Dear governing body members, employees, volunteers and partners,
All of you who implement Aide et Action International’s mission in
the world from day to day,

The 2nd Global Development Plan is now yours! It distils Aide et Action
International’s plans for the 10 years to come – the ambition it has set
itself and the challenges it intends to take up.

In fact, in order to ensure the smooth implementation of its associatio-
nal project, Aide et Action International needs to define a strategy for
fulfilling its mission. The strategy must guarantee its unity, its relevance
and coherence in its actions, while respecting regional specificities. And
that is the purpose of the Global Development Plan (GDP). A strategic
document, it defines the main development priorities for our mission for
the next 10 years, along with the evolution of our organisation.

This clearly does not mean wiping out the past, but on the contrary, ba-
sing ourselves on our strengths, our convictions and our identity, which
have been built over the last 30 years, in order to face the new challenges
facing development through education. For that is the objective of this
document: how can we ensure that our actions contribute to meeting
these challenges? How can we ensure that our organisation is as effi-
cient and effective as possible in the service of our mission? The États
Généraux enabled us to together identify the major policy orientations to
be followed – they set the course. The time has come now to implement
these orientations, to make them an inherent part of each of our projects,
our professions and our commitments.

The following pages constitute our common reference framework for the
years to come. Read them, develop them further, breathe life into them
through your Conventions of Objectives and through the projects you
conduct, so that, together, 10 years hence, we can all say, “Yes, education
can change the world, and Aide et Action International is contributing to
that change!”

Jacques Lemaréchal
International
Board President

Claire Calosci
International
Director General

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PERSPECTIVES
INTRODUCTION

TO WHOM IS THIS DOCUMENT ADDRESSED?

What if I am a governing body member, an employee, a volunteer, a partner:
The GDP is the indispensable bedrock on which I can base myself in order to take action with Aide et Action International! It is our common reference framework, whatever our trade, region or status.

What if I have just joined AEAI:
The GDP is, of course, a key reference document! But it may not provide answers to all my questions regarding the details of my mission or the way the organisation operates. Other documents can help me, such as the training modules, my region’s welcome booklet, or the Convention of Objectives.

What if I am a sponsor or donor:
I may just find this document too technical. It is basically a document for internal use. The Activity Report and the several other documents available on AEAI’s projects will offer me much more concrete information.

What is the Global Development Plan?
Like any other organisation, Aide et Action International (AEAI) prepares a multi-year strategic plan that enables it to ensure that its mission remains relevant, while the world around it changes. In order to deploy its mission coherently and efficiently, it also needs to adapt its organisational set-up. The development of the mission and the deployment of the organisational set-up to suit that mission are the two pillars of an organisational strategy – that is the purpose of the GDP. It sets the main directions to be followed for the next 10 years for all Aide et Action International’s actors and organises the evolution of our functioning in order to make this possible.

Where does the Global Development Plan come from?
The Global Development Plan is an important link in the chain of the collective choices made by Aide et Action International. Drafted following the États Généraux (ETG), the GDP makes it possible to translate the ETG into action. It therefore stems from this vast process of collective reflection. This 2nd GDP has been based on proposals from all the organisation’s entities. The International Directors’ Committee then debated, completed and consolidated it, in order to distil the strategic choices common to the entire organisation. Finally, the International Board granted its approval. This document is the fruit of this entire process.

États Généraux, Global Development Plan, Conventions of Objectives: How can we find our way around them?
The États Généraux set the organisation’s policy orientations. Is a new thematic emerging? Are new fundamental trends turning our role upside-down? Maybe even our identity? The États Généraux serves to respond to all these decisive questions. The orientations stemming from them are the subject of a number of discussions, over several months, across all levels of the organisation, as they are the ones that set our common course – the direction we want AEAI to take.

Once the orientations have been chosen, AEAI drafts its Global Development Plan in order to lay down the main strategic priorities for its interventions and its organisation at international level, for a period of 10 years. The GDP therefore sets out the international framework to be complied with, by all Aide et Action International’s member entities.

What happens to Global Development Plan no.1?
The GDP 1 was prepared within a given context. Since then, our context has changed and so have we. But in no way are we wiping out the past. Hence, in each of its two main parts (mission and organisation), the GDP recalls the existing strategies that will be continued. It then presents the new contextual factors to be taken into account, along with the common strategic choices stemming from them.

Even so, the GDP does not dictate any details of the actions to be taken to anyone. The principle of the autonomy of the regions remains a strong principle in our organisation and the effectiveness of our mission resides in the diversity of our contexts and in our innovations. The members therefore then work together every 3 years to prepare the Conventions of Objectives, which specify the action plans and budgets.
1. OUR MISSION’S ORIENTATIONS: WHAT WE WISH TO ACHIEVE TOGETHER

1. PURSUING THE FUNDAMENTALS

Over the last 30 years, Aide et Action has been able to ensure that its mission evolves continuously in order to always be in line with the issues related to development through education. At the heart of the mission lies a shared conviction: education can change the world. That is the very foundation of Aide et Action’s mission, its raison d’être, and it guides all the choices it makes. Indeed, its history has also enabled Aide et Action International to expand and clarify the thematics under which it implements its mission, formalised in the 1st GDP. The 9 thematics identified still endure and constitute our common keys for understanding and defining the issues as well as conducting our projects.

1. OUR CONVICTION: EDUCATION CAN CHANGE THE WORLD

It is our conviction that education is the lever for human development and contributes to the dignity of the individual. Development is always related to the idea of “change or transformation” and education plays a crucial role in changing or transforming the lives of children, communities or a given society.

Education is at the very basis of any development process and has an impact on all economic, political, social and cultural sectors. The holistic approach to education and development propounded by Aide et Action International is the reason why it takes a stand on various issues related to development and education, such as migration, citizenship, sustainable development or vocational training, etc.

Hence, education as a lever for development means education understood in its broadest sense. It means education that goes beyond school walls and aims at the education of the various groups within a given society. This broad-based perspective is related to an approach to education based on the “right to education” for all.

In its 1st GDP, Aide et Action defined the perimeter of its 9 thematics of intervention, enabling “better documentation and capitalisation, a greater depth of expertise and international synergy in action in these areas of intervention”. As confirmed by the 3rd Etats Généraux, these 9 thematics still remain the framework around which our mission is developed. They are given below, as a reminder:

Access and Quality of Education. Processes, actions and initiatives that ensure access to education for the largest numbers, along with quality education that responds to the specific educational needs of each individual.

Early Childhood. Actions that promote the physical, psychological, social and cognitive development of children aged 0 to 6 years, for whom the family and community environment provide the basic framework for the development of their potential.

Inclusive Education. Actions enabling the social integration of children and adults with little or no access to quality education because of their social condition or disability (physical, mental, motor).

Education for Sustainable Development and Global Citizenship. All awareness-building, training and educational activities aimed at developing citizens who are active agents of their development, and who are in harmony with their environment.

Livelihood Education. All educational actions that ensure that young adults acquire the knowledge and skills necessary to live their lives with dignity.

Health Education. All educational activities aimed at building awareness and the prevention of diseases so that health and the overall health environment is improved.

Migration. All the actions aimed at providing support to impoverished communities (including nomadic populations) who may or may not be forced to migrate for economic, political and environmental reasons, and facilitating their integration within the host communities.

Emergency and Post-Emergency. All the actions aimed at ensuring a return to “stability”, including actions aimed at preserving, maintaining or restoring educational systems and family values and unity after disasters.
2. STRATEGIC PRIORITIES FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE MISSION

Over the last ten years, the world has witnessed major changes in the political, economic and social spheres. Aide et Action International keeps a close eye on these changes in order to ensure that its mission remains relevant and responds appropriately to the challenges facing the world. Within the framework of the drafting of the 2nd GDP, AEAi identified 3 major issues related to development through education, which led to the identification of the priority areas of action for the years to come. The Conventions of Objectives then flesh-out and update this analysis in order to define the actions to be implemented.

ISSUE 1
ONE PREREQUISITE: GUARANTEEING ACCESS TO QUALITY EDUCATION FOR ALL

Changing educational systems

Borne aloft by a stronger political will, enrolment rates are improving, as is the GDP share devoted to education. Regional and international reference frameworks are being adopted, promoting ambitious educational policies based on a better long-term vision. The worldwide trend towards the decentralisation of educational systems is being further confirmed. When it goes hand in hand with a real transfer of resources, it proves effective, since it is more in line with local priorities and people’s expectations. However, it calls for very good coordination between the various actors in preparing curricula, dealing with the recruitment and remuneration of teachers, building school infrastructure, etc.

Another sensitive subject in the educational sector is the privatisation of education. It is true that the experiments conducted show that it contributes to the quality and effectiveness of education, that it enables governments to face the increasing demand for education and reduces their costs, while granting parents some freedom of choice. However, in the absence of government regulations in this field, it also involves the risk of the commercialisation of the right to education and threatens to further deepen inequalities and weaken social cohesion.

Progress in the access to education... though mixed

In terms of access as such, despite the progress achieved, 67 million children of primary school going age do not have access to primary education today, for economic, socio-cultural, familial and institutional reasons. Girls, ethnic and linguistic minorities, children with disabilities, as well as the poorest of the poor or migrants face greater risks of exclusion from education. Moreover, 74 million children of secondary school going age still do not have access to secondary school. The improvement in primary school completion rates (88% in 2009) is the reason for the social pressure at the secondary level, whose bearing capacity remains limited. Concerning early childhood care and education, efforts have been made to enable children in the 3-6-year age group to gain access to learning and prepare for primary education. Over the last ten years, enrolments at the pre-primary level have increased by 40% in the world. Nevertheless, more than half the world’s children are still excluded from pre-primary education.

Persistence of difficulties in delivering quality education

Apart from the access problems faced, the quality of education remains a key problem in changing educational systems. Depending on the country, educational systems face a shortage of teachers, inadequate training levels, classes with an overwhelming number of pupils, inadequate teaching material, persistent inequalities within establishments and curricula that are sometimes out of step with the pupils’ environment. Problems related to the quality of education can also be found in developed countries where universal schooling has been in place for several decades now. In Europe, for example, 15% of the pupils leave school prematurely without acquiring the basic skills. Finally the condition of teachers is worrying. Apart from inadequate training, both initial and continuous, and overcrowded classes, their motivation has been showing a downward trend whereas their living conditions too are worsening. Faced with the shortage of teachers, especially in developing countries, governments often call upon teachers who work on short-term contracts and are not adequately trained.

The schooling of all children remains a major challenge everywhere in the world. Whatever their gender, origin (ethnic, cultural, religious, etc.), vulnerability (handicap, illness, etc.), economic and social condition, milieu (rural, urban, etc.), every child must be able to go to school – and that too from an early age.

But for the right to education for all to be exerted effectively, quality should not be sacrificed to the benefit of quantity (access). To that end, resources need to be found, especially to improve teachers’ training. New alternatives and innovative approaches, especially through information and communication technologies, should also be implemented in order to develop the current educational systems.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

Despite the satisfying results achieved within the framework of the Education For All (EFA) and Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) policies, children belonging to vulnerable population groups, although they may have access to education, have little chance of succeeding. The inequality in the results obtained by educational systems affects the girl child in particular, along with children of minority groups and children with disabilities. The indigence of parents or even the fact that the school environment is far from adapted to the living conditions of these children heighten the risks of them dropping out and their exclusion. It is therefore necessary to act on the school environment, but also on health and the various other factors related to discontinuity in education. Furthermore, teaching methods and techniques that are far from effective lead to a situation where the quality of learning remains far from adequate, calling for action with regard to curricula and teaching methods.

CHANGES SOUGHT:

All individuals, whoever they are, acquire the following through quality education:

- Fundamental basic knowledge
- The necessary life and social skills
- Aptitudes for living together harmoniously in society

INCLUSION

All children have the right to receive education without discrimination related to disabilities, ethnic origins, religion, language, gender, capacities, etc. Apart from the transmission of knowledge, schools also play a fundamental role in transmitting societal values and provide a space of interaction and engagement for children and their communities. Inclusion also means the development of teaching techniques and methods and a school environment that are adapted to the needs and specificities of each individual to enable each one to develop their potential to the maximum.

CHANGES SOUGHT:

All individuals, whoever they may be, with no distinction of gender, condition, cultural or social origin acquire the fundamental basic knowledge, the necessary life and social skills and the aptitude to live together harmoniously in society.
Assertion of citizenship
This period was also marked by the multiplication of movements for democratisation, such as the “Arab Spring”, and the emergence of spontaneous social movements, such as the Indignant’s movement in Europe. Condemning the economic and financial system, the deficit in individual and public freedoms, poverty and the deepening of inequalities, these movements testify to a gradual reinvestment of citizens in the public sphere, especially thanks to the multiplier effect of the Internet and social networks. However, in 2011, 2.6 billion people – i.e. one-third of the world’s population – were still living under so-called authoritarian regimes.

Reduction of poverty
Vs. the rise in inequalities
In the social sphere, it appears that people’s living conditions are improving. They have been translated today into better access to care and water, an improvement in food security and extended life expectancy. However, a large part of the population still faces difficulties in gaining access to care, housing and employment, and in playing their role as fully-fledged citizens, which is likely to lead to a rise in social tensions.

In fact, for several years now, the social consequences of the economic crisis have slowed down this movement. While poverty is showing a downward trend globally, inequalities are deepening between and within the countries. While the highest incomes are rising substantially, the working conditions of the most disadvantaged, especially in the informal sector, are deteriorating. Unemployment rates are touching historical levels, especially among the youth and the least skilled. To these millions of unemployed have been added the millions of workers who do not earn enough to protect their families from poverty.

Youth in search of integration
Today, one out of every five people in the world is 15-24 years old and 90% of them live in developing countries. Many of these young people have dropped out of the education system prematurely. In fact, an increasing number of youth manage to complete the full primary education cycle, but the transition from training to employment remains a problem, especially in countries where almost 40% of the population is below 25 years. In addition, many young people who have never been to school or have dropped out prematurely remain without any clear future prospects and often get involved in adventures that endanger peoples’ peace and security.

Whatever the means mobilised, education enables everyone, of all age groups, to develop to their full potential in order to be able to face the future. In that sense, education has to help in pursuing different goals. First of all, enabling everyone to have access to knowledge, build their capacities and absorb the values necessary for all social interactions. Secondly, enabling people to have access to a certain intellectual autonomy in order to be able to critically analyse the world around them. And finally, enabling people to develop the necessary skills for their social and professional mainstreaming and their participation in the life of their society.

Youth

The issues related to skill development for the youth, including knowledge, know-how and social skills have become key factors when education is discussed. Vocational education is still absent to a large extent from the educational scene. Vocational training would, however, enable young people to be included economically and socially and to play their role as citizens and social actors. More generally, young people are harbingers of change and will have to take up the challenges of the future. For the past few years, Aide et Action has developed its actions in the sphere of livelihood education and vocational training extensively. This issue has the potential to permeate all the Association’s thematics of intervention.

Changes sought:
Young people know what they expect from their future and are able to be included economically and socially.

Lifelong training
Despite the avowed importance of literacy and even greater needs, illiteracy still affects a large majority of the population, especially women, youth and adults in rural areas. On the other hand, while individuals have to accept “otherness in all its forms”, they also need to acknowledge the plurality of their identity within societies that are themselves plural, and must be able to adapt themselves to their evolving societies throughout their life span. Finally, information and communication technologies have not just revolutionised lifestyles, but also learning and teaching methods. Henceforth, education plays a vital role in this process, both in highlighting the richness of the diversity of these identities, as well as in preserving them. Aide et Action pays special attention to the opportunities offered to individuals to educate and train themselves throughout their lives in view of being able to better adapt to an ever-changing world and the emergence of societies that are more equitable and able to stand together.

Changes sought:
Adults acquire social and professional skills that enable them to fit into their local, national and international environment.
Among today’s global issues that call for a global response, climate change occupies a key place. For several years, issues related to the environment and climate change have occupied the centre stage. Climate change mitigation and adaptation are now included in all development strategies and plans, because it is obvious that no sustainable development can take place without taking climate change impacts into consideration and without a collective and coordinated response. Indeed, climate change has become one of the major challenges that humanity will have to take up in the 21st century.

With regard to this challenge, the efforts deployed by the international community focus on concrete and quantifiable targets. The dissemination and sharing of Corporate Social Responsibility and Sustainable Development principles make it possible to attract a greater commitment from companies and consumers.

Furthermore, the current political, economic and ecological upheavals highlight the vulnerability of people and frustrate their development processes, especially in the area of education. Environmental disasters that occur regularly are just as many crises for people and societies to overcome.

In addition, the rising trends in the consumption of natural resource have shown that fresh crises are likely to develop in the years to come, especially in the area of access to drinking water.

Education and society are closely linked. The first is what drives the second, on the one hand by consolidating its achievements and, on the other, by enabling societies to change and develop. Since the dynamism of societies is strongly based on the autonomy, responsibility, commitment and solidarity of the citizens it is composed of, educational policies and practices must be able to respond to the plans, developments and improvements to which societies aspire. By taking up this societal challenge, they can enable each individual to become a change agent, responsible both individually and collectively and thereby contribute to the emergence of fair, solidarity-based, peaceful and responsible societies.
3. OUR MODES OF INTERVENTION AND OUR APPROACHES

Successive États Généraux have allowed Aide et Action International to question itself about its fundamentals, its vision, its mission and its approaches. How does Aide et Action International conduct its mission? What are its modes of intervention? How does it interact with other development actors? Aide et Action’s modes of intervention and approaches evolve with its mission, so that its way of acting and interacting is in line with its identity and serves its mission.

1. OUR MODES OF INTERVENTION COMBINING FIELD ACTION, POLITICAL ACTION AND SOLIDARITY ACTION

Action in the field remains the Association’s bedrock

In the field, the project mode and social innovations are the two main levers that make it possible to structure the support mechanism implemented by Aide et Action International today. They are based on the individual and aim at sustainable social development. By choosing to work in the project mode, the Association brings together actors from highly varied horizons to work together for their common benefit. As for social innovation, it makes it possible to develop new ways of interacting with the actors present so as to respond to increasingly complex social needs. The support mechanism is therefore based on the constitution of multi-disciplinary teams engaged in working with local actors.

The activities conducted in the field through projects remain the basis for the organisation, a foundation it can use to build its experience and expertise and thereby guarantee the legitimacy of its discourse in all other types of action (influence, advocacy, communication, etc.).

Political action to be developed further

In order to significantly change the condition of education, experience has confirmed that actions in the field are inadequate if they are not accompanied by advocacy. Since social and educational issues are eminently political and strategic, they cannot be left to political decision-makers alone, without any counter-power. Indeed, Aide et Action International is duty-bound to be a stakeholder within a strong international movement, capable of influencing development policies and programmes.

To do so, Orientation no. 1 stemming from the 3rd États Généraux stressed the need to have an international discourse that is common to the entire organisation, even if each region must then adapt these elements to its own specificities. Based on its vision and experience, Aide et Action International reaffirmed its desire to develop a common discourse on educational and socio-economic issues that will have an impact on education and human dignity.

In order to implement influence and advocacy approaches, Aide et Action International endorses strategies based on developing networks and alliances with different organisations, while ensuring that its identity is respected. Orientation no. 2 of the 3rd ETG invites the Association to increase its presence in regional and international forums, in line with its mission.

Solidarity – the backbone of all our actions

Aide et Action International upholds solidarity between people for fairer and more equitable societies. Its approaches have broken away from the “North-South” logic based on transferring and applying development models designed in the North to the South. Conversely, the Association advocates adapting to the specificities of different contexts.

This means questioning the place each people, each society occupies in the world – the interdependencies that exist. Aide et Action International promotes horizontal solidarity and endorses the existence of different “models” that enable everyone to live a life of dignity and freedom.

Depending on the contexts and levels of development, the solidarity upheld by Aide et Action may take different forms: financial, material, human, intellectual, etc. As specified by Orientation no. 4 stemming from the 3rd ETG, “reciprocity” and “mutual respect” are at the heart of the definition of the solidarity that Aide et Action International intends to promote. In order to involve new actors and bring them together so as to fulfill its mission, the Association must innovate and develop forms of solidarity that are adapted to these diverse stakeholders (Orientation no. 6 of the 3rd ETG).

More than ever, sponsorship contributes to promoting a vision of a more just world, open to others and to differences, “here or elsewhere”. Under the impetus of Orientation no. 5 stemming from the 3rd ETG, it has decided to evolve its form, content and modes of functioning. From a mechanism based on the exchange of correspondence and financial support, rooted in a “North/South” vision and a charitable approach to development and donations, it has the vocation of becoming a true international solidarity link (North/South, South/South and North/North) at the service of the educational mission implemented across the world.

At the same time, companies and foundations – the “new” inseparable solidarity actors – are daily confirming their enhanced commitment by our side. Their actions (and their expectations) go far beyond mere direct financial support. Their modes of action are increasingly innovative as intermediaries for promoting our vision and mission vis-à-vis their employees, networking with their European and international partners, partnership approaches vis-à-vis institutional actors, etc. Over and above these modes of action, Orientation no. 10 of the 3rd ETG invites the Association to develop skill-based partnerships with its partner companies and foundations.

Thanks to this “snowballing” effect, these new conceptions of philanthropic action by private actors have pushed “traditional” institutional solidarity actors to review their modalities and public action networks, within their own territories as well as at international level.
2. OUR APPROACHES: 
ACTING... AND INTERACTING WITH OTHERS!

Strengthening our attentiveness and support to actors

Aide et Action International is positioning itself as an association that provides support to actors. It has made a commitment to ensure that every citizen becomes the actor of his or her own project: indeed, local actors implement their own development projects with the support of Aide et Action. This societal project is, in fact, affirmed in its Charter, in which it states that it “supports the people, builders of their own educational projects.”

Today, the Association follows a rather participatory approach and the dynamics of support remain to be consolidated. However, the process has been initiated and the evolution towards the implementation of a global approach of providing support to actors is at work. The aim is to gradually manage to build and strengthen the actors’ skills and their ability to take autonomous decisions, as well as to instil a sense of responsibility with regard to their educational projects.

Weaving multi-actor partnerships

This posture of support innervates all the Association’s approaches vis-à-vis its partners, whether they are financial (in connection with donors), operational (with other local associations, for instance), influence-based (through advocacy networks and alliances) or others. As advocated by Orientation no. 7 of the 3rd ET0, the Association must ensure that it positions itself as a decisive pivot for initiating, developing and facilitating partnerships.

While seeking partnerships, Aide et Action International’s approach of providing support to actors must be explained and highlighted. In the years to come, the priority must therefore be to highlight and promote the project concepts it develops, as well as to formulate elements of Aide et Action International’s positioning as an Association that provides support.

To bolster this internal approach, it would be necessary in particular to form partnerships with Research Institutes and Universités. Through these skill-based partnerships, the Association could reinforce its credibility based on the tangible evidence of its projects’ impacts. Research and analytical work on Aide et Action International’s projects could nurture new economic, institutional and associational partnerships. In addition, the results of these studies could also be highlighted in support of its advocacy vis-à-vis influential bodies, particularly in the educational field.

Developing the movement for education

The citizens’ movement for education consists of all actors rallying together for the cause of education, whether they do so with Aide et Action International or through other means. This citizenship dynamic takes concrete shape in the International Associational Life (Vie Associative Internationale – VAI) in particular.

In the years to come, the Association must move towards structuring this citizens’ movement by relying on its international and regional governing bodies. The purpose of this movement is, on the one hand, to provide all citizens with the means to conduct their own development projects and, on the other, to give them the ability to participate in the formulation of the educational policies that concern them. Over time, the movement could contribute to the quality of projects and the development of key concepts, while also being used to influence policy-makers. Involved, Aide et Action International supports the actors in this movement in their quest for autonomy and visibility through its posture of training and support.
1. THE CONTINUITY OF THE ASSOCIATIONAL PROJECT

The 1998, 2004 and 2011 États Généraux enabled Aide et Action International to affirm its identity and base it on the strong values and principles that constitute its associational project – the vision of the world that it intends to incarnate.

Of course, different, more or less rational, more or less successful and more or less innovative models exist, depending on the concerned organisation’s priorities.

As for Aide et Action International, it has established two inseparable prerequisites for the deployment of its organisation – it should serve its mission in the best way possible and it should be faithful to its values and principles, which are a non-negotiable basis of its identity.

II. OUR ORGANISATION’S ORIENTATIONS : DEPLOYING OUR STRENGTHS AT THE SERVICE OF THE MISSION

1. A STRONG IDENTITY

Consistent with this conception of the world and of the central role education plays in development, AEAI has built a strong identity, which is specified in its two founding documents – its Charter and Statutes.

**Our vision**
Aide et Action International acts for a world in which dignity is assured for all women, men and children, thanks to education – a lever for human development.

**Our mission**
The Association is a development organisation whose goal is that of advancing the cause of “Education For All”, especially basic education for all vulnerable people whose fundamental right to quality education is denied or jeopardised, in order to allow them to choose their future in all liberty.

The Association acts wherever it is deemed necessary and feasible, including for migrant populations or those in crisis or emergency situations.

To this end, public awareness is achieved by all means permitted by law and in compliance with the ethics the Association has adopted. The awareness building is carried out through sponsorship in particular – a solidarity link that is the very foundation of the Association. It helps to stimulate a broad movement for education and acts on all factors having an effect in the educational sphere. The Association is free of any political and religious links.

**Our values**
Our commitment and our actions are based, above all, on the values of liberty, respect, solidarity, equity and integrity. These values constitute the Association’s identity. We share them with all the women and men the Association is made of and more generally with all our partners.

**Our commitments**
Free of all political and religious attachments, Aide et Action undertakes to:
- Act for the respect of the right to quality education for all, especially children, the future of humanity.
- Increase awareness, mobilise and lobby so that education becomes an international commitment.
- Support the people, who alone are the decision makers, builders and entrepreneurs of their educational projects.
- Promote an education that is open to the world, its diversity and its cultures.
- Develop intercultural exchanges and thus the principle of solidarity, especially through sponsorship ties.
- Guarantee transparency in our actions and in the use of our resources.
2. OUR 4 FOUNDING PRINCIPLES - THE REFLECTION OF A CERTAIN VISION OF THE WORLD

The sharing of decisions

AEAI’s (executive and governing) decision-making bodies, by their very composition, enable the various member regions or their representatives to take decisions together, which are binding for the entire Aide et Action International organisation. This principle is translated in particular not only in terms of the membership of decision-making bodies (the Congress, but also the International Directors’ Committee in the case of the executive), which include actors from the various regions.

A shared responsibility for the overall development of the Association

None of the regions decide for and by themselves – they are jointly responsible, along with the other regions and AEAI, for the overall interests of the mission and associational project. This joint responsibility ensures the organisation’s unity, based on the same, shared mission.

The autonomy of the regions

Apart from the rules that are common to the organisation, each region functions differently, to respond better to its specific contextual requirements. This autonomy is applicable both for the regional executive teams (organisations that vary from region to region) and the regional governing bodies (associational structures that also vary from region to region). Their autonomy is subject to their decisions not impacting on any other region or the Aide et Action Network as a whole.

The pooling of resources (human, financial, information-related, etc.)

This principle strengthens solidarity and equity, consisting of pooling all the resources of the various member legal entities across the world in-house, for the benefit of the same, shared mission and associational project. This pooling or mutualisation exercise also applies in decision-making forums, from the regional to the international level, where actors pool together their experience, expertise, knowledge and commitment.

International governance

Consistent with its world view and on the basis of its international principles, Aide et Action has built an international organisation that guarantees the representativeness of its various regions of intervention – constituting a true sharing of power and the development of international expertise on education-related issues in the world.

Four regional legal entities were, therefore, created (Africa, South Asia, South-East Asia, Latin America/Caribbean), and Europe is in the process of being established. Their governing bodies stem from the pool of local actors in the field, who work alongside Aide et Action to ensure the respect of the right to quality education for all, which guarantees operational and democratic legitimacy. They are all members of the legal entity, Aide et Action International.

The Aide et Action Network consisting of the regional entities and the AEAI organisation is a mixed organisation including both employees (executive) and volunteers (governing body members). The governing and executive bodies work together to implement the organisation’s associational project, while abiding by their respective roles.

At the international level

The Congress defines the Network’s overall orientations and their budgetary implications, determines the thematics, approves the accounts, and elects and controls the International Board which reports to it. As the Congress meets only every two years, it delegates some of its powers to the International Board between two of its meetings. The Congress therefore plays the role of an International General Assembly. Meeting for the first time in October 2011, the Congress is the organisation’s supreme sovereign body. It is composed of the regional associations or representatives by the Presidents elected by each regional entity, as well as Thematic Representatives. This dual representation, geographic and thematic, enables it to go beyond geographic issues and confers on it a truly international vision of the issues related to the Association’s mission.

The International Board, in addition to the powers delegated to it by the Congress, ensures the implementation of the global orientations by the Network’s members, while complying with the Association’s principles and ethics, as well as the approval and steering of their plans of action (Conventions of Objectives) in association with the regional governing bodies. It is responsible before the Congress. It takes the support of the International Directors’ Committee, designated and directed by an International Director General, in order to prepare AEAI’s decisions as well as ensure their implementation (orientations, deployment strategy, Conventions of Objectives, etc.)

At the regional level

The regional governing bodies (General Assemblies and Boards of Directors) take part in the international decision-making process through their participation in the International Congress and in the preparation of the Global Plan of Action (Global Convention of Objectives). They take the support of a regional executive team, directed by a Regional Director, to define regional plans of action based on the international orientations and implement them. They ensure that the associational project is complied with and that the plans of action are duly implemented in their region.

International Associational Life and the Movement for Education

The Association’s internationalisation reflects the mobilisation of actors who make a commitment to education alongside AEAI, everywhere in the world. They may be parents of school-going children, teachers, volunteers, sponsors, partners, children, etc. and are all part of our international associational life.

This International Associational Life guarantees that human beings and the solidarity link remain at the heart of the Association’s approaches. AEAI therefore gives everyone the means to express their solidarity with the Cause it champions.

The Association therefore engages actors from its International Associational Life to take up their responsibilities in the implementation of its educational mission. Each of those who are members of the International Associational Life take forward their associations’ approaches, common to all of Aide et Action International, at their own levels. And the recognition of these actors’ commitment should also contribute to the development of a broad-based citizens’ movement, sensitised to the Cause of education. The Association strengthens the skills of those mobilised along with it, in order to implement projects in favour of education. The International Associational Life contributes both to AEAI’s expertise and to the quality of its educational projects, but also to its visibility and capacity to influence.
2. CONSTANTLY ADAPTING OUR ORGANISATION TO OUR MISSION

An organisation does not restructure itself “by chance”. It is first and foremost the reflection of a certain identity. Indeed, Aide et Action International’s identity has affirmed itself over the years. It has evolved along with those that give it life – its women and men, who propose, make attempts and adapt, within the box or outside of it. It is also the outcome of a history: the successive États Généraux have marked turning points in the life of the Association. And finally, it is the response to a constant, inescapable question: how to place our skills, resources and know-how at the service of our mission in the best possible way?

1. A TRANSFORMATION PROCESS INITIATED IN 1998

Created in 1981 as a humanitarian, sponsorship-based association, it was in 1998 that Aide et Action began a true Copernican revolution. That was when it decided to make a deep-seated change in its identity in order to become a real development actor that worked with disadvantaged population groups across the world.

It chose to implement a participatory development approach placing the responsibility for their development in the hands of the target population groups, which therefore became the real actors of their projects and decided freely about their own future. This approach, innovative at the time, placed Aide et Action as a supporting organisation for local dynamics.

The second dimension of its evolution stemmed from a fairly simple observation: our world’s globalisation and the interactions it calls for, involve all sectors of activity. While it was obvious to all that an economic crisis in one region of the world would impact in the more or less long term on the other continents, the same holds true for educational systems and their development. Aide et Action therefore owed it to its mission to become international – i.e. to be able to have a global and cross-cutting vision and analysis of the world’s educational systems so as to be better able to anticipate trends and guarantee the relevance of its activities through a process of shared decision-making.

All the subsequent changes in the associational project were the direct consequences of this vision of the world, of development and of educational challenges.

Then, as of 2009, the organisation began to adapt its mode of operation to enable it to better implement its associational project, in line with its vision and mission.

In 2013, Aide et Action International initiated a new cycle of transformation, defining the 3 orientations of its transformation process, following the previous changes and in response to major challenges.

Given below is a diagram showing the main phases of these changes, which involved both our core mission – development through education – and our political functioning and operating and steering modalities.

2. A TRANSFORMATION PROCESS INDISPENSABLE FOR OUR SUSTAINABILITY

Over the last 30 years, Aide et Action has been able to evolve its mission, unite around a strong associational project and deploy itself in a growing number of countries with a growing number of themes, to cover the issues related to its mission of development through education as widely as possible.

From a charitable approach, it has been able to evolve true developmental approaches. It has adapted its budgetary system to its growth. It has transformed its governing bodies so as to remain faithful to its principles. To date, AEAI has therefore succeeded in managing the necessary changes to remain a relevant, effective and efficient actor in its mission.

However, new challenges have shaken up the field of development, particularly the world of NGOs as we know them today challenges whose extent and nature are such that many organisations may come out of it all diminished and weakened as they would prove to be less effective in the field, for want of making the necessary changes at the right time. In 2013, AEAI decided to take up these challenges so as to emerge on top of them, made even stronger by and thereby, better placed to improve the quality and scope of its actions.

Consequently, AEAI finds itself at the crossroads today. Three key issues in our international context have made our transformation process indispensable:

**NGOs losing their credibility**

International Solidarity Organisations (ISOs) – NGOs among them – are currently facing a loss of credibility and legitimacy vis-à-vis both institutions and the general public. This is not a sudden or dramatic phenomenon. However, the trend is quite real and sustainable. New actors are occupying the field of development – civil society movements, as well as institutional actors, universities and enterprises, to mention just a few. In this a priori buoyant context, in which other forms of organisations are picking up the gauntlet of development, what added value can an NGO offer? What expertise, what skills, what impact and what specific contribution can it offer?

**1st imperative for AEAI: Strengthening our credibility and legitimacy in response to the institutional and political fragility of International Solidarity Organisations (ISOs) across the world.**

**An increasingly competitive environment**

For those NGOs that manage to emerge as relevant, solid and credible actors of development, there is still a need to stand out from the crowd. In fact, although development efforts are extensively marked by cooperation and partnership among actors, NGOs too grow in a competitive environment like several other organisations, as they too are subject to the scarcity of resources. Fulfilling their mission – their raison d’être – depends not only on their abilities and skills in the field, but also on their capacity to raise the necessary resources to implement their mission.

**2nd imperative for AEAI: Standing out in an increasingly competitive global environment.**

**A wide-ranging international economic and financial crisis**

Finally, the crisis that the world economy is currently facing has forced every organisation to question itself about the effectiveness of its functioning and the optimal use of its resources and skills at the service of its mission. Resources – now more difficult to obtain – are also scarcer. Our mission has imposed this requirement of efficiency on us, at a time when the people we support need it the most. We therefore need to do “better”, i.e. be more efficient, more consistent and more specialised.

**3rd imperative for AEAI: Improve the effectiveness and efficiency of our organisation so as to deal with the budget constraints induced by the international economic and financial crisis.**

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**2004**

- Opening-up of the educational mission
- Changeover from programme to project mode

**2009**

- Refocusing on key innovative concepts and expertise

**2011**

- Clarification of roles and responsibilities (ICOR, Agreements, etc.)
- Harmonisation of practices and procedures
- Changes in international structure

**2013**

- New budget process
- Adaptation of IS
- New sponsorship policy framework

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**1998**

- Implementation of the support-based approach

**2004**

- Launching of the internationalisation of the governing body
- Creation of Aide et Action International
- Drafting of Charter

**2007**

- Drafting of Code of Ethics
- Creation of regional legal entities
- 1st International Congress

**2009**

- Harmonisation of practices and procedures
- Changes in international structure

**2011**

- Refocusing on key innovative concepts and expertise

**2013**

- New budget process
- Adaptation of IS
- New sponsorship policy framework
To respond to these 3 imperatives, Aide et Action International (AEAI) is transforming its organisation and its modes of functioning. This transformation process is centred on 3 major, inseparable orientations that would enable us to fulfill our mission differently and fully.

**ORIENTATION 1**
**DEPLOYING OUR KEY CONCEPTS**
AEAI shall identify and deploy key project concepts aimed at development through education at the international level – i.e. innovative solutions that have been tested in the field and whose impact in terms of development has been proven.

A key concept defines the specific elements and principles of one of our interventions, directed at a specific problem. To do so, it relies on the key success factors identified in the field, within the framework of tested innovative projects, so as to extract the intervention’s fundamental principles (its essence, key theoretical and philosophical aspects of our intervention), which are not determined by contextual specificities.

An innovative project for AEAI is therefore a project, which, thanks to the novelty of its approach, makes it possible to significantly enhance the impact (qualitative or quantitative) of our intervention on the issue of development through education. The new approach must therefore bring about a real added value for project actors. A new approach can be of any nature: a specific problem, activities, approaches, processes, modes of organisation or operation, etc.

However, the idea is not to innovate for innovation’s sake, but to truly respond to a dual challenge for the organisation: that of improving the impact of our interventions and of standing out from other actors. The success of such a project would therefore have to be demonstrated through its impact and the added value of the new initiative implemented will have to be identified.

**ORIENTATION 2**
**EXPERIMENTING WITH INNOVATIVE PROJECTS**
AEAI shall identify and test innovative projects in the field with a view to distinguishing new key concepts that can be deployed at the international level.

The international as well as the local context is perpetually changing and it is indispensable for an international solidarity organisation to remain relevant in terms of its interventions and credible as regards its positioning.

Consequently, AEAI is duty-bound to maintain an effective and dynamic rooting in the field that will enable it to test out new solutions concretely in the face of the diversity of educational challenges that prevail in our world. The diversity of educational issues is well reflected in the 9 themes of our Global Development Plan, which therefore remain totally relevant as a framework for the experiments that we need to conduct in the field.

Successful experiments (with a demonstrated positive impact) will enable us to come up with new key concepts or enrich already existing ones.

**ORIENTATION 3**
**HIGHLIGHTING THE VALUE OF OUR EXPERTISE**
AEAI shall develop an in-house expertise and research centre that will enable it to formalise and promote its expertise and know-how, and thereby offer them to other actors and derive new sources of funding from them.

The first two orientations should enable the Association to experiment and deploy solutions that are relevant in terms of development at the international level.

In order to establish this positioning and mode of intervention, AEAI must become a real laboratory of ideas in the area of development through education. That is the purpose of the 3rd strategic priority that seeks to set up a virtual in-house expertise centre to make it possible, on the one hand, to identify key concepts promising change that can be tested and, on the other, to promote the positive results of such experiments.

Thus, this cell will function as a “research and development” hub to help the organisation develop its expertise and promote it vis-à-vis external stakeholders:
- Support for the formalisation and deployment of key concepts promising change
- Identification of new possible key concepts for experimentation
- Documentation (capitalisation) and promotion of the expertise thus developed
- Development of a discourse for influence activities
- Making its expertise available to other development actors

**2. MAJOR CHANGES TO BE IMPLEMENTED**

The transformation process touches upon the core of the fulfilment of our mission: the identification of a key concept, highlighting its value and then, its international deployment. Thus, while it may seem obvious that our operational intervention modalities will be impacted by this new vision of the organisation, the same is equally true of all our trades. The following are the main areas of change planned:

**AREA OF CHANGE 1**
**INTERNATIONALISING OUR SOCIAL MISSION SO AS TO STRENGTHEN OUR IMPACT AND EXPERTISE**

The aim is for AEAI to be in a position to internationalise/ “transversalise” its knowledge and impact so as to carry weight in the global arena. AEAI will therefore move from local recognition to global recognition and will be able to position itself as an expert in development through education in the main discussion and decision-making forums.

**CHANGES SOUGHT:** Strengthening the impact of our interventions through action in the field and through influence.

**AREA OF CHANGE 2**
**EVALUATING THE STRUCTURE AND SKILLS**

Our current organisation is becoming obsolete both in terms of its structure and its processes and skills. It is indispensable to transform it by taking up the following three-fold challenge:
- Compliance with the 4 principles underlying our organisational modalities
- Structuring the organisation so as to be able to uphold the new intervention modalities
- Optimising our organisation for greater efficiency

**CHANGES SOUGHT:** Adapting our organisation’s international strategies and practices to enhance our effectiveness and efficiency.

**AREA OF CHANGE 3**
**ADAPTING OUR INTERNATIONAL MOBILISATION AND FUNDRAISING STRATEGY**

The aim is, of course, to adapt ourselves to our context in which the areas and actors of philanthropy have undergone rapid changes in the past few years, but to also strengthen the joint-responsibility of all, in the mobilisation of financial resources: fundraising is not the aim of a few, but the duty of the entire organisation, everywhere in the world and on the basis of the rationale of the pooling of resources (mutualisation).

**CHANGES SOUGHT:** The challenge is to breathe fresh air into the organisation’s development by enabling it to invest in new territories while promoting innovation and our historical know-how: the solidarity link.

**AREA OF CHANGE 4**
**DEVELOPING AN INTERNATIONAL COMMUNICATION STRATEGY AT THE SERVICE OF INFLUENCE AND MOBILISATION**

From an Association known and recognised locally, AEAI must become an Association known and recognised internationally. This will have to be done through brand-building and the development of advocacy so as to introduce an international dimension that is indispensable for our visibility and credibility.

**CHANGES SOUGHT:** Strengthening our brand image on the basis of a few projects promising change with demonstrated real added value.
4. AREAS OF DEPLOYMENT

Our mission’s modes of deployment are directly linked to the changes our organisation is making. Conceived thus far on the basis of a geographic and thematic rationale, the organisation’s deployment will now follow another reasoning - that of the deployment of its expertise and influence.

1. A CHANGE IN OUR APPROACH TO DEPLOYMENT

Based on Aide et Action’s first Global Development Plan (GDP), Aide et Action’s expansion strategy was able to develop on the basis of two main fundamentals: on the one hand, through territorial deployment by favouring geographical proximity with existing countries of intervention and, on the other, through furthering its mission by developing priority thematics of intervention defined by Aide et Action International. Thus, today Aide et Action International develops projects and leads actions of fundraising in 26 countries.

This concept of areas of deployment, an outcome of the 1st GDP, was based on the concern for the stabilisation of regional entities. Henceforth, and in keeping with AEAI’s transformation process in the years to come, geographical deployment would take place not so much through the expansion of our countries of intervention – although the possibility will be retained for strategic reasons – as through a real aptitude to position ourselves as a support provider. Aide et Action’s expertise will therefore expand beyond its areas of intervention.

2. GEOGRAPHIC DEPLOYMENT THROUGH A DIVERSIFIED APPROACH

Faithful to its posture of listening to and supporting people and partners, Aide et Action International has created both an international and regional structure. It is now in a position to respond to the initial need of stabilisation in the areas in which it intervenes. Each region will further its territory’s development in line and in consultation with the other regions and the international level.

Within the framework of the new Global Development Plan, Aide et Action International could promote three modes for the deployment of its interventions: development through the educational mission, development through the mobilisation of resources and development through the volunteers’ movement.

3. PROMOTION OF ITS EXPERTISE FOR AN ENHANCED IMPACT

Apart from direct interventions that call for the physical presence of Aide et Action teams to conduct projects or mobilisation activities, the Association must seek to promote its expertise, which will enable it to undertake activities or influence actions in other regions and, thereby, enhance the impact of its direct interventions.

Deployment through a policy of exerting our influence

In accordance with Resolution no. 2 of the 2011 ETG, the organisation is duty-bound to convey its discourse to decision-makers and policy-makers so that it can influence public educational and development policies at the local, regional and international level. Its firm rooting in the field gives its discourse the credibility it needs for the success of its influence policy, so as to enable the organisation to disseminate the best practices it has learnt from its experiences on a larger scale.

Support to other intervening actors on the basis of our expertise

The fact that Aide et Action International does not itself conduct projects in a country will not prevent it from being present alongside/through its partners. Its posture as a support provider implies that the Association would remain a stakeholder in such projects and develop its expertise through projects implemented in different fields. With a view to furthering its mission, Aide et Action International has chosen to expand its projects to cover the largest number of local actors, irrespective of their country of origin. Consequently, the Association undertakes to highlight its distinctive skills in terms of providing support to communities or partners in designing and implementing effective and sustainable projects beyond its borders.

Such support can be provided over the medium term within the framework of partnerships, but it can also be offered as a one-off intervention in the form of the remunerated provision of services. The latter modality could consequently constitute an additional form of mobilisation of financial resources, presenting a real return on our investments in innovation and action-research.
The world is witnessing changes at a faster pace, bringing in their wake an inevitable transformation of organisations. The ways of taking action and of being “useful” in the world are not set in stone – they are constantly being questioned, shaken up and challenged by the changes that take place.

It is for this very reason that – as the discerning reader would have undoubtedly remarked – no time limit has been set in this GDP. Obviously, time for implementation is necessary, as many of the orientations set forth by the document cannot become operational instantly. But the Conventions of Objectives shall provide the details.

However, the idea here is to lay down the guidelines, the main areas of change in our mission and our organisation, in relation to the major trends observed and expected in the years to come.

One of the factors marking the world today is also a certain breaking-down of dogmas, paradigms and thought processes. Visions of the world are diversifying and getting renewed – and NGOs will probably have a role to play in this area too.

Indeed, NGOs – laboratories of new ideas that are grappling with global issues – have the ability to experiment with new ways of acting together and to propose new models.

Aide et Action International has embarked upon this path, through its États Généraux, but also through its mode of internationalisation. Its associational project embodies a new form of governance, based on its 4 principles: sharing of decision-making, the autonomy of regions, shared responsibility and the pooling of resources.

There are many ways in which an international organisation can be managed. The choice of the “best” organisational structure is always more or less based on rational criteria, such as performance, quality and efficiency. But these criteria themselves open up a multitude of possibilities. However, above all that, it is a certain vision of the world, a conviction, a certain ideal and the culture of the organisation that guides that choice.

Aide et Action International gathers together women and men that promote and uphold its associational project and test it out every day. Indeed, it is this ability to try things out, innovate and place our joint convictions at the service of our mission that is not likely to change!