. If the government doesn't support you, it will likely be way more difficult to implement the Solidarity Action Day. Some organisations get a lot of support from the government. In these countries, the government doesn't only allow the organisation to organise a Solidarity Action Day. They also give funds, hire students during the Solidarity Action Day and / or advertise it. At the same time, it is important that SAME member organisations stay independent from the government – financially, politically and structurally.

How do you raise funds for your activities?

All organisations raise funds for their activities in different ways. Funds may be granted by governmental institutions on different levels: European, national, regional or local. Some organisations also receive funds via private institutions, like foundations and companies. Several organisations use a small part of the Solidarity Action Day money for their own work and donate the rest to the projects. Fundraising does not always have to be limited to money, also material funds can be very interesting, like free food for your General Assembly.

What were failures in the past? What did you struggle with?

At some point, every organisation had to face challenges. Below, you will find some examples of organisations' struggles and how they solved them.

Youth Can

When Youth Can started the project, the main challenge was ensuring students showed up for their jobs. To solve this, Youth Can worked closely with high schools, getting confirmation from professors. Before each Social Day, Youth Can holds an info session to motivate participants, highlighting that they are part of a global initiative and preparing them for the learning experience ahead. This helps students feel excited and connected to something bigger.

TOKA

In TOKA's first year, they focused business partnerships only in Prishtina, leaving rural students unable to participate, and allowed volunteers aged 18+, many of whom were too busy to engage fully. In response, they shifted focus to high school students for easier participation and expanded outreach beyond Prishtina for more equitable involvement across Kosovo.

Operasjon Dagsverk

In Norway, Operasjon Dagsverk got some competition from other solidarity and charity organisations, such as IMPANDE and PLAN International, who are also active in schools. In reaction to that, they adapted their communication strategy and campaign so as to explain to schools, why the Solidarity Action Day is worth joining compared to other social initiatives.

Operation Dagsvaerk

In Denmark, the organisation is fully run by pupils and there is a constant shift of people each year (e.g. the board and council members are replaced by new students every year). Furthermore, members in the decision-making bodies do not necessarily have a lot of experience, and handing over the work from the previous year takes a lot of time. OD Denmark thus created an alumni group, which new members can always consult, if questions arise.

Schüler*innen Helfen Leben

In Germany, Schüler*innen Helfen Leben is not the only organisation implementing something like the Solidarity Action Day. Over the years, several copy cats popped up. SHL's strong structure and membership in SAME however underpins their argument that their concept is the best one to participate in.

YOUCA

Although YOUCA has been involved in many projects, the general public only knew about the Solidarity Action Day. They tried to communicate their other activities more and changed their name from Zuiddag (English: South Day) to Youth for Change and Action, in short YOUCA.

Social Day

When things started with the Solidarity Action Day, it was organised by a small project team within a bigger organisation, where youth did not have greater influence on decisions. Therefore, they founded their own association called 'Social Day', which allowed them to take decisions into their own hands.



What can you expect from us?

Solidarity Action Day for Beginners Conference

Join our “SAD4BC” - a conference only meant for organisations interested in the idea of the Solidarity Action Day. Delegations of these organisations come together, learn about the Action Day, get to know out network and all the others that are also just starting their SAD journey. After three days of programme you’re set to continue on your own. However, we support all those who want to pursue organising their first SAD.

Acquisition visits

You are interested in the idea of the Action Day and you just missed the Solidarity Action Day for Beginners Conference? No worries! As a network full of experts, we’re happy to visit you and your organisation and give a workshop or have an intense working meeting at your organisations headquarters, your local youth club or favourite coffee shop. Wherever there are youngsters in Europe interested in the SAD, we will find a way to share our knowledge with them.

Just reach out to us.

Mentoring and feedback

At our office in Lübeck, we are always happy to help you with your concept. Do you need more information? Do you have a particular question? Or would you like to receive some feedback on your ideas? We are there for you!

Contact us via info@same-network.org with your questions, or if you want to arrange a video call.

Basic Common Principles



We act on the ground of the universal human rights.
We promote and work for the equality and freedom of all humans.

§ 1: Our actions are carried out by, with and for youth.

§ 2: We act in solidarity.

§ 3: We raise global consciousness and awareness through education.

§ 4: Pupils have the right to choose to participate.

§ 5: Our Solidarity Action Day shall promote active citizenship.

§ 6: We implement projects for formal, non-formal and informal education.

§ 7: The projects should be sustainable, locally initiated and include marginalised groups.

§ 8: Our work is based on transparency.

Quality Guidelines

1. The organisation is run by youngsters.

Youngsters run the organisation through decision- and policy making, electing the projects, campaigning, etc.

2. The projects are carried out by youngsters.

Youngsters are the ones who actively work on the Solidarity Action Day, and they are the focus of the information campaign.

3. The organisation works for youngsters.

The organisation deals with problems and interests of youngsters. The projects are for youngsters around the world, and all the work is based upon the idea of solidarity with other youngsters.

4. The organisation supports education.

Education is a key to development. This is supported by the organisation and is the main focus of projects.

5. The organisation empowers youngsters to get informed, take a stand and act.

The projects of the organisation promote active citizenship. The organisation offers information to youngsters and lets them choose to work actively on a voluntary basis. This information is appropriate for the youngsters. The organisation believes that education and activism are interdependent. Before the annual Solidarity Action Day, an awareness raising campaign on different project-related topics is carried out. Educational material for the formal education sector (e.g. material and workshops for schools) is developed, and the organisation engages in non-formal education (e.g. workshops for volunteers and local student representatives). Peer education is the central pillar of the organisation's work. In order to foster critical awareness, the organisation points out how global processes and issues intersect with local decisions and practices.

6. The organisation is religiously and politically independent.

An open and welcoming organisation doesn't exclude people on the basis of different beliefs. This does not mean that the organisation does not express political opinions or opposes religion, but rather that it is independent from and not associated with political parties and /or organised religions.

7. The collected funds of the Solidarity Action Day are monitored and always arrive at the promoted place.

The projects are closely monitored by regular reporting and good communication with the partners. This is to ensure that the collected money always arrives at the promoted place.

8. The projects are transparent in all regards.

There is transparency throughout the projects. There is transparency in the finances of the projects, the decision-making in the organisation and projects and in participation possibilities. There is also an open source of information and documentation regarding the projects and organisation.

9. Ecological, economic and social sustainability and responsibility are always considered.

The organisation works towards ecological, economic and social sustainability in its projects.

10. There is no discrimination, and a broad spectrum of people is involved in the organisation and its projects.

The organisation and its projects are for everyone. It actively works towards being represented by a broad spectrum of people. Religion, sex, age, origin, educational status, sexual orientation, disabilities, finances or other parameters may not be excluding factors for participation in the organisation and its projects.

11. There is continuous appreciation.

People working for and with the organisation are continuously appreciated. A good environment helps to build an organisation that people want to be a part of.

12. There are active discussions about the organisation's views and values.

It is important for all organisations to always have a discussion going on about their own views and values, in order to sustain credibility and to encourage development in the organisation and its projects.

13. The project is embedded in overarching concepts and values.

Overarching concepts and values, like supporting human rights, create a unity in the work of the organisation.

14. The organisation enables intercultural exchange.

Youngsters around the world can learn a lot from each other. It is therefore important that the organisation enables a cultural exchange in order to raise global awareness.

15. There is a clear organisational structure.

The organisation has a clear structure with a clear division of tasks and responsibilities. This is to ensure an effective and well-running organisation.

16. There are verifiable goals and objectives established through internal debates among all participants.

It is important to establish common goals through debates throughout the organisation.

17. The steps taken in the project are continuously documented and evaluated.

There is an ongoing evaluation of the organisation and the projects. This evaluation includes tips and feedback that allows for improvement.

18. The organisation preserves knowledge through constant peer-to-peer exchange and archiving.

To be able to develop, it is important that knowledge is constantly exchanged and old material is archived. Learning from peers is encouraged.

19. The project is embedded in local and regional networks.

This is to ensure that projects are sustainable and to create a sense of ownership for the people participating in the projects. This is also important to create a strong and sustainable organisation.

20. Partners are strengthened without creating dependence.

The organisation supports projects in becoming sustainable and self-sustaining after the cooperation.

Publishing information

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