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Reactive Youth

Youth Workers Toolkit Towards Youth Engagement In Rural Areas

Rural Entrepreneurship, Active Citizenship and Territories Identity Visibility through the Engagement of Youth
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Index

INTRO		**1**
	About Reactive Youth	1
	Why this toolkit?	2
	Starting point	2
	First steps of Reactive Youth	5
CHAPTER 1: Starting our pathway		**9**
1.1	Accountability	11
1.2	Facilitation	14
1.3	The role of the facilitator	16
1.4	Team building activities, icebreakers and energisers	18
CHAPTER 2: Do your own Context's analysis		**19**
2.1	Agenda 2030/SDGs	25
2.2	Prioritisation of the needs found	29
2.3	Setting clear objectives	32
CHAPTER 3: Review of the planning and redistribution of responsibilities		**34**
3.1	Logistics	36
3.2	Risk management	40
3.3	Accounting	42
3.4	Monitoring & evaluation	43
CHAPTER 4: Identifying stakeholders and partners		**46**
4.1	Overview of relevant stakeholders	48
4.2	Categorization of the influence of stakeholders based on the nature of engagement	50
4.3	Disseminate initiatives, find synergies, and engage stakeholders	52
4.4	Sustainability of the initiatives	56
WORKSHOPS		**59**
ANNEXES		**88**
BIBLIOGRAPHY		**97**

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INTRO

About Reactive Youth

"Reactiveyouth:RuralEntrepreneurship,ActiveCitizenshipandTerritoriesIdentityVisibility through the Engagement of Youth" project intended to process recommendations, develop outputs, and implement activities that could make possible a bottom-up approach in rural areas towards their development through rural networking between youth and other stakeholders. The project gave the opportunity to youth in remote regions to express their opinions, needs, worries of the way they see the world and become active citizens, thinking in their context but with a global perspective.

"Reactive youth" aimed to empower youth living in rural locations as change makers of their communities towards more sustainable social and economic models. By promoting their civic engagement and structured dialogue with social actors, youth were able to share their creativity and entrepreneurship to foreseen employment and training opportunities for them in their regions. This was possible by taking advantage of their natural and cultural richness, contributing to their growth and stopping their depopulation.

Besides this toolkit that you have now the opportunity to explore, the project also developed other materials that could be useful for youth workers:

A Policy Brief towards Rural Areas Development & Sustainability through Youth Participation: A key tool that combines in a synthetic way all the results and materials from the initial research carried out in all partners areas by the project on which local authorities, civil society organisations and youth participated. Based on the feedback of all the actors involved in its creation, it is focused on the assessment of the local communities' real needs and the potential ways to tackle them through youth participation.

Partners regions Identity Maps: Interactive maps of the partner's areas that capture the regional identity and promote the interaction and development of all the local communities living there e.g. on an island, a valley, or a mountain. They mark each area main places of interest, cultural values or even gastronomy, which have been detected by young people and shared combining links, videos, audios, images, or texts of locals. They promote the cultural identity of each area while giving added value to the youth role and highlighting the main attractiveness for newcomers.

Why this toolkit?

This toolkit is an output with guidelines and materials adapted to the needs of youth workers and educators working in rural areas with the aim of increasing the quality of the youth services on them. It is based on a structured pathway for professionals linked to local actions and non-formal approaches that are focused on the awareness raising among youth about the added value of their areas towards leisure time, tourism, and cultural activities (especially related to environmental protection and promotion), that could build on them a common identity related to the belonging of each territory.

By using this toolkit, you will be able to create workshops to set objectives and co create actions in a cooperative way with youth in order to cultivate a change on them and their contexts. The idea is to expand the perspectives of young people to create a closer connection between them and their communities.

These workshops are designed as activities that may enhance critical thinking, the sharing of other perspectives, open communication, and easier learning, while helping youth to develop stronger bonds with personal goals and growth. Furthermore, all the suggested activities are attempted to be accomplished through specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, time-bound objectives, which are a good way to design youth initiatives with long-term goals.

To resume, the objectives of this toolkit are thus to raise youth involvement in community activities within rural areas; raise their awareness of and concern for the environment in which they live; reconnect with their cultural heritage while cooperating with local stakeholders; and help them to build synergies with other movements and groups.

Initial point

We use the term “rural” when describing small communities that are found in remote regions across a country. Definitions of “rural” vary widely among individuals, with some considering it a subjective state of mind and others viewing it as an objective quantitative measure.
The concept of “rural” and “geographically isolated” areas prompts questions about their boundaries, characteristics, and the criteria for categorising an area as “rural”:

- What precisely do we mean by “rural” and “geographically isolated” areas?
- Where do these designations start and end?
- To what extent must an area be peripheral to earn the label “rural”?
- How is the population density factored into defining “rural” and “isolated” areas?

The Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) provides specific quantitative criteria for classifying regions as “rural”. According to their standards in their article *OECD rural policy review* (2011), a region is classified as rural if 50% of its population resides in communities with fewer than 150 inhabitants per km^2. In the context of European Commission report on rural development and policies from 2007-2013, it is emphasised that rural areas constitute over 90% of the EU’s territory and house more than half of the EU’s population.

Independent research such as the one carried out by Mreža MaMa in 2019, revealed that approximately 55% of the global youth population resides in rural areas, with rural youth being among the most disadvantaged groups. The extent of their disadvantage is primarily determined by the distance to central and urban areas.

However, not all rural areas face the same challenges. Those that are remote, depopulated, or heavily reliant on agriculture encounter specific issues related to growth, jobs, and sustainability. These challenges include:

- Lower levels of income.
- Unfavourable demographic situations.
- Lower employment rates and higher unemployment rates.
- Slower development of the tertiary sector.
- Weaknesses in skills and human capital.
- Lack of opportunities for women and young people.
- Insufficient skills in certain segments of the agricultural sector and food processing industry.
- Reduced access to services (information, medical, education, etc.).
- Lack of support mechanisms available (youth centres, detached youth work services, stakeholders’ involvement).

Within this context, the importance of working with rural youth is underscored. Since 1976, the Council of Europe has focused on policy papers addressing the situation of agricultural youth. Despite differences in economic, social, and geographical dimensions, common challenges persist for rural youth. Moreover, the 2008 crisis significantly impacted the youth population, leading European governments to implement initiatives like the Youth Employment Initiative and Youth Guarantee.

Compared to major cities, rural communities are often smaller and because of this, oftentimes younger people will relocate to bigger cities to pursue further education or life opportunities. The decision to live in big cities may have an impact on younger generations, who could feel isolated from their cultural roots.

Rural youth, affected profoundly by societal transitions, face challenges such as unemployment, marginalisation, lack of consultation, difficulty in business setup, limited access to training, inadequate resources, limited education opportunities, poor career prospects, etc. being migration the only viable option towards personal and professional development opportunities. Additionally, many rural youths in isolated communities struggle to access information about development opportunities in the era of globalisation, despite being digital natives.

Even when access to education is available, the educational process tends to be urban-oriented, leading many rural youths to believe that migrating to the city is the optimal choice. This lack of aspiration for rural living, coupled with lower education levels and limited opportunities in rural communities, negatively impacts the long-term prospects of rural youth entering the labour market and securing well-paid jobs.

Recognizing the diversity within rural areas and the challenges faced by youth with fewer opportunities there, the European Commission (2017) underscores the importance of addressing these challenges. The priority is to ensure the overall well-being and sustainable development of rural communities while enhancing access to participation frameworks, giving grassroots youth organisations an active role for the development of transferable tools and mechanisms that can be adapted to various contexts.

First steps of Reactive Youth

Being given the facts described on the previous section, on the year of 2023 the “Reactive Youth” partners had the opportunity to connect themselves and find more about 6 rural regions, belonging to their respective countries: Syros Island (Greece); Brežice (Slovenia); Tietar Valley (Spain); Arouca (Portugal); Cori (Italy); and Werfenweng (Austria).

The objective of this decision was to notice which factors had in common these rural regions in general and how they are differentiated from urban areas through numerous indicators. The aim was to create distinct opportunities and ways for people to live and develop themselves there in terms of quantitative (such as population density) and qualitative factors.

Thanks to the implementation of a desk and field research involving 158 youth, 52 local authorities and civil society entities from these areas, it was possible to perceive the importance of understanding and characterising these regions.

By this way, partners noticed the richness of these areas in terms of history, patrimony, religion, culture, natural resources and landscapes, community relations, everyday life, and local businesses. They discovered the important efforts that are made there to preserve the above-mentioned aspects, especially when considering issues such as environmental sustainability and the need to protect the uniqueness of all these sites, among others.

For those living there, these areas offer a specific quality and style of life as synonyms of access to green places, safety and security and community engagement opportunities.

For those living there, these areas offer a specific quality and style of life as synonyms of access to green places, safety and security and community engagement opportunities. In a way, rural areas were known for their air, water, and soil quality, as well as absence of pollution (e.g. not only related to these factors, but also sonorous and luminosity pollution), which has direct positive effects on everyone's mental and physical health. They also provide a special and regular interaction among inhabitants and the feeling of proximity, which are intrinsically linked to a sense of local identity on which citizens can adopt social and participatory roles in the community, close to each person personal characteristics, goals, and potential. This has an important impact on the emergence of informal support networks among people, which can be crucial to tackle certain challenges, felt on the personal and communal level, where there is an absence of swift and customised solutions.

The indicated factors showed the added value of developing and contributing to the survival of such regions which offer specific and unique contexts of life, which can translate into opportunities of participation, inter-help, and personal development.

Despite the previous added value of these regions, the research allowed partners to identify a set of challenges which can compromise these benefits while affecting the longevity of these areas.

When it comes to youth, overcoming these challenges is crucial to meet their growing interest of participating and being heard by decision-makers. That is why youth centres and youth workers must emerge here, since their support will facilitate opportunities to establish new dialogue and decision-making platforms, such as youth councils, community forums and workshops.

The first of the key points to work on is the need for young people to recognize their personal potential (as it is not always the case). They must feel their role in the community, how their actions have an impact on it and feel connected to the culture, values, and practices of the place they live in. This contributes to the creation of a sense of local identity, essential for the adoption of new social roles and transformation of their inner selves in the process, in a perspective of improvement and guarantee of quality of life.

Another objective to be achieved is to give importance and promote inclusive policies that explicitly recognize and address the needs and aspirations of young people in rural settings. When we talk about citizen participation, we can recognize that sometimes there are models of youth participation in place, but they are usually headed by local authorities or other related entities.

Many young people participating in the project research, expressed a desire to have a voice and be actively involved in shaping policies and programs that affect their lives. However, existing structures and mechanisms often do not offer suitable opportunities for participation which makes the views and experiences of young people not sufficiently considered. They also mentioned the existence of hierarchical structures and bureaucratic processes which didn't facilitate their intervention in their areas and failed to provide them with meaningful opportunities for participation. Young people are only involved to a limited extent in decision-making processes and their needs and wishes are not sufficiently considered in policy measures. This lack of representation not only hindered the ability of young people to contribute their perspectives and expertise, but also resulted in policies that did not fully address their specific needs and aspirations.

Moreover, many rural communities lack alternative educational opportunities, as youth centres are rare and often low on the list of local authorities' priorities due to financial constraints. Human resources, particularly qualified youth workers, are scarce in the public sector. This forces non-governmental organisations to operate in rural areas, striving to provide opportunities that support the development of rural youth.

These events only highlight the lack of youth organisational representation in rural territories (e.g. organisations, initiatives, social movements, etc.), which, in addition, is negatively affected by the low population density, the increasing ageing of communities and the constant loss of population. As far as population loss is concerned, youth figures stand out, something that endangers the singularity and preservation of the cultural and natural resources of the territories; since there are not enough people to transmit knowledge, values, traditions, ways of life and ensure the maintenance and survival of many related elements (e.g., land, flora and fauna, heritage, landscapes, etc.). Some of the youngsters were aware that there is no future for the villages if all young people wish to move to urban areas. The majority was convinced that their villages will soon turn into nice places to spend their holidays but not places where people live. Hardly anybody believed that the number of inhabitants would grow in the villages.

In summary, to address all the above issues and to promote the sustainable development of rural areas, their members and especially the youth need to be aware of several issues.

First, to understand the importance of belonging to and participating in the community. They need to recognize their value within the area in which they live and understand their importance on an individual level. All this entails to promote the idea of belonging to their region while having the opportunity to propose and implement their own alternatives and solutions to the challenges facing their areas.

And secondly, it is necessary to involve young people in policy-making processes and to ensure that their views are considered, although this will require providing them with training programs that equip them with the necessary skills and knowledge to actively participate in these processes.

This is the pathway that this toolkit will guide you through.

CHAPTER 1

Starting our pathway

Considering the previous context and challenges, the question arises on how to get youth involved in their territories. The following chapters of this toolkit will introduce you how to create a pathway with several stages to work with youth at local level. Have in mind, that the actions and activities proposed here must be seen with the glasses of each area and younger inhabitants, as they could demand adaptations or modifications to be properly implemented in concrete communities or territories by youth workers.

These chapters will not only contain concrete guidelines to carry out a co-creative and participative process with young people to generate solutions for their contexts, but also provide you the input to facilitate short workshops with them to make it possible. Notice that it is not mandatory for a successful process to carry out all the workshops here proposed, but the more they are implemented, the better towards youth participation and commitment.

According to this, please consider on which stages of this process you want to put more emphasis on and implement workshops on those more important for you or on which youth participation could be more relevant. Even if the authors of this material recommend to do at least one workshop per stage, be sure that you have the resources, time and capacity to make this possible or just select which workshops will be carried out according to your limitations. Take into consideration that the more young people are involved in the process, the more accurate and suitable will be the results obtained, while empowering them and recognising their role as change makers.

Before starting your process and thinking about the workshops that will articulate it, there are some aspects to consider when it comes to creating the best conditions for the realisation of the mentioned pathway proposed here, as it should be an accountable process.

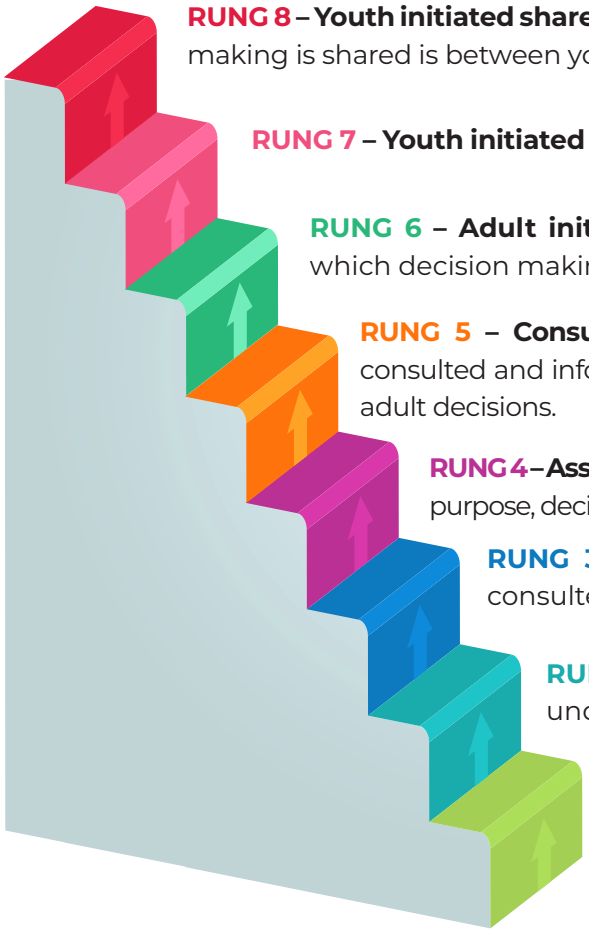
1.1 Accountability

The decision on the level at which you, young people and different stakeholders are involved in your cocreation pathway strongly influences their participation, creating commitment and compliance towards your objectives. Establishing the roles, responsibilities, and accountabilities of the groups of people involved forms the foundation for the process success, so it is important to consider the following four main aspects when implementing it: participation, inclusion, clarity, and communication.

a. Participation

The goal is to involve as many people as possible who can benefit from your actions. This will create a sense of participation and commitment to the process and its output, making a difference on how strongly people (especially youth) are involved and actively take on their roles. Related to this, Roger Hart (1992) developed a Ladder of Participation with eight levels to determine the degree of participation of young people in processes and projects. At the higher levels, young people have a direct influence on activities that promote their goals, so be sure that your actions along the process join all the conditions to make them participate and reach those levels.

ROGER HART'S LADDER OS PARTICIPATION



RUNG 8 – Youth initiated shared decisions with adults: Youth-led activities, in which decision making is shared is between youth and adults working as equal partners.

RUNG 7 – Youth initiated and directed: Youth-led activities with little input from adults.

RUNG 6 – Adult initiated shared decisions with youth: Adult-led activities, in which decision making is shared with youth.

RUNG 5 – Consulted and informed: Adult-led activities, in which youth are consulted and informed about how their input will be used and the outcomes of adult decisions.

RUNG 4 – Assigned, but informed: Adult-led activities, in which youth understand purpose, decision-making process, and have a role.

RUNG 3 - Tokenism: Adult-led activities, in which youth may be consulted with minimal opportunities for feedback.

RUNG 2 – Decoration: Adult-led activities, in which youth understand purpose, but have no input in how they are planned.

RUNG 1 – Manipulation: Adult-ed activities, in which youth do as directed without understanding of the purpose for the activities.

Figure 1Hart, R. (1992). Children's participation: From tokenism to citizenship. Innocenti Occasional Papers, Series 4, No. 1. UNICEF International Child Development Centre.

b. Inclusion

It is important to adopt an inclusive approach in the development and implementation of your path. Raise awareness of the importance of everyone's opinion, promote the gathering of diverse and varied perspectives, stimulate critical thinking, respect, and empathy during the participatory process. Make the spaces for participation and the materials used accessible and tailored to the skills, competences, and capacities of those involved.

USEFUL MATERIALS

In order to ensure that people can contribute appropriately in your activities despite their characteristics, you can follow the principles of the *Universal Design for Learning approach.*

c. Clarity

It plays a crucial role in your process and in all related tasks at each stage of your actions. Everyone involved should have a clear idea of their respective roles and responsibilities by using clear facts, definitions, and precise indicators and guidelines. Be sure that all this information is adapted to the register, language and channels that your recipients deal with.

d. Communication

Think about what your communication strategy will be. Define the amount and type of information you want, determine who needs what type of information, when it should be provided to each target group, etc. Establish the forms of communication you want to use at each stage of your process and how to reach your potential target groups, either they are participants, your entity staff, external stakeholders, local communities, etc.

Make sure that these four aspects are adequately addressed. In this way, the result obtained at the end of your patway will be based on everyone's (especially youth) expectations and feedback and will be aligned with your own aims and, potentially, with your organisation's objectives too.

1.2 Facilitation

Once the accountability of the pathway is considered, you would need to generate a participant-centred experience through the actions that will articulate it and on which youth could have an active role. The objective is to cultivate an environment that enables participants to explore, experience, acquire, and apply knowledge and skills, emphasising peer learning and individual strengths.

To optimise facilitation and promote effective interactions among participants, you as facilitator must address three key aspects or levels in your actions to enhance the learning experience:

- **A learning space:** ensuring that the physical facilities where the action(s) occurs are accessible, well-structured, and suitable for active participation.
- **An experimental atmosphere:** creating an environment where participants feel free to express opinions, share ideas, explore concepts, exchange experiences, and learn from different perspectives.
- **A debriefing framework:** incorporating reflection moments during and especially at the session's conclusion, fostering a "learning to learn" mindset, making participants aware of learning objectives, and broadening their worldview.

When it comes to the implementation of the activities you have in mind, there are some instructions that you can follow to create the necessary conditions for participants to join them and reach the three previous levels. In the following recommendations you will find that they are divided temporally (some before and others during the implementation of the activities) because there are things that must be considered before starting the activities, and others can be set during their implementation.

Before

- Carefully choose the locations and facilities.
- Ask and enlist young people's specific needs and create an action plan to cover them.
- Create synergies with entities that already work with certain target groups, especially young people with social exclusion factors.

- Work with such synergies to mobilise young people.
- Create instructions and guidelines to ensure the actions and workshops will be implemented in a mentally and physically safe environment.

During

- Utilise accessible materials according to the specific needs which were identified (e.g. colours, backgrounds font sizes, subtitles, appropriated images, etc.).
- Implement the exercises while considering specific needs (e.g. be considerate of young people's mobility, learning abilities, impairments, expectations, etc.).
- Think of initial exercises or activities where you can show young people the importance of respecting others' personal space and the instructions they must follow.
- Ensure that everyone feels safe (e.g. beware of potential discriminatory attitudes and be ready to act upon them).
- Allow young people to talk and express themselves, without pressure.

All the previous arrangements will facilitate the creation of moments for young people to share the results of their work, reflection and even connect ideas.

1.3 The role of the facilitator

During the whole pathway, the facilitator plays a crucial role on various aspects, which demands on that person a balance of skills, competences, and tasks. According to this, you should support young people in meeting, cooperating, interacting, and recognizing skills and knowledge acquired during activities. Remember:

- **Guide rather than train.** Assist participants in identifying their strengths and encourage them to share and utilise them.
- **Nudge rather than shove.** Motivate young people's participation and encourage their interactions, creating opportunities to enhance learning without being forceful.
- **Empathise rather than impose.** Understand participants' perspectives and anticipate their needs.
- **Listen rather than talk.** Establish spaces that enable participants to share ideas, foster debate, and encourage peer learning without judgement.
- **Mediate rather than protect.** Ensure a safe environment for all participants, anticipating sensitive situations and reacting promptly to defuse potential emotional or physical conflicts.
- **Debrief rather than instruct.** Guide participants to promote critical thinking, reflective observation, empirical analysis, and curiosity. Encourage a "learn to learn" approach and awareness of how knowledge is obtained.

As a facilitator, try to cultivate and train regularly yourself on:

- **Logistical and activity management:** planning, coordinating, and organising activities effectively.
- **Methodological scopes:** selecting or creating suitable learning approaches and methods, organising a logical and coherent learning pathway.
- **Interpersonal skills:** managing groups, ensuring safe participation, facilitating human relations, and preventing conflicts.
- **Communication competences:** maintaining an effective flow of information or tasks to participants, creating, guiding, and conducting effective debriefings at the session's conclusion.

WORKSHOPS

- *Perfect facilitator* (to be done with a group of youthworkers aiming to test)
- *Perfect facilitator* (to be done alone by you as youthworker)

USEFUL MATERIALS

In case you want to improve your facilitation skills, there many courses and materials online that you can check such as the *Inspired by inclusion trainer manual and toolkit for seminars.*

1.4 Team building activities, icebreakers and energisers

Every group of people that works together to achieve specific goals through planned activities needs to organise in the very beginning of the process some getting to know and team exercises. This is especially important if these people do not know each other or are not used to cooperate. According to this, you as a facilitator or with the support of external associates, can coordinate diverse activities for everybody to develop a greater collaboration on the coming stages. These activities are useful to start and maintain an efficient learning process and can be divided in:

- **Icebreakers and name games:** are activities designed to help people to get to know each other at the beginning of the process and usually involve sharing names and other background and public information.

- **Team building activities:** once participants know their names, these activities allow group members to know each other deeper and some more personal details, being the focus on making the group become more connected. They can be also implemented with the aim of establishing inside the group basic dynamics of cooperation.

- **Energisers:** are quick, fun activities when the group has run out of energy. They are particularly useful when starting a workshop to wake up everyone and also late in the day when motivation is decreasing.

USEFUL MATERIALS

Sites to find icebreakers, name games, groups dynamics and energizers:

SALTO YOUTH
DEPAL project
Teambuilding.com
Sing Up Genius

Once all is ready to carry out your process and the young people are recruited, it is time to start your co-creation pathway with them and hand in hand with your community so you can also ask for their commitment along with your actions.

WORKSHOPS

▸*Three way communication*

CHAPTER 2

Do your own Context's analysis

The first step to promote young people engagement and participation in rural areas, but also identify alternatives to local challenges, is to carry out a diagnosis of the territory's needs. It is imperative to gain a comprehensive understanding of the local context. This involves a detailed analysis of the specific challenges, opportunities, and characteristics of the chosen territory. Key aspects to consider include:

- **Demographics:** an analysis of the local youth population's size, distribution, and diversity.
- **Socioeconomic conditions:** understanding the economic status, educational opportunities, and access to resources for young people.
- **Cultural and social factors:** identifying cultural norms, social dynamics, and the extent of community engagement.
- **Existing Initiatives:** reviewing any ongoing youth-related programs, organisations, or councils.

Even if you can do this step previously on your own, it's important to input auscultation efforts and a context analysis that could be ideally implemented by young people themselves. You need to keep in mind that youth workers and educators should have an important role in setting safe spaces for co-creation processes, but they must understand their role as facilitators, which should be to support young people and guide them through this pathway. When such isn't achievable, youth workers can do this analysis by themselves, but this could reduce the quality and real impact of the conclusions and initiatives obtained.

WORKSHOPS

- *Creating a physical collage*
- *Trivial time*

There are many ways of reaching an understanding, especially when talking about youth participation and inclusion. This is why the involvement of youth directly into preparation of analysis of the local environment is essential. E.g. they can prepare questionnaires considering key aspects and prepare analysis that will support them in development of their future initiatives. By understanding the needs of the local environment, we can introduce and prepare future potential initiatives or projects to which the local environment will respond and participate.

Notice that there are possible diagnosis and obstacles that you will deal with when involving youth on a context analysis process, so set the measures to identify and prevent them: severe boredom, renounced disinterest, partial or total disconnection between knowledge and practice, wasted talents, vision of social reality (poor or intermediate level), lack of foreign language skills (critical level), etc.

As a youth worker and with your youth team, make yourselves the following questions to set the bases to run your own analysis. The answers given will help you to facilitate the process and drive your group, while assisting you in better understanding youth communities and the target groups they serve:

"**Where** do we want to do the context analysis on?" -> Identification of the specific place and contextualization of the place in terms of country, district, county, town, etc.

- Where are we located?
- What defines our area as "rural" or "geographically isolated"?
- How peripheral is this area to be considered "rural"?
- Where does this area begin and end?

"**Why** do we need a context analysis here?" -> Reflective answers to understand the aim of the work to be done.

- Did we identify a specific need in the area? How did we identify it?
- Do we feel that we can give an answer to such a need?
- What challenges do the target groups affected face?
- What support can be offered to them?

"**When** will we do the context analysis?" -> Definition of the timeline for the analysis.

"**Who** else is going to be involved?" (e.g. stakeholders mapping) -> Identification of relevant target groups to get into contact with and get information from. Also, on the utilisation of tools such as interviews and focus groups (examples of guides).

- Who is referred to as rural youth?
- Who else is working with youth or connected to their needs?
- Who is the population of our "rural" and "isolated" area?

"**What** do we want to know more about, besides what we already know?" -> Demography, culture, environment, training, employment, civic participation, democracy, health, sports, history, patrimony, habitation, etc. Choose all relevant fields for you.

- Which resources are already available in relation to the challenge or group addressed?
- Which data are relevant to understand the need detected?
- What does stigma look like in this area or in relation to our target group?
- What distinguishes support work in rural or our area?

To carry out the previous work, there are several tools and steps that could be useful for you to collect the external information (quantitative or/and qualitative data):

- Do desk research (collect information from open databases, online official bulletins, statistics centres, etc.). Try to avoid not reliable and outdated sources of information.
- Consult diverse platforms and compare the data you collect from them.
- Carry out field research (visit libraries, local registers, meet local organisations and professionals, check with policy makers, etc.).
- Ask the community and potential direct and indirect target groups (do interviews, focus groups, spread online or paper forms or questionnaires, polls, etc.).

USEFUL MATERIALS

Find here as an example in English a comparative table resulting from the "Reactive youth" researching stage as a reference of the type of information and results that could arise from your own analysis.

Out of the context needs identification and before acting on an intervention, another issue to consider is young people's personal feelings, story of their lives and how they live overall within what is being identified. According to this, a next stage of this process and logic would be to generate a moment which you could allow youth involved to reflect about their role in local rural areas, while offering multiple starting points for this brainstorming. This could be achieved by also asking young people questions based on personal or communal experience that could contribute to the creation and/or reinforcement of an individual sense of awareness. Youth should:

- Understand and care for the local environment they live in.
- Value Traditions and cultural heritage of this environment.
- Explore principles of equality in the area.
- Anker youth to the local environment.
- Make them aware about the importance of local youth active participation in community events.

Youth need to notice how these areas themselves can be spaces of enhancement for them, as long challenges are addressed and solutions are considered; such will mean young people understand themselves, or who they are closer to, within the area they live in. It must be understood how there can be different subjective appropriations related to living in a certain region. This also opens space for the match and combination of individual experiences, which will be the basis for the creation of a common identity among young people you are working with.

Using reflexive exercises with your participants will allow an ambience to understand, at a first glance, the major problems of your local areas and which inhabitants and their environment face. For example, by answering a list of questions about oneself and our implication in the community before introducing ourselves, contributes to the organisation and alignment of ideas. This could confirm the existence of certain problems within a territorial and social scope, and how to find information in an efficient way.

WORKSHOPS

- *The issues tree*
- *Coffee shop stations*

In summary, while this general context analysis is directly related to major problems and tendencies that regions and inhabitants face, young people should also identify among them, specific themes to tackle, based on their experience and which they feel that need to be addressed. Working as a group will allow them to widen their scope of action and intersect challenges that they wouldn't be able to work to its fullest on their own. Based on the results obtained, synergies and sharing expectations of youth or what they have in common, they will better foresee how they can work together to act within their communities

All of this will allow young people to understand the missing conditions existing to ensure their benefits of staying, which they already understood. It also opens space for them to seize the different roles they can adopt for a potential solution, according to their characteristics, talents, skills, and the resources which are available to them. They'll envision complementary factors among each other and be more motivated to act in the region.

At the end of the whole analysis process, you should obtain a list of topics, lines of actions or fields of intervention to set priorities for your youth initiatives.

USEFUL MATERIALS

Even though your analysis results could be arranged and grouped in different ways, you can see, as a reference to organise them, *the outcomes obtained during the creation of the "Reactive Youth"* policy brief so you can use them as guidance and inspiration to create your own framework of work.

2.1 Agenda 2030 and the SDGs

Once your context analysis is completed, it could be relevant for your team or your strategy to identify the tendencies and policies at transnational level aligned with the results you got. This could be useful in those contexts in which our initiatives could be potentially presented to local and regional administrations as well as to EU funding opportunities, as it will help us to match our priorities to already existing legal frameworks or programmes. According to this, you can take in consideration the Agenda 2030 and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) that are mentioned and considered in many regional, national and international policies.

The Agenda 2030 and SDGs were created by the United Nations, being discussed, and agreed upon on September 25th of 2015, by 193 countries. The idea behind them is to recognize the degree of global interdependence and interaction among nations, an aspect which, currently, shapes relationships, trades, values, lifestyles, quality of life patterns, development perspectives, among others. This means that nations are becoming more interconnected, especially when social challenges, environmental crises and conflicts arise. To ensure that these patterns are utilised to maximise the emergence of equal, resilient, united, and sustainable societies, instead of escalating inequalities and compromising the living conditions of future generations, 17 SDGs were written.

These 17 goals relate to many different fields:

End poverty in all its forms everywhere.

End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture.

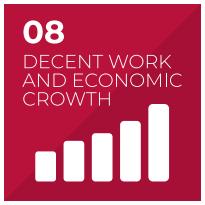
Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages.

Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all.

Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls.

Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all.

Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all.



Promote sustained, inclusive, and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment, and decent work for all.

Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation.

Reduce inequality within and among countries.

Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable.

Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns.

Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts.

Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas, and marine resources for sustainable development.

Protect, restore, and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss.

Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable, and inclusive institutions at all levels.

Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalise the global partnership for sustainable development.

All nations must cooperate to reach these goals and, with that in mind, there are sets of indicators *for each goal*. Even if many are designed from a major institutional/ organisational perspective, in the sense that governments, international entities and other public and political bodies are the ones called to track and register such changes, such can only be achieved if all elements of society are involved. That means citizens and local civil society organisations can, in their daily lives, contribute to SGDs and their respective indicators, as it's the case of the ones who live in rural areas. Such areas correspond to specific territorial, historic and cultural configurations that allow people and entities to live and act according to a set of lifestyles, values, and relationships, which are directly affected by the global panorama and, in certain cases, even acute in the presence of social crises. With that in mind, the 17 SDGs need to be promoted in these regions to improve their quality of life, while protecting and potentializing their human and natural resources, and as the United Nations has mentioned: **"The SDGs cannot be achieved without progress in rural development".** (2017)

The Agenda 2030 calls attention to a set of themes from different social fields: inequalities, economy, environment, culture, education, employment, justice, and policy making. These themes shape social, organisational, and human relationships, which complexify within the panorama mentioned on the initial pages of this toolkit. It also means that they are felt differently, according to each region. Since these aspects directly affect young people's future and their perspectives towards it, they have a direct impact on their present thoughts, actions, and decisions. This also makes young people an especially vulnerable group when it comes to major changes and social problems from the different fields, since they can create a sense of uncertainty and affect the number of opportunities that each young person has access to.

Put this, it could be important to contextualise the needs young people feel within a global context too, based on Agenda 2030, since that contributes to their feeling of connection, not only with their local communities, but also with other regions and countries, allowing them to understand the value of their intervention. The context analysis you could have completed following the guidelines of the previous section of this material, is valuable on this step, since it might imply the identification of local/regional strategies which can match Agenda 2030 and SDGs.

USEFUL MATERIALS

Find here for your inspiration how partners or Reactive Youth matched the results of the desk research on each partner country with the SDGs framework.

Once there is a match between the already existing regional policies and SDGs, young people have the opportunity to understand where their identified needs could be placed from a global point of view in connection with their territories. This allows youth to identify support schemes predicted by local authorities and facilitate the implementation of future solutions once young people have decided if and which roles they would wish to adopt for its resolution.

As a result, this starts to hint at the stage of creating priorities within the identified needs. Given the different experiences and point of views which are collected by ensuring the participation of diverse groups of young people, it is more effective to choose the needs which can be tackled by young people and their potential efforts. Many times, there will be needs that are restricted to certain social agents, such as national authorities, for example. This either means breaking down the need to actions which are reachable within people's autonomy and power to act or choosing only the difficulties that already imply such posture.

WORKSHOPS

- *Short skit on inequalities by teams.*
- *Coffee shop stations.*

2.2 Prioritisation of the needs found

Even if each rural territory has its specificities, there is a transposition of needs which are often found on national, European, and international levels as well as common themes and challenges to be addressed. By understanding certain characteristics of the region, their alignment with existing policies, and considering the context analysis which affect most of the inhabitants, the next step would be to set the prioritisation of the needs to be tackled.

The more the needs you detected and future intervention to cover them are aligned with established policies, the easier it would be that they match with local, regional, or national development programmes and stakeholders priorities in your area. This will also facilitate a potential support of local authorities as well as the collection of resources to carry them out.

Prioritisation of needs is an important step of intervention for young people, since the motivation to act also comes from the feeling that change can be implemented. This feeling emerges when people know they have the capacity (e.g. skills, knowledge, resources. Etc.) to act, influencing the degree of effort put into the planning and operationalizing of the solution. Effort corresponds to the balance between what's already available in terms of capacity, and what's missing and needs to be ensured to foment the solution (e.g. time, availability, mental space, group complementarity and potential synergies, with other civil society organisations, for example). Another aspect to be considered is the impact of the solution we intend to implement, as impact is perceived as its long-term outcome, positive and negative, in the community and their members. Examples of impact are change in behaviours, better quality of life, job creation, improved civic engagement, among others.

It's important to support young people into identifying the needs that:

1) They can use their own talents, skills, contacts, knowledge, and experience to tackle, along with other available resources from the community.
2) They have the minimum set of conditions for, based on the capacity which was identified.
3) They can have the broader impact possible, with the level of capacity which was mentioned and the least effort.

To complete a needs priorisation it could be useful for you and your young participants to go through the following steps:

- Define keywords related to the needs identified by the group.
- Study the local strategies by utilising the keywords.
- Make a list of web pages where the local strategies are published or communicated on (e.g. official pages, social media, etc.).
- Select the relevant local strategies and their priorities, based on the needs identified.
- Write how the needs contribute to the local strategies and their priorities
- Identify other participation opportunities that can be mentioned on the local strategies and that can help people reach local authorities or other relevant civil society organisations (ex. participatory budgets, open spaces for dialogue, calls for projects proposals, etc.).

In summary, having young people's perspective and allowing them to head solutions in these matters is essential. It's a way to promote youth civic, community and institutional participation, especially when they feel that the traditional means of civic participation might not reflect their interests and not truly involve them, which affects their potential to acquire important roles in the community. Many young people might also feel that they are unable to impact the social reality of their rural communities, since the scale of such problems and the inability to translate and/or envision them within daily and community actions is often an obstacle.

Once the previous process is completed, you should have the whole picture and main priorities for starting, but what are we intended to do? The next step is setting the objectives and concrete actions to complete with our group.

Before starting with the next chapter about creating actions, here you can find some examples of youth initiatives for your inspiration, built to tackle detected needs and based on concrete objectives:

Good practice 1 – Example from Austria:

▸ Event: "Youth-Regio-Talks"

▸ Organised by: Flachgau Nord regional association in cooperation with Akzente Salzburg

▸ Participants: 50 young people between the ages of 12 and 20 took part.

▸ Aim: direct dialogue between young people and regional politicians

▸ Method & programme: Various topics were discussed at the meetings, such as participatory budgeting and ecotourism. The young participants were able to present their concerns and talk about possible solutions. The expansion of leisure facilities and the improvement of public transport connections were mentioned particularly often.

▸ Important learnings: The setting of these kinds of events plays a very important role in enabling dialogue between young people and potential groups (politicians e.g.). In this case, all participants gathered for a cosy pizza meal together and therefore had a great opportunity and relaxed atmosphere to talk.

Good practice 2 – Example from Greece (Island of Syros):

▸ Event: The Stray Art Festival

▸ Organised by a group of students called "SPINTHIRAS" from the Faculty of Design Engineering of the University of the Aegean

▸ Participants: In total, more than 30 young people take part in the festival each year.

▸ Aim: Claiming public spaces, organising cultural and alternative tourism.

▸ Method & programme: The festival brings street culture to the streets, squares, and alleys of the Cyclades capital for three days every September. Public squares and buildings are filled with colour, music, and events on topics such as nature and animal protection and the ecological revolution against the climate crisis. The festival attracts a critical number of returning visitors and locals who perceive the city as a vibrant and ever-changing region and want to actively participate in it.

▸ Important learnings: The initiative is organised, prepared, executed, and planned by young people; therefore, it is a good example of a sustainable cultural event that actively involves participants in shaping their city.

2.3 Setting clear objectives

After going through a thorough grasp of the local context and its needs, the next step is to set clear and achievable objectives. Objectives should be Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-bound (SMART).

Consider the following:

- Youth involvement: Define with your group which level of youth involvement you aim to achieve. For example, establishing a team of young people or a youth council, increasing youth participation in community events, or creating mentorship programs. Give all young people the opportunity to get involved and become active citizens.

- Policy impact: Specify the policy areas or decisions where youth input is crucial, such as education, employment, or environmental sustainability. Contribute to programmes to make rural places attractive and viable for young people to build their lives and their futures there.

- Community impact: Determine how increased youth engagement will benefit the broader community, like enhancing social cohesion or addressing local challenges. Participate in the change they want to see in society.

- Youth personal interest: Foster that besides the general impact of the action, youth involved in it also are awarded somehow and get benefits by being involved (ex. learning foreign languages, reducing bullying or levels of racism, spontaneous growth of other skills). Young people can get “superpowers”!

WORKSHOPS

▸ *Set a SMART goal.*

Here you can find a resumed description of this chapter steps through an example so you can better understand them:

(1) **Need identified:** Young people do not interact with nature and spending time at home affects their social skills and promotes unhealthy lifestyles.

(2) **Keywords:** Green spaces; Nature; Biodiversity; Environment; Interaction; Community.

(3) **List of sources of information:** Municipality's official website and social media.

(4) **Identification of documents and files with the local strategies,** such as the most recent Action Plan of the municipality.

(5) **Utilisation of "Green spaces; Nature; Biodiversity; Environment; Interaction; Community;" keywords** to find information on Action Plan.

(6) **Identification of the following objectives,** which mentions "increased number of green spaces to ensure air quality and reduction of pollution", "Raise number of shared spaces, among the community, for recreational activities" and "Ensure the access of the community to nature"

(7) **Writing at least one paragraph that explains how "Lack of green spaces near their school for people to interact on**" influence the objectives which were mentioned on (6), for example, by mentioning that the school is located near a residential area and that there aren't not many places for the community to enjoy and spend time on. Besides, there aren't other green spaces nearby, which also affects the community's access to nature and increased quality of life. As such, creating a new space would tackle this.

(8) **Understand if there's already places/initiatives to communicate this need, by looking out for participatory** budgets and calls for project proposals, for example. The last written paragraph will be a strong argument to use.

CHAPTER 3

Planning and redistribution of responsibilities

Once the priorities and the different topics are sorted and your objectives are in place, your next step as a facilitator is to support your group of young people to co-create a detailed action plan for your initiative implementation. This plan should outline the steps, responsibilities, and timelines for implementing your initiatives, which are crucial practical elements.

In this sense, this chapter wants to introduce you to very practical aspects of planning and the execution, especially not getting lost in many small tasks, and being tidy with all the assignments. We will navigate you through:

- Practical aspects of tools to use and ways to manage things
- Correctly review the workload and the assessment of capacities
- Defining a roadmap in a practical way.

First of all, to achieve what you have in mind, you should concretely map in very simple and pragmatic ways what your group aims to achieve. It is crucial to see an event, activity or any possible work as the summary of a list of things to be done, and, above all, to check who does what.

To do so, it is a good idea to make one single online document (so it can be easily shareable) to map in a clear and comprehensive way all the things to be done. In this way, you will have a clear status of what needs to be done and to balance correctly all the dependencies, as well as the people who are involved.

Following this clear and simple definition of the tasks and who does what, you will consistently improve your efficiency, as well as your internal accountability. It is fundamental to have internal meetings with all the involved people, so as:

- Make sure that you have clear internal groups running different tasks, aligning their responsibilities, individual interests, and expertise.

- Review the allocated hours for each task and assess if they are realistically achievable.
- Distribute the workload evenly, considering the complexity and time requirements of each task.
- Check if the current team has the capacity to handle all planned tasks efficiently.

In this way, you will be able to spot whether you have enough people to run a task, or if you are missing fundamental expertise and tasks.

Notice that your action plan towards a sustainable action must include some key components such as:

- Activities: List the specific actions or events you intend to undertake, such as workshops, awareness campaigns, fundraising, policy dialogues, etc.
- Responsibilities: Clearly define who is responsible for each activity or component, whether it's a young person, a local authority representative, a youth leader, or a partner organisation.
- Theme or approach: sustainability, art, music, cinema, entrepreneurship, democracy, human rights, ecology, computer science and technology, digitalization, etc. anything your group wants to deal with.
- Target audience: children and young people, interested groups, elderly, minorities, etc.
- Environmental approach: individual connections to the local natural environment and community itself may bind youth to their community of origin.

USEFUL MATERIALS

See here an example of a matrix to track your initiative planification.

3.1 Logistics

Logistics are a crucial part of running a youth initiative, and you may reflect on some key points according to what you and your group would like to do. We have tried to gather here the main practical tips and considerations when running them:

a) Mapping necessary resources:

Identify the key resources needed for your project. This includes materials, personnel, and potential partners. Develop a budget that details the costs of your initiatives, including any necessary resources or external funding.

Try to use public places and facilities to reduce costs or set partnerships with local stakeholders that could support you. Create a list of local organisations, businesses, or individuals who can contribute resources or support. Indeed, it is good to consider organisations which are already in the specific field of your future event, so as to create a common feeling about it.
For example, do you have the place yet? Or do you need to ask for it? In case you need to ask for it, consider partnerships, so as to avoid fees, but use the event as a platform of promotion for the organisation hosting your event.

b) Calendaring and dates:

Use a simple calendar tool to plan your project timeline. Google © calendar or a basic planner such as a Gantt chart works well. Create a timeline with your activities well listed that outlines the start and end dates for each activity, ensuring all are completed within your set time frame.

USEFUL MATERIALS

Here you can find a model of Gantt Chart, a model used to calendarise activities, organise projects and plan long term actions.

Consider public holidays and school schedules when planning events or activities, as well as take into account other local events. If you know that a town or neighbourhood event is likely to take place during that period of time, it is better to communicate with the organisers or find a way to collaborate and calendarise things to mutually get benefits.

When timing your initiative and related tasks or activities, set realistic deadlines for each phase of your project to stay organised and on track. It does not make sense to push yourself and your group of young people beyond your current workload. Don`t forget to leave breaks between tasks (if possible).

If you use online calendars or tools, you can put notificationsthattakeintoaccountimplementation time. So, if in one week you foresee accomplishing a task, it is better to receive notification reminders about it. It could also help to create your to-do list at the end of the day or each project stage, as well as one for the next day or coming period.

c) Settings for an action or activity

Choose the best setting for your initiative depending on the actions you intend to carry out. Opt for venues that fit within your budget or explore spaces available for community use, and make sure, again, to gain the opportunity for meaningful collaboration. Ensure the venue can comfortably accommodate or allow the participation of the number of participants you expect. A venue is never a “neutral ground” - make sure you give a civic purpose to your activity! You can choose different settings for your actions:

Outdoor Settings:

- ▸ Accessibility: They must be locations that are easy to reach by public transport or within walking distance by your potential participants and attendees.
- ▸ Needs: Ensure outdoor settings have basic amenities like seating, shelter, and waste disposal.
- ▸ Venue selection: Pick venues with open spaces suitable for activities, ensuring they align with your project goals.

▸ Weather considerations: Have a backup plan in case of unexpected weather changes.

▸ Energy access: Is there any plug to get energy? Do you have to open a temporary public contract to get the energy? Or do you need an energy supply? In this case, it is important to physically check the location before implementing the event.

Indoor Settings:

▸ Accessibility: Prioritise venues with wheelchair ramps and accessible facilities. Especially, make sure prior to your event the type of participants coming, so as to guarantee full accessibility. For example, an issue might be for a venue to be perceived as far by the main target group. In this sense, the best is to check whether it is suitable or not for the locals you want to reach.

▸ Check for essential facilities like restrooms, water sources, working places, toilets, etc.

▸ Technical tools: Verify that indoor settings have adequate electricity access, lighting, ventilation, and seating arrangements. Check if WiFi correctly works in case you need it, as well as make sure there are sockets, cables, projectors, and any sort of adapter. For example, if you have an Apple © laptop, you will have the C-type cables, so most of the projectors do not have a C-type of input, and you necessarily need a bridge adapter. Is the light ok? Do you need a signature list? Does the heating work? etc. All these issues should be considered with enough time before your actions take place, of course, which means not 5 minutes before the start!

▸ Venue Selection: Consider the nature of your project and places related to it. For workshops or group dynamics , choose venues with enough space for group activities.

Digital events:

▸ First of all use a reliable and if possible free online platform.

▸ Try to use a simple but effective registration process with easy instructions. There are free ways for creating questionnaires and platforms that you can use for this purpose.

▸ Don`t forget to send pre-event emails, reminders, and instructions for accessing the digital platform

▸ Use interactive elements such as polls, breakout rooms to attract participants attention and to achieve better collaboration.

▸ Track feedback from the participants by using surveys to evaluate your event and plan more effectively the future ones.

Make sure you have in mind the exact physical or online journey of the participants coming and how to make access simple and straightforward to understand.

d) Inclusion by logistics

Creatively use spaces to tailor your project to address specific needs in different areas, such as a deprived neighbourhood or a residential community. Be flexible in your approach, adjusting logistics to suit the unique characteristics of each setting or the concrete profiles of your participants.

To promote inclusion in your activities, be sure that the local community or its representatives are engaged (especially those related with groups with fewer opportunities). Try to involve local residents in the planning process to ensure your project is relevant, suitable for them and appreciated. Especially, if you want to discuss a topic, why not involve locals?

When dealing with the logistics of your action, pay attention to:

- Scout locations early: Visit potential venues beforehand to assess their suitability.
- Local partnerships: Collaborate with local businesses or organisations for support and venue options.
- Participant feedback: Gather input from participants to improve future event planning.

A good preparation and logistics are the key for an initiative success, but challenges will always happen and you must be ready to deal with them. So, how to deal or avoid risks?

3.2 Risk management

In terms of risks, you have to assess the possible problems and issues that your group might encounter during the project execution, and set up plans B, C and D! As an overall platform of thinking to avoid risks, it is crucial to set a proactive and positive environment for everyone and especially for the young people involved in your initiative implementation.

On this sense, there are several issues that can be a focus of risks or to consider when implementing youth initiatives:

a) Under-Engagement:

▸ Meet the target groups from the beginning, so participation is real!
▸ Conduct assessments so as to understand what can be done to engage people or what went wrong and could be improved in case the activity is over.
▸ Make sure to send lots of individual messages and keep track of everyone's participation. Ideally, there should be one person in the group sending messages prior to tasks or events and tracking everyone's engagement.

b) Ground rules setting (in a concrete and concise way):

▸ Maintain a clear communication. Articulate expectations and guidelines to your team and the participants of the action from the outset.
▸ Offer a collaborative approach. Involve the young people in your group in establishing and monitoring ground rules to foster a sense of ownership.
▸ Ensure consistent application of rules and address violations promptly.
▸ Make sure there are always people in charge, so it will be easier to settle issues.

c) Negotiation Tips (in case of conflict):

▸ Apply an active listening. Hear out all parties involved, allowing them to express their concerns while mediating between them.

▸ Act as a neutral mediator of the groups, guiding the conversation towards a constructive resolution that could benefit if possible all the parts. Learn how to negotiate. Focus on the needs of each person/participant in your youth group, or organisation (in case of collaborations), and not on the problem. In other words, when there is a conflict, it is not about the specific issue that appears, but has underlying implications, and it is always fundamental to ask “why”, and “how else can we think things through”. Thinking out of the box means to go beyond two-way solutions, but to craft ideas out of the

▸ Have a predefined plan for handling and resolve conflicts, including escalation procedures if needed. Keep records of ground rules and agreements to reference in case of disputes.

Prevention is Key. Proactively address potential issues by establishing clear expectations. Plus, make sure to list a set of ground rules that are not simply “ordered” but are co-created by your young participants. An idea could be to have intro activities to develop rules.

3.3 Accounting

When it comes to budget and finances, it is hard to keep track of all the hard copies but it is important that your group deals with the issue (and compulsory if they count with donors or receive public funding). Two handful apps on your phone to always bring with you are OneDrive © and Google Drive ©. Basically, you have your cloud to go, and a powerful scan with editing tools. Plus, you can organise all your files online in folders. As accounting is mostly boring for young people, it is important to make it smooth and easy!

- Define ground rules for everyone: Can volunteers get any reimbursement? Do they have a fixed rate? Do they have a maximum?, etc.

- Transparent record keeping: Maintain clear and organised financial records to ensure accountability. By developing a simple spreadsheet, your group can link all the expenses in an ordered way. Take thorough notes during financial transactions, including purpose, date, and amounts.

- Adherence to Budgets: Regularly compare actual expenditures against budget allocations for transparency.

- Be organised: Make sure you have ordered folders. Provide templates and already created docs so all the payments are done in a similar way (e.g. claimsheets for reimbursements).

- Ask for help: In case of doubt, consult with financial experts or accountants for guidance on best practices.

3.4 Monitoring and evaluation

Whether you are organising offline or online activities, it is crucial to plan how to monitor and evaluate your project. In this way, your group can concretely understand whether your activity, event or training event is successful or not. You should plan ahead when and how engaged parties or participants will be able to support your team. It is not just to “help you”, but also to see an event or activity as a moment where “everyone grows”. To ensure your efforts are on track and effective, you need a robust monitoring and evaluation system. This should involve:

- Data Collection: Regularly collect data on youth engagement, participation levels, and the impact of your initiatives.
- Indicators: Define specific indicators to measure progress toward your objectives, such as the number of young people engaged or policy changes resulting from their input. They can be quantitative (e.g. how many people participated) or qualitative (e.g. from 1 to 10, how much people like your activity).
- Feedback mechanisms: Establish feedback mechanisms or sources of verification for young people and stakeholders to provide input on the initiatives’ effectiveness.
- Adaptation: Be ready to adapt your action plan based on the data and feedback you collect, ensuring your initiatives remain responsive to evolving needs and circumstances.

Let’s see some practical guidelines and examples to make the previous points possible:

Offline activities of monitoring and evaluation:

Observation:

▸ Be present and observe activities firsthand.

▸ Take notes on what is going well and areas for improvement.

Surveys and questionnaires:

▸ Prepare simple surveys with key questions (it is better to be concrete and use very understandable concepts!).

▸ The best is to use mobile surveys to gather feedback.

Feedback sessions:

▸ Organise regular feedback sessions with participants.

▸ Encourage open discussions and note valuable insights.

▸ An ideal way to develop feedback sessions is to have fun while doing it. For example, you might want to make people move in a room to express their position, to draw their opinions, to pick up a card to express a feeling etc

Checklists:

▸ Create checklists for specific tasks or milestones. This goes back to the excel map of all the tasks to be achieved.

▸ Tick off completed items and identify any challenges

Online activities of monitoring and evaluation:

Online surveys:

▸ Use user-friendly online survey tools like Google Forms or SurveyMonkey.

▸ Share surveys through project social media or email newsletters.

Social media analytics:

▸ Use analytics tools on platforms like Facebook or Instagram.

▸ Monitor engagement, comments, and shares for real-time feedback.

Website analytics:

▸ If you have a project website, use tools like Google Analytics.

▸ Track website visits, popular pages, and user demographics.

Video diaries or vlogs:

▸ Encourage participants to create short video diaries.

▸ Share videos to understand their experiences and perspectives.

A good monitoring will help you to identify trends by analysing collected data for recurring patterns or issues. Schedule regular reflection sessions within your team and discuss what's working and brainstorm solutions for challenges. Look for both positive trends and areas that need improvement. You would need to:

- Adapt your strategy or set corrective actions: Based on findings, make sure to change how you organised things. Flexibility is key – don't hesitate to make necessary changes.

- Celebrate Success: Acknowledge and celebrate small and big successes. Boost morale and motivation for ongoing project activities.

WORKSHOPS

▸ *Let's plan together*

▸ *Build the perfect event!*

▸ *Coffee shop stations*

CHAPTER 4

Identifying stakeholders and partners

Once your action is defined and to reach your objectives as seen in previous sections, it is recommended to have a multi-stakeholder approach to youth engagement. It emphasises the importance of collaboration and partnership between local authorities, civil society organisations, educational institutions, and the private sector to create a comprehensive ecosystem of support for young people. This will help your group of young people to both, recruit new participants for your action as well as to find actors who could help you to make it real.

Whereas most traditional dialogue practices are unstructured, or semi-structured, such conversational modes have been observed as insufficient for the coordination of multiple perspectives in an area with many challenges. A disciplined form of dialogue, where participants agree to follow a conversation framework or a facilitator, enables groups to address complex shared problems. Having a rigorous bottom-up democratic approach could ensure that a sufficient variety of stakeholders represents the problem system of concern and that their voices and contributions are equally balanced in the dialogic process.

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By working together, these stakeholders can leverage their respective expertise, resources, and networks to provide a holistic and sustainable framework for youth participation or to foster the initiative youth could aim to implement. Engaging in youth empowerment and participation is a collaborative effort.

Stakeholders are all individuals or groups interested in the progress and results of the initiatives that the young people you work with pretend to carry out. They could be your donors, other youth groups you want to work with, the wider community, the media and political authorities and civil society working in the fields relevant to instead of for your action.

Some stakeholders are easier to manage than others. The use of stakeholder mapping techniques can help you to identify who your key stakeholders are and make sure you meet their requirements.

Stakeholders are needed to take proactive steps to create an enabling environment for youth participation and therefore the stakeholders must interact. Otherwise, the collaboration and cooperation that youth would need to make their initiatives real, are very likely to suffer and will not be as good as necessary and possible. Through the support, you can manage to take these different levels into account on the one hand, but on the other hand, also push the boundaries and involve everyone in the best possible way to achieve your goals.

4.1 Overview of relevant stakeholders

To delve deeper into the topic of stakeholder engagement, it is important to start by gaining an overview of the relevant stakeholders. According to this, identify key stakeholders and potential partners who can contribute to the success of your initiatives. These target groups can also serve as orientation and help you to work out and find your stakeholders. Some examples could be:

Young people:

- ▸ Young people living in rural areas.
- ▸ Organised youth. Particularly those associated with partners and beneficiaries such as students in schools or members of NGOs.
- ▸ Unorganised individuals who are not part of any social entity or are unorganised yet.
- ▸ Young people under 18 who have not yet fully participated as citizens, encouraging their future engagement, including voting in local elections.
- ▸ Youth representatives or leaders with active involvement could ensure that their voices are heard.

Organisations and local authorities:

- ▸ Local youth associations and similar existing youth groups, clubs, or organisations that can play a role.
- ▸ Entities involving professional youth workers or volunteers in the youth field.
- ▸ Youth centres in rural areas, enabling the development of new services to address local needs.
- ▸ Local authorities, including municipalities, municipal government officials, decision-makers, and administrators as well as regional public actors responsible for youth and environmental policies in isolated areas.
- ▸ Rural start-ups and informal groups aiming to promote rural heritage, culture, and the environment.
- ▸ Civil society organisations, youth-oriented NGOs, community groups, and advocacy organisations.

Other individuals and groups:

- Educational institutions, schools, colleges, and universities that can provide resources and support.
- Educators, teachers, and facilitators.
- Local experts (culture, tourism, and other relevant thematic areas).
- Private sector, local businesses interested in supporting youth initiatives.
- The entire rural community and its members.

4.2 Categorization of the influence of stakeholders based on the nature of engagement

Stakeholders can collaborate with you at varying levels. Some will want to be more active than others so follow the next steps to map and involve them properly. You can use this table and next guidelines to complete this mapping:

Nr	Stakeholder	Position/mandate	Potential role	Engagement	Influence/Power

1 Identifying the key stakeholders and their interests (positive or negative) in the project:

- Start by brainstorming a list of all the people and groups likely to be affected by the initiative. You could bring a small group of well-informed people together to do this or start the list yourself and share it with others so that they can add to it.

- Go through the list again and decide how the stakeholders feel about the initiative. Group them into the following five levels of engagement: “Unaware”, “Resistant”, “Neutral”, “Supportive”, and “Leading”. Below you find a matrix, you could use. Number your stakeholders for easy reference.

- **Unaware – Not aware of the project and the impacts of the project.**
- **Resistant – Aware of the project and resistant to change.**
- **Neutral – Aware of the project and neither supports nor resists.**
- **Supportive – Aware of the project and supportive of change.**
- **Leading – Aware of the project and its impact and actively engaged in ensuring the project is a success.**

2 Assessing the influence of, importance of, and level of impact upon each stakeholder: It's best to go through the list again in a group and decide what influence they could have and what level they have without based on research, previous experience, and knowledge. Add this into the matrix in the column "Influence/Power".

3 Identifying how best to engage stakeholders. You have to think about how you can best utilise these characteristics and any advantages and disadvantages of the initiative. Add your ideas into the matrix in the column "potential role".

Of course, attitudes, commitment and support can also change over time, so be open to shift roles/ positions of the stakeholders during the development of the initiative. You must bear that in mind. In general, it is important to see the current levels of engagement of each stakeholder and ensure that they all become and stay supportive towards the project.

4.3 Disseminate initiatives, find synergies, and engage stakeholders

Do not only integrate stakeholders on your initiatives implementation, but also in your dissemination plans. It is important to successfully share and engage the initiatives with groups, interested people and parties. This will help your team to set alliances that could help ensure that your initiatives can remain successful in the long term.

Young people often feel disconnected from decision-making bodies and have limited information about relevant opportunities, resources, and initiatives due to insufficient communication channels between them. Due to this insufficient information sharing and a lack of structured programmes, young people's participation in local initiatives is not sufficiently considered by local authorities, while local authorities are not aware about youth initiatives and actions.

Good dissemination and communication need to be a carefully planned process to ensure that you reach the participants of your initiative or your action. By supporting and enabling interactions through your initiative dissemination, your team could achieve ideally an enhancement of youth representation, an improvement of communication channels and implantation of interaction routines between the stakeholders. Good communication will promote the possibility to shape policies and programs, which affect youth the most and enable active involvement and catalysts for change and the creation of a supportive environment for youth-driven initiatives on their areas.

Dissemination and communication actions are very important for the success of an initiative. They both refer to the results of the initiative, but communication is also focused on the initiative itself while it is active. More specifically, communication means taking strategic and targeted measures for promoting the action itself and its results to a variety of audiences, including the media and the public, and possibly engaging in a two-way exchange. On the other hand, dissemination means sharing project results with potential users - peers, organisations, stakeholders, and policymakers.

As yourself the next questions:

a) How can I achieve good communication?

▸ Set clear communication objectives (e.g. what changes or impacts do you expect from your target audience?).

▸ Use the appropriate means of communication for one-way exchange (website, press release, brochure, etc.) or two-way exchange (school visit, exhibition, internet debate, etc.).

▸ Focus on wider audiences that go beyond the initiative's stakeholders.

▸ Create clear, concise, defining messages (why do we need to know about the initiative? do the results affect our everyday lives or those of our fellow citizens?).

▸ Develop a content calendar indicating when and where each part of content will be published.

▸ Choose the tone of voice, content format and style according to the target audience and the channel that is used.

b) How can I get a good dissemination?

▸ Define the outputs that will be created.

▸ Specify where they will be available.

▸ Define the area that you expect to make an impact.

▸ Detect the needs that might be covered by the results of your initiative.

▸ Detect from the stakeholders the ones that are going to be the potential users of the results.

▸ Define the means of contact (social media, emails, face to face meetings, brochures, website etc.).

▸ Share information about your initiative even when it is in progress through local and social media.

▸ Create digital community hubs where local groups can share information.

c) Which visual identity and channels can I use?

A critical point for the success of your communication and dissemination actions is to create your Visual Identity and choose your channels:

▸Digital material (Power-Point presentations, photos, documents, email signature, memes, videos, etc.). You can even create a logo for the action.

▸Printed material only if it's necessary (posters, brochures, bulletins, etc.). Adopt a paper-free approach (if it's possible and taking in consideration the target group).

▸Social media accounts.

▸Multiplier events, workshops.

▸Face to face meetings.

d) How can I measure the scope and impact of my initiatives?

One measure for assessing the communication and dissemination of your initiative is the definition of indicators for ensuring that your messages are reaching the intended audience and achieving the desired outcomes.

First, measure the extent of media coverage your communication receives, both in traditional media (newspapers, TV, radio) and digital media. Related to the digital media monitor likes, shares, comments, and retweets to gauge the level of audience interaction.

You can also conduct surveys or gather feedback through various channels to understand audience perceptions, preferences, and satisfaction with the communication materials. The number of registrations in your activities can also be a valuable indicator. If you observe changes in the behaviour of the target audience that are related to the objectives of the initiative, then you know that something good has been done

e) What else should I do before the action and what afterwards?

The pre action phase is mainly based on taking care that your initiative information will be reached to the potential participants and on creating a supporting environment/ community for the implementation of the activities to be completed. That means that focusing on stakeholders and collaborations is crucial in that phase, so you can use those cooperation routes to inform about the project goals and the action implementation. If it is suitable to your processes, ethics and goals, part of the field research that you did to analyse your local context could be also used to address needs or good practices that could be presented to those stakeholders in an informative way while also informing the community about the project and the upcoming action. Do not hesitate to ask for help from them or local people about workshop issues that arise while in progress (e.g. when changing the venue because of unexpected reasons).

At the post activity phase, focus on the action outcomes, whether they are tangible products or results that you have obtained during the action. Don't forget anybody who has even a little been part of that initiative and share with them the recognition and ownership of the action's success. Organise the information on such templates and formats that it would be easy for anyone that you share it with to spread it also and multiply the receivers. Be also ready to prepare dissemination materials already finished just to be shared by others or media (e.g. press notes, reels, posts, etc.). Try as much as possible for your initiative to be directed to the community in a direct or indirect way because this can increase the power of human resources and enhance the support network of your group or organisation e.g. host an open house event at your action, inviting community members to tour the facilities, learn about your sustainable practices, and meet your team.

WORKSHOPS

- *Three way communication (variation)*

4.4 Sustainability of the initiatives

Sustainable initiatives contain diverse approaches that aim to improve the chances of long-term success by promoting efficient and responsible resources use. An initiative can be regarded as successful if it can leave an impact over a long-term period by addressing social, economic, and environmental aspects.

There are several characteristics that are related to diverse levels of sustainability:

a) Environmentally friendly and responsible: by adopting practices that respect the environment and promote minimum resources consumption-emphasis on SDG's goals. Some examples could be:

▸Involving people from the community and selecting local suppliers can help you reduce energy consumption and share your sustainability efforts with the community to inspire others and create awareness.

▸Consider the environmental impact of the materials you use and choose those with lower carbon footprints. Additionally, choose loose products or products with minimal packaging or packaging made of recycled materials.

▸Of course, recycle as much waste as you can: plastics, paper and cardboard, glass, etc. and compost organic waste.

▸Choose rooms or areas with natural lighting to reduce the need for artificial lighting during the day.

▸Inform your participants about all the good work you're doing. Put a poster up in your waiting area and communicate the practices during the workshop.

b) Social inclusion: through the involvement of the local community by organising informative meetings about the goals and by giving space to the members to actively involve in long term activities or being engaged on their follow up.

c) Economic longevity: through stakeholders and donors that appreciate the impact of the initiative and would be willing to be engaged in long-term funding or keep alive part of your activities. Set synergies and network to identify the common objectives that your team/organisation and other stakeholders share. By clarifying the shared vision and purpose, you can create a sense of alignment and commitment among the different stakeholders. Tips for expanding your synergies-networks:

▸Try to attend a combination of in-person and virtual networking events.

▸Consider reaching out to local communities that share your values and volunteer your time to them.

▸If you work in a co-working space, you have the opportunity to network with those around you.

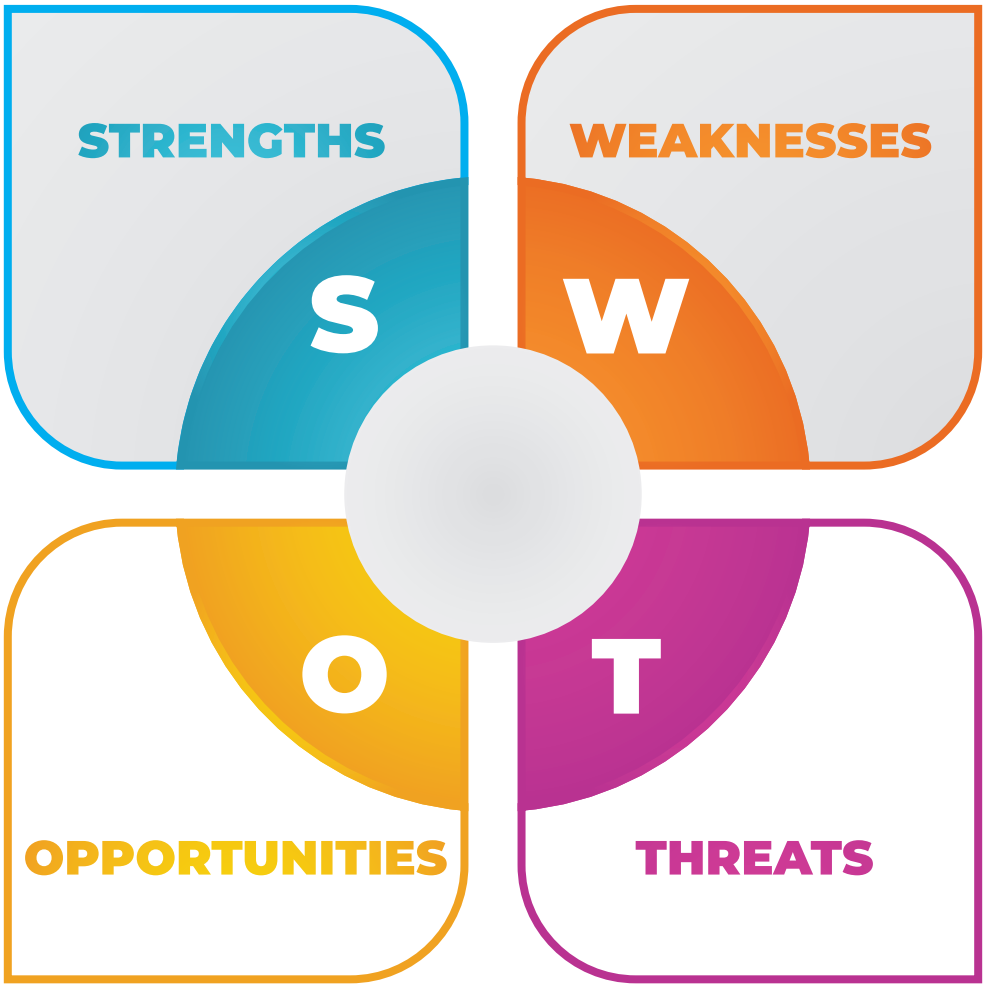
▸Try at the beginning to network in a comfort zone environment and when you are more confident expand your connections.

It's important to give a long-term vision to your initiative to see it grow and be sustainable over time. Some main characteristics that can assure longevity in your initiative are:

▸Clear values, goals and intended impact by articulating first the problem that will be solved.

▸Engage your stakeholders to listen to, collaborate with, or inform your existing stakeholders. Use the mapping techniques mentioned above to have effective communication, to make the best use of available resources and to attract donors.

▸Use Swot Analysis to identify the positive and negative aspects of your team and the challenges of the community-area you are working in. Aim for an ongoing capacity-building process.



WORKSHOPS

- *Round table with all relevant stakeholders.*
- *Set a SMART goal.*

WORKSHOPS

PERFECT FACILITATOR

(to be done with a group of youthworkers aiming to test)

Learning objectives

- To work on the competences and skills of the facilitator.
- To do a reflection of the facilitation skills a group could have and which they can improve.
- To work on creativity.

Duration

45 – 60 min

Materials needed

Flipcharts or large pieces of paper, paper sheets for notes and coloured markers.

Implementation

1. Divide the participants in teams (approximately four to six people).
2. Give to each group a large sheet of paper, and some coloured markers.
3. The next thing they will have to do is to reflect, for about ten minutes, on the competences and skills that a perfect facilitator should have: In an ideal world, what does such a facilitator need to have to fulfil this role? During this time they will describe all the characteristics of this perfect facilitator and write them down in a list.
4. Then, using the flipchart, each team will draw this being or person in a creative way, trying to show with images those skills detected.
5. Once all the groups have finished, they will give a name to their beings or person and share their creations to the group.
6. Close by doing at the end a small debriefing in a plenary starting from the drawings.

   - Was it difficult to identify the skills?
   - Which competencies and skills have been repeated the most? Why?
   - How did you feel about the contrast between your skills and the perfect facilitator skills?
   - Which ones do you have?
   - Which ones would you need?
   - Which can you train and which not?, etc.

Variations, tips or things to consider

To work with youth, this group dynamic could be changed to discuss about the “Perfect youthleader” or “Perfect team member” so you can reflect with youth about what does it mean to be part of a team or to lead youth towards the creation of youth initiatives. E.g. you can suggested young people to think of the skills one needs to have to be able to change their community.

PERFECT FACILITATOR

(to be done alone by you as youthworker)

Learning objectives

- To work on the competences and skills for a facilitator.
- To do a self analysis about your own facilitation skills.

Duration

20 - 30 min

Materials needed

Paper sheets for notes and coloured markers.

Implementation

1. Think for a few minutes about the competences and skills that a perfect facilitator should have to list them on a paper. Ask yourself: In an ideal world, what does such a facilitator need to have to fulfil this role?
2. Once these minutes are over, write the ones that you consider more relevant in a table or spider net (see annex of this exercise).
3. Score from 1 to 10, how important these skills are for a perfect facilitator and put and X on the appropriate place. Then connect all the X with a line (e.g. red).
4. Then, score again the competences but in this case, according to your own abilities. Put an X to score yourself on each skill and connect all the X with a line (e.g. blue).
5. Compare the results: which are the differences between both lines (the perfect facilitator scores and yours?). Ask yourself:

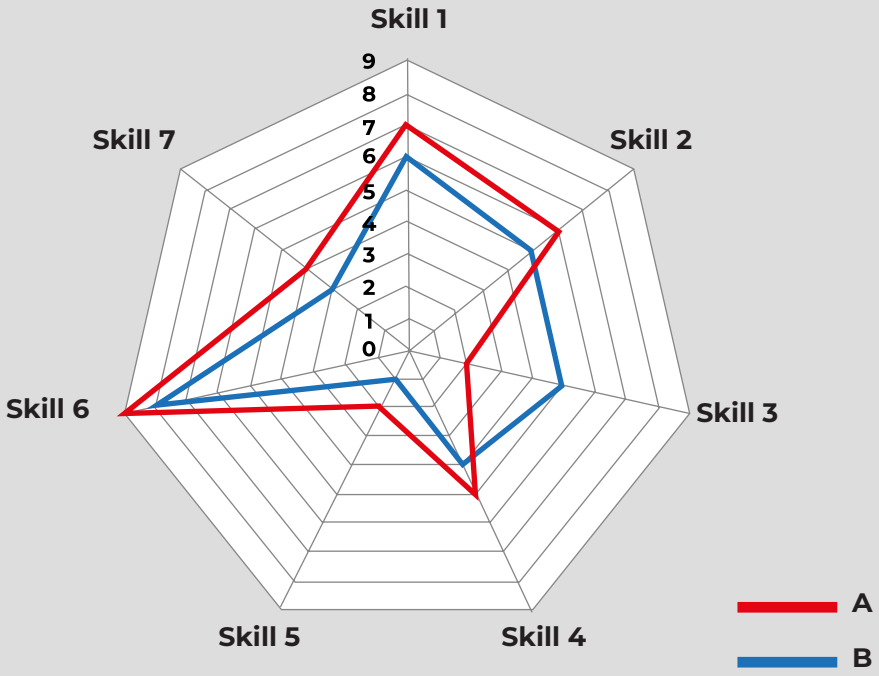
   - Which competencies and skills are more relevant? Why?
   - How did you feel about the contrast between your skills and the perfect facilitator skills?
   - Which ones do you already have?
   - Which ones can you train? How?

Variations, tips or things to consider

To work with youth, this dynamic could be changed to discuss about the “Perfect youthleader” or “Perfect team member”. So youth can reflect in groups or individually about what does it mean to be part of a team or to lead youth towards the creation of youth initiatives and make them compare their profiles to detect how to improve.

Annex

Spider net model

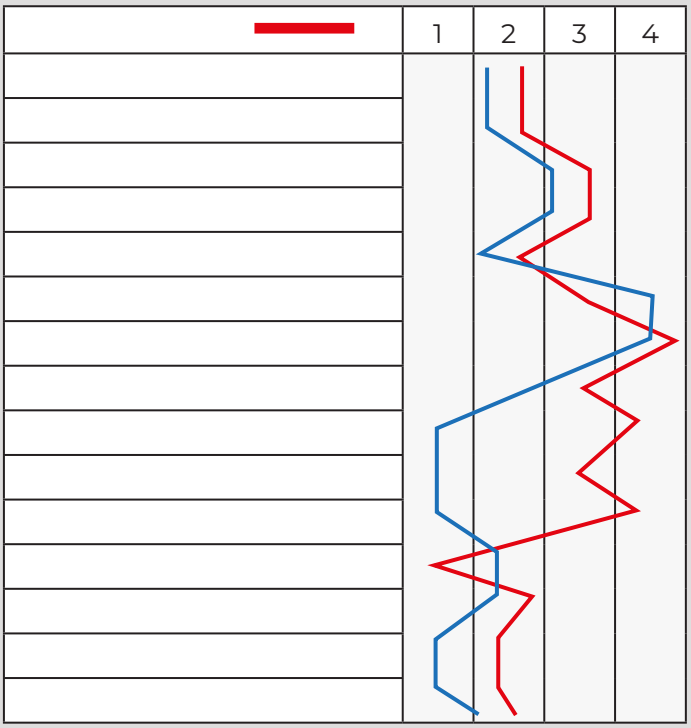


Model skills in a table

Profile/Position: Name										
Skill/Competence	Score									
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Annex

Model skills in a table



THREE WAY COMMUNICATION

Learning objectives

- To team build within a group.
- To understand different methods of communication.

Duration

30 – 40 min

Materials needed

A flip chart, markers, a few bandanas, clipboards, pen and paper.

Implementation

1. Preface the game with a brief discussion about the various ways in which people communicate with their friends, professors, colleagues, etc. Tell the participants that in this activity, they will discuss and determine key aspects, pros/cons and guidelines for a specific type of communication. Three different communication methods will be explored: Face to face, telephone, and e-mail.
2. Divide the group members into three groups.
   - The first group represents the face-to-face communication environment. These people do not have any controls on their communication. They should sit in one area of the room and use pen and paper to write their findings during the activity.
   - The second group represents the telephone environment. These group members should be blindfolded in order to replicate the telephone environment (in which they cannot see the person they're talking to). They should sit together in one area of the room. One person will act as the scribe for the group's findings and will not wear a blindfold.
   - The third group represents the email environment. These participants should sit back-to-back and may not speak. They should have paper, pens, and clipboards. In order to communicate, they must write notes and pass them to one another.
3. Give them about 7 minutes and then ask each group member to make its report (Participants can now be free of the blindfolds, clipboards, and other constraints).
4. Capture the findings and guidelines on a flip chart. Share them by doing a group discussion using questions such as:
   - Was it difficult to communicate within each group? Why?
   - Which of the three ways of communication was more effective?
   - Why effective communication is so important in a team?
   - Which of the three ways of communication will be more relevant when planning or implementing a youth initiative?

Variations, tips or things to consider

You can ask participants to propose a task of an activity or event in which they have to communicate. This exercise can be also used on the final stage of a youth initiative planification to practice its dissemination or how to attract participants or supporting stakeholders.

CREATING A PHYSICAL COLLAGE

Learning objectives

- To enhance critical thinking, the sharing of other perspectives, open communication, and easier learning.
- To develop participants' stronger bonds with personal goals and growth.
- To value and care for the environment in which young people live.

Duration

60 min

Materials needed

Magazines, glue, scissors, markers and poster paper.

Implementation

1. Share the materials on tables.
2. Tell participants to choose a theme related to their local environment or territory (e.g. cultural heritage, gastronomy, sports, tourism, nature, youth leisure time, etc.).
3. Invite them to create a physical collage (individually or by teams).
4. Tell participants to share their creations in a group and communicate to others the meaning and aims of each college.
5. Debrief with them:

   - Which elements did you choose?
   - Why they were important for you?
   - How did you represent them?
   - Which is the mood or style of your creations? Why?
   - To whom is your design created to?
   - Has the perception about your territory being influenced? How?

Variations, tips or things to consider

It may be difficult for young people to find inspiration; you can show examples of other collages already created on the internet on a related topic; or you can show photos and talk in an introductory way about what things represent the territory.

If all the participants come from the same area, you can divide them on groups and tell each group to do a collage with images, words, photographs, and art that ais related to a concrete and different theme (e.g. The forest, the sea, the mountains, the river, the heritage, the region identity, etc.).

Another variation can be to tell your participants to create an online collage instead of doing it physically.

TRIVIAL TIME

Learning objectives

- To enhance critical thinking and to experience other perspectives.
- To learn more, or learn new facts from local communities, with the intention of increasing interest in youth about them.
- To ease the learning process and developing motivation and focus levels.

Duration

60 min

Materials needed

Devices such as a mobile phone, a tablet, a laptop, computer.

Implementation

1. Create groups.
2. Groups should think of a few (between 3 to 5) fun or interesting facts about their region or their community.
3. Collect the results of the step 2 and create a quiz online on which each question could have four possible answers (some right, some wrong). You can use Kahoot ©, Mentimeter ©, Powerpoint ©, etc.
4. Participants will be given a QR code to scan with their mobile phones, or a numeric code, which will bring them to the page of the quiz. You can also just share the screen of your computer with a projector.
5. The participants will have to select the correct answer displayed. You can inform them that they can not answer the questions that they created or invite them to create a quiz per group.
6. Debrief about why did they choose those facts:

   - Why are they important?
   - Why could they be relevant or interesting for outsiders?
   - Do they feel proud about them and why?
   - Do they have any bond or relations with those issues that connects them to the territory?
   - Which added value do they bring to the territories?

Variations, tips or things to consider

A variation of the exercise to make it funnier could be to simulate a TV programme on which participants simulate a role play
(e.g. how wants to be a millionaire?).

THE TREE OF ISSUES

Learning objectives

- To allow youth to recognize and identify their communities problems in a visual way.
- To identify local challenges consequences and suggest how to solve them.

Duration

40 – 60 min

Materials needed

Flipchart, pencils/pens

Implementation

1. Create groups.
2. Draw a tree with three parts: roots, trunk and crown of tree.
3. Tell groups to think about a general problem in their community that they should write in the trunk.
4. Groups must fill the roots with the causes that generate the problem and the crown the consequences of the problem. They can draw direct connections (e.g. a root (problem) ends on a concrete branch (consequence), or one root ended up on different branches). Some guide questions to fill the tree could be: What problems would you like to solve with this sustainable development measure? What are the consequences/ negative effects of these problems? Who does it affect the most? What are the causes of the problem?
5. Invite each group to think in an initiative of how to solve the problem.
6. Each group should explain its tree to the rest of the group and how they will solve the problem detected.

Variations, tips or things to consider

Identifying concrete issues in a wide context or define a group goals is important because it gives youth a more concrete idea of what actions they really need to take or which points to reach.

A variation or extra step could be to tell youth to turn into positive sentences the consequences or negative impacts written on the trees, as this new sentences could be seen as the objectives their initiatives should have.

SHORT SKIT ON INEQUALITIES

Learning objectives

- To enhance critical thinking, the sharing of other perspectives, open communication, and easier learning.
- To raise awareness on an issue and locate possible biases that may exist within themselves.
- To value and care for the environment in which young people live.

Duration

90 – 180 min (considering the videos edition)

Materials needed

Devices such as a mobile phone, a tablet, a laptop, etc.

Implementation

1. Create teams if your group if big.
2. Choose a topic related to inequalities in your territory or tell each team to address one (e.g. gender, social, economic, access to education, mobility, etc.).
3. Tell participants to discuss in teams about examples of those inequalities (e.g. if the topic are gender inequalities, they can speak about unequal pay, unequal life opportunities, sexism, etc.) and make them reflect about which SDGs could be related to the example or issue they chose.
4. Each team choose one of the previous examples and prepare a short story/script for a roleplay or video.
5. Teams record and edit a video with their phones/laptops.
6. Videos are shares as a small festival.
7. Conduct a debriefing with the group about the activity. You can make questions such as:

   - How was the initial debriefing? How did the topics arise?
   - Why did you choose the topic selected?
   - Was it difficult to find examples?
   - Can you guess which SDG was address with each video?
   - Which SDGs did you address and which is the connection with your topic?
   - Were the topics or SDGs chosen related? How? Etc.

Variations, tips or things to consider

To implement this activity in a different way, you cand use drawings instead of videos in the activities to explain the problems related to the inequality issue.

LET'S PLAN TOGETHER

Learning objectives

- To promote critical thinking.
- To practice time management.
- To encourage participants adaptability and resilience.

Duration

45 – 60 min

Materials needed

A flip chart, markers, clipboards, pen and paper.

Implementation

1. Discuss with the participants about the different tasks that the implementation of an initiative involves.
2. Give an example of an initiative that the group will work on e.g. a festival of street art. Tell them to brainstorm about the tasks that could be needed to organise such an event and to try to organise them in three groups.
3. Divide the group members into three teams. Share each group of tasks among the three teams.
4. Each team must work in these tasks and give concrete ideas about them.
5. Every group presents their conclusions.
6. Capture the results in a flipchart and make participants debrief about the process and where the main difficulties were or how to solve them.

Variations, tips or things to consider

You can ask participants to propose initiatives and then to vote in which one they would like to work on.

An extra step of the exercise could be to meet the three teams together at the end and invite them to create a plan or calendar that articulates the three teams tasks in a coherent and efficient way.

BUILD THE PERFECT EVENT!

Learning objectives

- To educate young individuals on organising an associative event.
- To train management skills, time organisation and encourage strategic thinking.
- To explore and assess participants organisational skills.
- To promote team work and identify teams' roles.

Duration

60 - 80 min

Materials needed

Building materials to build (marshmallows, spaghetti, etc.). Cards or sheets for noting down strategies. Posters or flip charts. Coloured markers. Clock or timer.

Implementation

1. Form groups of 4-6 people.
2. Assign each group to build a tower or building using the constructions materials given (marshmallows, spaghetti, etc.).
3. Each group must discuss and list the key roles needed to promote the tallest or weirdest building and decide how to promote it (e.g., coordinator, marketing manager, logistics manager, etc.).
4. Each group has to organise a showcase, receiving a limited amount of marshmallows, other building materials. Give them freedom to organise themselves as they prefer.
5. Groups have 45 minutes to make their buildings.
6. However, in the mid-game the facilitator explains how the conditions have changed. Now they have to build e.g. a horizontal building or the most colourful building they could, or there is a lack of resources (you can ask to freeze their remaining resources) etc. In this way, they have to readapt their strategy according to a new condition.
7. Once they are completed, they are asked to explain their strategies and present the great idea
8. The group which has achieved the objective will win!
9. Run a debriefing with the using questions like:

   - What was your organisation structure like?
   - Did you set a strategy first and implement it afterwards? why/why not?
   - What would you have improved?
   - Has the activity change put further stress in your group? why/ why not?
   - How can you replicate this work or distribution to the organisation of a youth initiative?

COFFEE SHOP STATIONS

Learning objectives

- To share ideas and coordinate group brainstorming in teams.
- To confront ideas and promote creative thinking to approach a similar issue from different perspectives.
- To find solutions for issues detected and create activities to solve it.

Duration

60 min

Materials needed

Flipcharts, pens and pencils, colour markers.

Implementation

1. Create small areas or set different tables in the space you are going to use, where a flipchart with a topic is displayed (one per area/table with some markers).
2. Form groups of 4-6 people (only for the starting point).
3. Assign each group an area with a flipchart they need to fill. On each flipchart, there should be written a question to answer or a challenging topic which participants should reflect about (e.g. regions exodus, sustainable tourism, youth participation, intergenerational clash, etc.). It could be a direct question of just a broad topic. On each table or area, one person will act as "president", not changing his / her position along the activity and acting as observer or moderator.
4. To start, the group on each table must discuss and list the opinions in the flipchart about their topic.
5. After some time (e.g. 25-20 minutes), make a noise and tell participants to change tables or areas. The members of the groups freely rotate to other tables or areas while presidents stay.
6. On the new areas or tables, groups read the opinions written down by the previous groups and try to add new stuff or give opinions about what it has been previously said. The president can help to clarify what is written upon the arrival of each new group to the flipchart.
7. Repeat the step 6 several times. Once the time is over, the president of each table will introduce the final flipcharts and resume the feedback obtained about each topic.
8. In plenary, debrief with your participants the results obtained and how they can be used to inspired and plan local youth initiatives.

Variations, tips or things to consider

Participants are free to self-organise but it's convenient if the facilitator guide the first station change (e.g. move to your left station) and point out how time left they have so the participants be able to rotate to every stations.

SET A SMART GOAL

Learning objectives

- To promote creative thinking.
- To identify a group vision through collaboration.
- To empower participants organisational skills.

Duration

60 min

Materials needed

Tables/chairs, pens, and paper for the preparation phase, rearranging the chairs to a circle, blackboard or flipchart for collecting the results at the end.

Implementation

1. Introduction about the importance of identifying goals during the planning or dissemination of an initiative. Explanation of what SMART goals:

   - Specific: Have clear and established aims
   - Measurable: Be able to measure the success
   - Assignable: Designate who will complete the task, and who will supervise
   - Relevant: Productive for the participants, and the team/ organisation as a whole
   - Timely: Set a timeframe accurate to the scale of the task.

2. Separate the group into several teams and distribute flipcharts, markers, pens and papers.
3. Each group identifies one or several goals according to the above characteristics and related to a topic given to them (e.g. set the objectives of a planned action, prepare a dissemination of an activity, learning goals of a training, etc.). It is better if this exercise is done over an idea or youth initiative already foreseen.
4. Each group presents the goal to the other teams. In plenary, the whole group revise if the objectives created are really SMART and, if not, how they could be reformulated to be reached.

Variations, tips or things to consider

The facilitator can give the theme of the initiative or give the freedom to the teams to work on their own themes.
This exercise could be also used at the beginning of the workshops to invite young participants to set goals for their initiatives.

ROUND TABLE WITH ALL RELEVANT STAKEHOLDERS

Learning objectives

- To put oneself in the role of a stakeholder.
- To develop curiosity and interest in the views of others.
- To gain the perspective of others' ideas.
- To learn how to express opinions and needs in a plenary session.

Duration

60 min minimum, flexible to extend.

Materials needed

Roles of players or stakeholders (see next page). Table/ chairs, pens, and paper for the preparation phase. Rearranging the chairs to a circle, blackboard or flipchart for collecting the results at the end

Implementation

1. Introduction with an explanation of the activity
2. Separation into groups of 2-5 people each and distribution of roles. Participants will have some minutes to put themselves on the shoes of their characters.
3. 15 minutes of preparation time in the teams – speaking about characteristics, collecting information and stereotypical thoughts, creating arguments, setting a goal for their role
4. Optional: Informal dialogue between the roles just before the official meeting
5. The moderator introduces all participants to the round table(s) with their fictional names, explains a fictional situation and gives the floor to one of the stakeholders for their opening statement. Either there are several round tables at the same time, in which one person from a "stakeholder team" always participates, or initially there is one round table and everyone else watches/listens and the team members alternate and complement each other.
6. For 30 minutes the participants discuss from the role's point of view, try to bring arguments and collect pro and contra statements to clarify the views and explain the advantages and disadvantages of their role and to achieve their goals.
7. At the end, everyone slips out of their roles again. Participants reflects together, looks at the arguments exposed, gives feedback and there is a collection of results (learning outcomes) about how stakeholders behave on each context and how this could affect youth initiatives implementation in a negative or positive way.

Variations, tips or things to consider

- Ensure a polite and respectful discussion, do not tolerate insults or hostility.
- Encourage even reluctant young people to take part, possibly by asking them questions or asking them to switch places.
- Balance between the stakeholders in terms of length of speech and number of role players.
- Structure the preparation phase and the dialogue before the actual "meeting" well and understandable for all.
- It can be easier, if some of the roles have a very strong and controversial opinion.
- Give the roles out by chance to not lose too much time and not raise specific expectations.

The moderator introduces all participants to the round table(s) with their fictional names, explains a fictional situation and gives the floor to one of the stakeholders for their opening statement. For 30 minutes the participants discuss from the role's point of view, try to bring arguments and collect pro and contra statements to clarify the views and explain the advantages and disadvantages of their role and to achieve their goals. At the end, everyone slips out of their roles .

SITUATION

We are in a town called Farturi with about 40.000 inhabitants.
It is about the **construction of a new youth centre** named PLAY HALL.
There is no youth centre now, youth like to go to places like parks or clubs. The town is a famous tourist destination and is known for its natural heritage and nature-based tourism. Culture is not the most important topic.

In the project meeting, all stakeholders come together to discuss the advantages and disadvantages of the youth centre.
There have been several difficulties so far with this project. Everybody has his interests and opinions.

Tim Tester Organized youth (LOCAL)	**John Felder** President of the informal group NGO "For Youth"
Eva Example Unorganized youth	**Sofia Mila** Director of a local school
Frank Ramos Founder of local youth association LOCAL	**Maria Meyer** Local expert in the field of culture
Ellen Smith professional youth worker at LOCAL	**James Brown** CEO of a local restaurant business
Mark Clark municipal government official	**Eric Wilson** The direct neighbour of the property
Anna Alberts Project manager regional management organization (public)	***Mila Taylor*** CEO tourism organisation (DMO)

Nr	Stakeholder	Position/ mandate	Potential role	Engagement	Influence Power
1	Tim Tester	Organized youth (LOCAL)	Can support by taking part	Leading	Low
2	Eva Example	Unorganized youth	Can support by taking part	Supportive	Low
3	Frank Ramos	Founder of local youth association LOCAL	can provide resources and support	Leading	High
4	Ellen Smith	professional youth worker at LOCAL	can provide resources and support	Leading	High
5	Mark Clark	municipal wgovernment official	Can support	Neutral	High
6	Anna Alberts	Project manager regional management organization (public)	Cooperation possible	Supportive	Middle
7	John Felder	President of the informal group NGO “For Youth”	can provide resources and support	Leading	Middle
8	Sofia Mila	Director of a local school	Network and knowledge	Supportive	High
9	Maria Meyer	Local expert in the field of culture	Can provide knowledge	Supportive	Middle
10	James Brown	CEO of a local restaurant business	Cooperation possible	Unaware	Low
11	Eric Wilson	The direct neighbour of the property	Can support or disturb	Neutral	Low
12	Mila Taylor	CEO tourism organisation (DMO)	Can support or disturb	Neutral	Middle

SITUATION

It is about the **construction of a new youth centre** named PLAY HALL in the town called Farturi with about 40.000 inhabitants.

There is no youth centre at the moment, a few meeting places like parks or clubs. The town is a famous tourist destination and is known for its natural heritage and nature-based tourism. Culture is not the most important topic.

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YOUR ROLE
Tim Tester Organized youth
POTENTIAL ROLE
Can support by taking part
YOUR LEVEL OF ENGAGEMENT
Leading
YOUR LEVEL OF INFLUENCE
Low
YOUR BACKGROUND AND OPINION
You are 17 years old and an active member and take part often in activities from the local youth association LOCAL. You support the idea of the youth centre and are very engaged and have a very bad opinion about the public authorities because in your opinion they are too slow and don't support the young people. You know Eva Example, Frank Ramos very well, Ellen Smith also from the youth association and Sofia Mila only a little bit, but she knows you.

SITUATION

It is about the **construction of a new youth centre** named PLAY HALL in the town called Farturi with about 40.000 inhabitants.

There is no youth centre at the moment, a few meeting places like parks or clubs. The town is a famous tourist destination and is known for its natural heritage and nature-based tourism. Culture is not the most important topic.

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YOUR ROLE

Eva Example
Unorganized youth

POTENTIAL ROLE

Can support by taking part

YOUR LEVEL OF ENGAGEMENT

Supportive

YOUR LEVEL OF INFLUENCE

Low

YOUR BACKGROUND AND OPINION

You are 15 years old and were invited by your friend Tim Tester because he is engaged in this topic and an active member of the local youth association LOCAL.
You support the idea of the youth centre but are not engaged so far, because you have the feeling, that you can't influence and nobody of the decision makers cares about your opinion. If they asked you directly, you would have a strong opinion about the whole topic of youth engagement in your town, because you are frustrated about it.
Usually, you meet with your friends in the park or sports playgrounds.
You know Tim Tester because you are neighbours and friends.

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YOUR ROLE

Frank Ramos / Founder of local youth association LOCAL

POTENTIAL ROLE

Can provide resources and support

YOUR LEVEL OF ENGAGEMENT

Leading

YOUR LEVEL OF INFLUENCE

High

YOUR BACKGROUND AND OPINION

You are the founder of the local youth organisation and have been involved in this area for 25 years. You grew up in the village yourself and realised that there were no good opportunities, which is why you founded this association back then. You have been trying to set up a centre for 8 years, but for a long time there was no suitable property, and the money was not made available.
Now you see a great opportunity.
The problem for you is that there are very few people who would get involved and work at the centre. Unfortunately, the public authorities are also aware of this. A few neighbours are also not necessarily enthusiastic about the idea because they think it will be too loud.
You know Tim Tester because he is member of your association, Ellen Smith works with you, you already know Mark Clark, John Felder and Sofia Mila.

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YOUR ROLE

Ellen Smith / professional youth worker

POTENTIAL ROLE

Can provide resources and support

YOUR LEVEL OF ENGAGEMENT

Leading

YOUR LEVEL OF INFLUENCE

High

YOUR BACKGROUND AND OPINION

You have been working at LOCAL for 2 years and are very committed. Unfortunately, some colleagues have already left because they themselves have moved away or because the association doesn't have any good premises and only offers programmes and courses in sports facilities or schools.
You are very supportive of Frank Ramos because you admire his motivation.
You know James Brown, because he is your uncle and Mila Taylor because you used to work in tourism.
You don't know the other participants, only Tim Tester, because he is a member of LOCAL.

SITUATION

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YOUR ROLE

Mark Clark
municipal government official

POTENTIAL ROLE

Can support

YOUR LEVEL OF ENGAGEMENT

Neutral

YOUR LEVEL OF INFLUENCE

High

YOUR BACKGROUND AND OPINION

You have been working in municipal administration for 20 years and are responsible for the construction of new buildings.
You've often heard about the project, but you personally don't think it's absolutely necessary because young people often travel to the larger cities and meet up there anyway. The money could also be used for something else. But you don't want to reject it either, as there could also be public funding. You could also turn it into something touristy, a café or a meeting place.
You know Frank Ramos for many years as a fighter for this topic and project, you know Anna Alberts, Sofia Mila and Mila Taylor.

SITUATION

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YOUR ROLE

Anna Alberts
Project manager regional management organization (public)

POTENTIAL ROLE

Cooperation possible

YOUR LEVEL OF ENGAGEMENT

Supportive

YOUR LEVEL OF INFLUENCE

Middle

YOUR BACKGROUND AND OPINION

You work in regional development in the municipal organisation and like to get involved in youth issues, but you also think that we need to think a little further ahead and include problems such as staff shortages and problems with young people.
You are open to this project, but not yet a very big supporter.
You know the public representatives, the head of LOCAL and Mila Taylor.

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YOUR ROLE

John Felder
President of the informal group NGO “For Youth”

POTENTIAL ROLE

can provide resources and support

YOUR LEVEL OF ENGAGEMENT

Leading

YOUR LEVEL OF INFLUENCE

Middle

YOUR BACKGROUND AND OPINION

You founded the informal group NGO “For Youth” about a year ago to support the issue of youth. It is currently running somewhat parallel to the youth organisation, which sometimes leads to problems. However, you could provide staff and support the project with fundraising or other financial assistance as well as help with communication and dissemination.
You know Frank Ramos, Ellen Smith and Maria Meyer, who has invited you to this meeting.

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YOUR ROLE

Sofia Mila
Director of a local school

POTENTIAL ROLE

can provide Network and knowledge

YOUR LEVEL OF ENGAGEMENT

Supportive

YOUR LEVEL OF INFLUENCE

High

YOUR BACKGROUND AND OPINION

You have been the director of the local school for several years and are convinced that a youth centre would be good for the young people. You could also organise cooperative events from the school and act as a sponsor, as the school carries out charity projects from time to time.
However, you would also like to influence the content and programmes, which the head of LOCAL Frank Ramos is not so keen on.
You know Frank Ramos well, the student Tim Tester, Ellen Smith, Mark Clark and Anna Alberts

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YOUR ROLE

Maria Meyer
Local expert in the field of culture

POTENTIAL ROLE

Can provide knowledge

YOUR LEVEL OF ENGAGEMENT

Supportive

YOUR LEVEL OF INFLUENCE

Middle

YOUR BACKGROUND AND OPINION

You are still quite a young expert in the field of culture and think that there is too little culture on offer in this town.
You can also remember from your own youth that there were few offers and are in favour of cooperation and want to support the project.
You only know most of them by ear and best of all John Felder, with whom you work.
You also invited him because you want there to be collaborations between LOCAL and them.

SITUATION

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There is no youth centre at the moment, a few meeting places like parks or clubs. The town is a famous tourist destination and is known for its natural heritage and nature-based tourism. Culture is not the most important topic.

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There have been several difficulties so far with this project. Everybody has his interests and opinions.

YOUR ROLE
James Brown CEO of a local restaurant business
POTENTIAL ROLE
Cooperation possible
YOUR LEVEL OF ENGAGEMENT
Unaware
YOUR LEVEL OF INFLUENCE
Low
YOUR BACKGROUND AND OPINION
You haven't heard much about the project yet because you don't have much to do with the topic. You also don't have a firm opinion yet. It would be possible to cooperate between the youth centre and your restaurant, which would of course be an advantage. You only know Mila Taylor from tourism.

SITUATION

It is about the **construction of a new youth centre** named PLAY HALL in the town called Farturi with about 40.000 inhabitants.

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There have been several difficulties so far with this project. Everybody has his interests and opinions.

YOUR ROLE

Eric Wilson
The direct neighbour of the property

POTENTIAL ROLE

Can support or disturb

YOUR LEVEL OF ENGAGEMENT

Neutral

YOUR LEVEL OF INFLUENCE

Low

YOUR BACKGROUND AND OPINION

You've known about the idea of the project for some time but didn't take it seriously for a long time.
You have had bad experiences with young people and noise and problems in your life and don't want to have a youth centre right next to your house. You are looking for good reasons, but you can't really think of any objective reasons.
You happen to know Mila Taylor and therefore want to support her in doing something tourism-related with the property.

SITUATION

It is about the **construction of a new youth centre** named PLAY HALL in the town called Farturi with about 40.000 inhabitants.

There is no youth centre at the moment, a few meeting places like parks or clubs. The town is a famous tourist destination and is known for its natural heritage and nature-based tourism. Culture is not the most important topic.

In the project meeting, all stakeholders come together to discuss the advantages and disadvantages of the youth centre.

There have been several difficulties so far with this project. Everybody has his interests and opinions.

YOUR ROLE

Mila Taylor
CEO tourism organisation (DMO)

POTENTIAL ROLE

Can support or disturb

YOUR LEVEL OF ENGAGEMENT

Neutral

YOUR LEVEL OF INFLUENCE

Middle

YOUR BACKGROUND AND OPINION

You have been working in tourism for 10 years but have only recently started your job in this place and would like to see the place become more attractive. Of course, you know that the locals are just as important and the DMO also officially has a “inhabitants concept”, but you can actually imagine seeing a hotel or other great touristic project there. A youth centre would certainly help a lot, but from a tourist point of view, it’s not that interesting.
You know James Brown a little bit and have met Eric Wilson when you were looking at the site and told him about your opinion.

ANNEXES

ANNEX 0

Working Package 3

WP3.2: Compilation of Information from the Desk Research

CLICK TO SEE THE TABLE

Themes/Region	*European Union*	*Syros Island (Greece)*	*Brezice (Slovenia)*	*Tietar Valley (Spain)*	*Arouca (Portugal)*	*Cori (Italy)*	*Werfenweng (Austria)*	**Notes**
Total number of inhabitants of the region	**Year of 2021:** 447 199 800 people.	**Year of 2021**: the inhabitants of Syros are 20.791 and in South Aegean Region are 327.820.	**End of the year of 2022**: Brežice Municipality has 24.286 inhabitants.	Total of 36.158 inhabitants.	**Year of 2021:** approximately 21117 Inhabitants.	Total of 10 456 inhabitants.	In 2022, the municipality of Werfenweng had 1,078 inhabitants (Land Salzburg, 2022).	*All areas have less than 40.000 inhabitants, each.* *Together, the areas represent 0.03% of the European Union.*
Number of youngsters (14-30 years old, if available) living in these territories.	**Years of 2001-2020:** overall decrease of young people.	**Year of 2020:** 347.512 inhabitants between 15-29 years old in South Aegean Region. In Syros Island there is no recent data available, but in **year 2011** for the ages between 15-24 it was 1.908 inhabitants.	End of the **year of 2022:** Brežice Municipality had 3.718 young people.	5,115 people between the ages of 14 and 30 live in the Tiétar Valley.	**Year of 2021**: There were 3331 (15-29 years old) youngsters.	**Year of 2020**: (ISTAT data), there are 1400 youth (18-30) and 2003 (18-35). In terms of the presence of young people (18-35), it's 2003.	**Year of 2022**: There were 110 (15-24 years old) youngsters living in these territories. It represented around 10.2% of the overall population, in that year (Land Salzburg, 2022).	*In all cases, the percentage of young people seems to be lower than 16% of the overall population.*
Unemployment rate (if possible, youth unemployment rate).	**Year of 2008-2013:** went up from 16% to 24.4%. **Since 2013**: went down, record lows of 14.9%, but it remains twice as high as general unemployment. Stable labour market integration started to take longer: many job-to-job transitions and precarious work, which greatly affect vulnerable groups (e.g. racial and ethnic minorities). **Ages 15-24 years old, in the year of 2020:** total of 15.9%; 19.4% (born inside EU) to 27.5% (born outside EU). **Ages 15-24 years old, in the year of 2021:** 31.1% (born outside) to 31.3% (born in the EU).	**Year of 2018**: unemployment in Syros was 13.4%. **Year of 2023**: Data collected in January 2023 shows a raise in youth unemployment in Greece: 28.9% in the ages 15-24 years old.	**Year of 2023**: As of **January**, there are 885 unemployed people in Brežice Municipality. From that there are 88 (almost 10%) people unemployed in the age bracket 15-24 years old and 80 young (around 9%) people in the age bracket 25-29 years old.	**Unemployement data in La Adrada January 2023 (source SEPE):** Total population 2.750 Total unemployed 267 Men less than 25 years old: 7 Men between 25-45 years old: 42 Men over 45 years old: 74 Women less than 25 years old: 5 Women between 25-45 Years old: 41 Women over 45 years old: 98 **Unemployment data in Arenas de San Pedro January 2023 (Source SEPE):** Total population 6.465 Total unemployed 514 Men less than 25 years old: 21 Men between 25-45 years old: 60 Men over 45 years old: 155 Women less than 25 years old: 9 Women between 25-45 Years old: 103 Women over 45 years old: 166 **Unemployent data in Candeleda January 2023 (source SEPE):** Total population 5.044 Total unemployed people 318 Men less than 25 years old: 5 Men between 25-45 years old: 42 Men over 45 years old: 87 Women less than 25 years old: 10 Women between 25-45 Years old: 77 Women over 45 years old: 112	**Year of 2022**: there were 9.7% unemployed youth (between 15-24 years old) and there were 6.7% (between 25-34 years old).	**Year of 2020:** Unemployment rate among youth is at 38.6%, and NEETs amount for the 12.3% (PSZ).	**Year of 2019**: No statistics are available on the number of unemployed by age group. The unemployment rate in the municipality of Werfenweng in 2019 was 4.4%. (Statistik Austria).	*In most cases, recent data related to youth unemployment rate seems to be lower than the EU overall tendency (2021). However, it still represented at least over 9% in all cases, but Werfenweng (no data), La Adrada (no data which allows distinction) and Arenas de San Pedro (no data which allows distinction).*

ANNEX 1

Reactive Youth's Policy Brief result

Population:

1. **Small Population Size:** All the territories have a population of fewer than 40,000 inhabitants each, comprising less than 0.03% of the EU.

2. **Limited Youth Population**: The youth population in these territories is smaller than 16% of the total population, affecting workforce and social dynamics. Youth migration influences the youth population in these territories.

3. **Population Decline:** Most selected territories, like other rural areas in the EU, have seen a population decline due to limited educational and economic opportunities and youth migration with ageing populations. However, Tiétar Valley and Werfenweng show contrasting trends, suggesting unique dynamics.

Economy:

1. While the **youth unemployment** rates in most territories are lower than the EU average, they still range above 9% in all cases (except for Werfenweng, La Adrada, and Arenas de San Pedro where specific data is unavailable). This suggests that despite comparatively better conditions, youth unemployment remains a concern in these rural areas.

2. **Economic Sectors:** The primary and secondary sectors dominate employment in these territories, with an emphasis on agriculture, primary industries, and tourism-related services. These sectors employ a significant portion of the local population, especially during peak tourist seasons. The tertiary sector also plays a role, particularly in tourism-related services.

Regional Policies:

1. The selected territories have rural development policies that indirectly reference young people through education, employment, and services for vulnerable groups. Sustainable development is emphasised, highlighting the importance of training, education, and best practices in economic sectors. Brežice and Cori explicitly mention youth participation, while others imply it indirectly.

There are policies that did not fully address specific needs and aspirations because of the lack of representation of young people who want to contribute their perspectives and expertise.

Civic and social participation:

1. **Advocacy Efforts:** Advocacy focuses on sustainable environment, natural resource use, youth participation, and gender equality. Arouca and Syros prioritise sustainable environmental initiatives. However, regional authorities or organisations, not young people, primarily lead these efforts. They align with the EU's sustainable development objectives.

2. **Youth Participation Desire**: Many young individuals expressed a desire to have a voice and be actively involved in shaping policies and programs that affect their lives. In addition, young people want to take proactive roles in addressing community issues, initiating projects, and implementing positive changes.

3. **Youth Participation Models:** Youth participation models exist, led by local governments or state-related entities. Examples include youth councils in Arouca, Tiétar Valley, Cori, and Brežice. Other territories promote youth organisations and collaborations to engage young people individually or through affiliations with various organisations.

4. **Obstacles to Participation:** Hierarchical structures and bureaucratic processes hinder youth involvement in decision-making. Young people in Syros face challenges in claiming public spaces and navigating bureaucratic procedures. Existing structures and mechanisms often fail to provide young people with meaningful opportunities for participation. Young people often faced financial constraints, limited access to resources, and a lack of support networks to turn their ideas into reality. Overcoming these obstacles is crucial to meet the growing interest of youth in participating and being heard by decision-makers.

5. **Insufficient communication channels between local authorities and youth organisations:** Young individuals often felt disconnected from decision-making bodies and reported a lack of information about opportunities, resources, and initiatives relevant to them. This communication gap hindered the flow of information, limiting the awareness and involvement of young people in local initiatives and programs.

ANNEX 2

Reactive Youth's Policy Brief result linked with SDG's

Example showing how the situation analysis carried out in the areas of the Reactive Youth project was linked to the SDGs by prioritizing those that were most closely related to the needs of the region and how they were addressed following the 2030 Agenda.

Population:

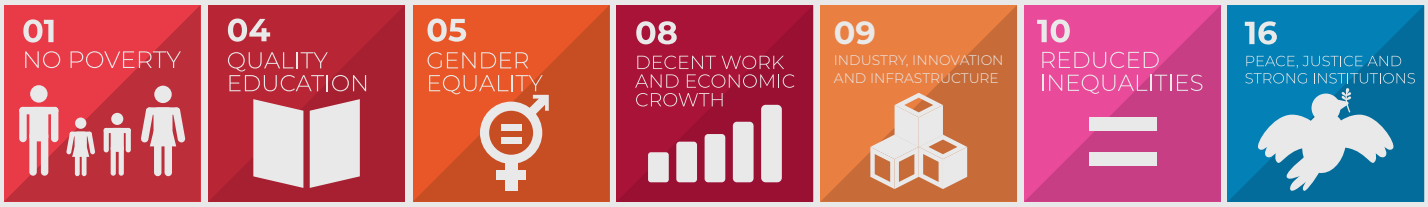
1. **Small Population Size:** All the territories have a population of fewer than 40,000 inhabitants each, comprising less than 0.03% of the EU.
2. **Limited Youth Population:** The youth population in these territories is smaller than 16% of the total population, affecting workforce and social dynamics. Youth migration influences the youth population in these territories.
3. **Population Decline:** Most selected territories, like other rural areas in the EU, have seen a population decline due to limited educational and economic opportunities and youth migration with ageing populations. However, Tiétar Valley and Werfenweng show contrasting trends, suggesting unique dynamics.

Economy:

1. While the y**outh unemployment** rates in most territories are lower than the EU average, they still range above 9% in all cases (except for Werfenweng, La Adrada, and Arenas de San Pedro where specific data is unavailable). This suggests that despite comparatively better conditions, youth unemployment remains a concern in these rural areas.
2. **Economic Sectors:** The primary and secondary sectors dominate employment in these territories, with an emphasis on agriculture, primary industries, and tourism-related services. These sectors employ a significant portion of the local population, especially during peak tourist seasons. The tertiary sector also plays a role, particularly in tourism-related services

Regional Policies:

1. The selected territories have rural development policies that indirectly reference young people through education, employment, and services for vulnerable groups. Sustainable development is emphasised, highlighting the importance of training, education, and best practices in economic sectors. Brežice and Cori explicitly mention youth participation, while others imply it indirectly.
2. There are policies that did not fully address specific needs and aspirations because of the lack of representation of young people who want to contribute their perspectives and expertise.



Civic and social participation:

1. **Advocacy Efforts:** Advocacy focuses on sustainable environment, natural resource use, youth participation, and gender equality. Arouca and Syros prioritise sustainable environmental initiatives. However, regional authorities or organisations, not young people, primarily lead these efforts. They align with the EU's sustainable development objectives.
2. **Youth Participation Desire:** Many young individuals expressed a desire to have a voice and be actively involved in shaping policies and programs that affect their lives. In addition, young people want to take proactive roles in addressing community issues, initiating projects, and implementing positive changes.
3. **Youth Participation Models:** Youth participation models exist, led by local governments or state-related entities. Examples include youth councils in Arouca, Tiétar Valley, Cori, and Brežice. Other territories promote youth organisations and collaborations to engage young people individually or through affiliations with various organisations
4. **Obstacles to Participation:** Hierarchical structures and bureaucratic processes hinder youth involvement in decision-making. Young people in Syros face challenges in claiming public spaces and navigating bureaucratic procedures. Existing structures

and mechanisms often fail to provide young people with meaningful opportunities for participation. Young people often faced financial constraints, limited access to resources, and a lack of support networks to turn their ideas into reality. Overcoming these obstacles is crucial to meet the growing interest of youth in participating and being heard by decision-makers

5. **Insufficient communication channels between local authorities and youth organisations:** Young individuals often felt disconnected from decision-making bodies and reported a lack of information about opportunities, resources, and initiatives relevant to them. This communication gap hindered the flow of information, limiting the awareness and involvement of young people in local initiatives and programs

ANNEX 3

PHASE	MAIN ACTION	TASK	ACTIONS	CURRENT STATUS	TARGET GROUPS	RESPONSIBLE	NOTES
Preparation	1. Communication	1.1 Webpage development					
			1.1.1 Development of the structure	Done	Youth	Eddie	
			1.1.2 Development of the texts	On-going	Youth	Helen	
			1.1.3 Shooting of the photos	Half of the texts done	Youth	Francisca	
		1.2 Social calendar organisation					
			1.2.1 Excel develop-ment	Not started	Local communities	Mark	
			1.2.2 Media content on-going feeding on the dedicated folder	Not started	Local communities	Francisca	
			1.2.3 Daily posting & copywriting	Not started	Local communities	Mark	
						Mark	

Calendar deadlines (GANTT chart) and deadlines						
February	March	April	May	June	July	August
15th						
	28th					
		29th				
			20th			
					26th	
						28th

ANNEX 4

	MONTHS	M1	M2	M3	M4	M5	M6	M7	M8	M9	M10	M11	M12
		Year xxxx											
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
ACTIVITIES													
ACTIVITY 1: preparation													
ACTIVITY 1: implementation				A1									
ACTIVITY 1: dissemination													
ACTIVITIES 2 AND 3: preparation													
ACTIVITIES 2 AND 3: recruitment of participants													
ACTIVITY 2: implementation										A2			
ACTIVITY 3: implementation											A3		
ACTIVITIES 2 AND 3: dissemination on a final event													

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