**Chapter III**

**AIC Today**

* AIC's Grassroots Actions
* Advocacy
* Training Volunteers
* Communication
* **Finances**
* **Legal Framework**
* **Code of Ethics**

**Finances**

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| The **activities of local groups** are financed by the annual dues of their members and by the donations that the groups seek from private donors or public bodies in the vicinity.  The **volunteers**, AIC members, also contribute to funding the work by offering the association their time and putting their skills to its service.  **AIC International** is financed by the annual dues of the member associations, as well as by donations from individuals or different bodies. However these financial resources are extremely important for carrying out grassroots actions.  **Paying the annual dues** has deep value: it is the sign of our desire to contribute, through a gesture of **solidarity**, to the life of the association. It is also a commitment to collective responsibility and above all it is a symbol of **belonging**. For this reason paying the annual dues has a different meaning than simply giving money.  A donation, even if it is necessary for the life of the association, can just be a sign of appreciation for the work being carried out and does not imply a personal commitment. The annual dues, on the other hand, express the decision to belong to the association and to take on the responsibility of this commitment. | **Finance:**  **A means of action**  **The annual dues:**  **A symbol of belonging**  **and commitment** |

**Legal Framework**

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| AIC groups have a dual legal identity:   * A civil identity as recognised NGOs in their own country * An ecclesial identity, subject to canonical norms. AIC is, under Canon Law, an “association of the faithful”. This means that its Constitution is officially approved by the competent ecclesiastical authority.   AIC is constituted as a “legal person”: it is an international not-for-profit organisation.  **The Constitution** (1985) and its subsequent modifications define:   * The objectives being pursued and the activities being implemented to achieve them; * The operation of the association and the hierarchy between the powers; * The rights and responsibilities of the members   (It can be consulted on our website)  **The By-Laws** (1985) complete the constitution and are only imposed on members. They enact an ethic of collaboration.  **The Canonical Status** (2007) confirms that AIC is movement of the lay faithful.  Saint Vincent and his successors received the power to canonically erect parish or interparish Confraternities of Charity from the Holy See through Apostolic Privilege (C312 §2). Later the local groups were organised into national associations with different names according to the country and an international association (AIC). | **Dual identity:**   * **Civil** * **Ecclesial**   **Constitution**  **By-Laws**  **Canonical Status** |

**Code of Ethics**

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| Governance according to Saint Vincent implies promoting the values of rigorousness, fairness, integrity, transparency and efficiency;  A clear legal framework and a balance of power allow for transparency and proper management of money that is the property of those living in poverty.  The rules that the association has given itself, its evangelical values and the vision and method of Saint Vincent direct our behaviour as partners at the service of the most disadvantaged, with respect to both them and the donors. | **Total transparency in the management of the “goods of the most disadvantaged”** |

**Questions to reflect on in groups:**

1. **Do you consider the payment of the annual dues to be a gesture of solidarity and a sign of belonging to AIC? Knowing what the dues are used for, do you pay them with pleasure?**
2. **What do the members of your group think about the subject of the “legal framework”? What do you think about the fact that mandates are only for a limited duration of time?**
3. **Why do you think it is important that AIC volunteers act in conformity with evangelical values and the teachings of Saint Vincent?**