

<https://www.osi-ngo.org/actualites/actualites-generales/article/objectif-sciences-international-au-travers-du-impact-gap-canvas>



Objectif Sciences International through the Impact Gap Canvas

- News - General news -



Publication date: Tuesday 30 September 2025

Copyright © Objectif Sciences International - All rights reserved

Using the lens of the Impact Gaps Canvas, designed by Daniela Papi-Thornton at the University of Oxford, allows us to go beyond the simple idea of a solution to deeply understand the root causes and systemic dynamics of a problem.

This tool helps map out the actors, existing initiatives, and their limitations, in order to identify impact gaps—those areas where efforts remain insufficient or misaligned.

It encourages a more clear-eyed, strategic, and collaborative approach to impact-driven innovation.

By connecting understanding, observation, and action, it transforms good intentions into measurable structural change.

On the eve of celebrating the 35th anniversary of the NGO Objectif Sciences International, let us engage in this analytical exercise in light of the path that still lies ahead.

Sommaire

- [From Seed to Global Network: Building \(...\)](#)
- [A Proven, Accessible, and Replicable Model](#)
- [A Method, Not a Franchise](#)
- [Concrete Examples: DRC, Togo, Canada](#)
- [A Global Capacity-Building Strategy](#)
- [A Balanced and Inclusive Economic Model](#)
- [A Roadmap for the 2025–2035 Decade](#)
- [An Alliance for the Planet and Future \(...\)](#)
- [A Call to Join the Common Effort](#)
- [An Invitation to Act](#)

From Seed to Global Network: Building Participatory Science for the Planet Together

There are human dynamics that change the course of the world not through force, but through the steady repetition of the right action, carried out thousands of times, in thousands of places.

For over thirty years, Objectif Sciences International (OSI) has been part of these dynamics.

Born from a simple idea learning science through practice, and practicing it to take action the NGO has become an international network for [participatory research](#) and science education, present on every continent.

A Proven, Accessible, and Replicable Model

Local OSI groups are hubs of action.

They bring together educators, researchers, engineers, teachers, associations, young people, families, universities, and local authorities.

Each group is structured around 5 pillars:

- **Operations management**, which ensures the quality, safety, and logistics of activities;
- **Development program**, which builds partnerships, manages communication, fundraising and collaboration, and finds participants for operations;
- **Pedagogy and logistics program**, which ensures the educational and scientific consistency of each project;
- **Research programs**, which define, lead, and bring scientific projects to life with participants and facilitators;
- **Facilitators**, who lead the activities and provide participants with experiences where reality surpasses fiction.

Participants are placed at the heart of the process, and together, these pillars give rise to [Participatory Research](#) initiatives.

This model, proven since the first group was created on the shores of Lake Geneva in France and Switzerland in 1992, has since spread to Canada, from Togo to the Democratic Republic of Congo, and to Tunisia, China, Guinea, and Australia.

A Method, Not a Franchise

Creating a local OSI group does not mean duplicating a structure it means replicating a method: that of **learning through practice**, based on participatory science and education for sustainable development.

Each group is born from a foundational training session, the **Local ST1**, which enables a team of actors to learn how to design and lead science camps, youth clubs, field missions, or educational trips.

Over the months, this team becomes autonomous, trained in key roles: operations management, educational coordination, development program leadership.

They learn to build partnerships, design programs, host diverse audiences, and showcase the research results produced by participants.

Concrete Examples: DRC, Togo, Canada

In the Democratic Republic of Congo, the ST1 training held in Kinshasa in 2021 launched research programs on bonobos, gorillas, water quality, and waste management.

Dozens of young professionals became involved, from Kinshasa to Goma, supported by experts in ecology, urban planning, and public health.

Their goal: connect participatory science with local priorities in development and resilience.

In Togo, local teams are working on biodiversity, ethnobotany, and beekeeping enhancement.

Their journey began with initial training in Lomé, followed by patient work in Kpalimé to find a base camp, engage

local communities, and launch the first science trips.

The impact is measured as much in learning outcomes as in the restored pride of taking local action.

In Canada, the model brought together researchers, educators, and responsible tourism professionals as early as 2006 to form OSI-Canada.

From Vancouver to Quebec, the programs are based on participatory research around water, forests, and boreal wildlife. Everything is still in development, and the possibilities are endless.

A Global Capacity-Building Strategy

The NGO's LGC (Local Group Creation) service, based in Geneva, supports the creation of each local group.

The processes are clear:

- an 18-month preparatory phase,
- a first local training session,
- a first field operation,
- followed by full autonomy within three years.

Each country defines its own scientific and educational priorities, in dialogue with OSI's international programs.

The data collected contributes to global research while addressing local needs for education, awareness, and innovation.

Local groups then become **nodes in a planetary network**: they share protocols, exchange results, translate materials, pool tools, and co-develop new methods.

They are laboratories for experimenting with the world of tomorrow, rooted in the realities of each territory.

A Balanced and Inclusive Economic Model

Each OSI group relies on a tripartite balance:

- operational income from trips and activities;
- institutional grants and partnerships;
- philanthropy and crowdfunding, particularly through diasporas.

This model ensures independence while opening the door to cooperation and shared responsibility.

Thus, at the creation of a local group, a crowdfunding campaign is often launched, directed toward the country's diaspora.

It funds the first training session, outfitting the camp center, or scholarships for local participants.

A Roadmap for the 2025-2035 Decade

OSI's vision is clear: to enable every country, region, or city in the world that wishes to do so to establish its own local OSI group.

These groups will form a **global archipelago of participatory science**: spaces where youth, researchers, educators, and citizens collaborate to address the challenges of their environment.

Leverage locations Geneva, Nairobi, London, Brussels, New York, California play a catalytic role: creating a local group in these international hubs facilitates the emergence of new groups in neighboring regions.

Thus, Geneva inspires European development, Nairobi energizes East Africa, and Montreal, Vancouver, and more recently California, drive growth in the Americas.

An Alliance for the Planet and Future Generations

This vision goes beyond OSI.

It speaks to all who believe that education, science, and cooperation are the foundations of a sustainable world.

To ministries of education and environment, UN agencies, local authorities, NGOs, universities, and foundations: each actor can contribute to this living network.

Because ultimately, it's less about building an organization than about sustaining a movement: that of people learning together to observe, understand, and repair their world.

The OSI project belongs to no one in particular it belongs to those who choose to be part of it, wherever they are on the planet.

A Call to Join the Common Effort

Creating a local OSI group is building a bridge between education, science, and life.

It's offering children, youth, families, and researchers the opportunity to take concrete action for the Sustainable Development Goals.

It's also about strengthening social cohesion, local autonomy, and collective pride.

In the coming years, dozens of new groups will emerge, supported by International Geneva, the United Nations, foundations, and citizens, all working on impact-driven projects.

Each will bring its own colors, culture, and expertise, but all will share one ambition: **to make the world more curious, more conscious, and more responsible.**

An Invitation to Act

The challenges of our time ecological, social, technological will not be met through competition, but through cooperation.

The world does not need isolated heroes, but enlightened communities.

Local OSI groups are this emerging community.

They do not promise perfection, but progress through experience.

They do not aim to persuade, but to connect.

And perhaps their greatest achievement is this: proving that a global organization can grow without losing its soul.

Joining OSI means joining a global movement for participatory research and active education.

It means planting a seed of science and hope in the soil of reality.

And every seed counts.