# GROWING SOLIDARE

A Guide to the Implementation of Projects in Your Community

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## A Guide to the Implementation of Projects in Your Community

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# GROWING SOLIDARE

A Guide to the Implementation of Projects in Your Community

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# INTRODUCTION

The Guide "*GROWing soliDARE*!" is the outcome of an elaboration and experimentation process, which involved trainers with experience in different thematic areas.

The purpose of the Guide is to reach out to informal groups and organisations wishing to implement ESC projects so as to facilitate their understanding of the concept of solidarity and provide support in their approach to the needs of the communities they are active in.

Therefore, especially if you are a beginner, this Guide
- is useful to be read throughout to get a deeper understanding of solidarity in practice;
- contains a set of relevant information for young people, mentors, project coaches or coordinators, about the implementation of projects, especially if they approach a topic which is less familiar to them;
- is directed at the practicality of the concept of solidarity and is mainly focused on how this concept may be translated into projects, suggesting experiential methods and activities;
- reflects the concerns and needs of young people and is a useful tool for the development of their social skills and attitudes;
- is easy to be used in various learning contexts –

formal, non-formal and informal ones; and
- includes punctual references to the "Programme Guide" so that the users can link the methods to activities which are specific to ESC projects.

*"GROWing soliDARE!"* is structured in 3 chapters as follows:
**Chapter 1:** "Solidarity and the European Solidarity Corps Projects" introduces to the user the concept of solidarity, the philosophy of the ESC Programme, and sets out a few elements which are specific to these projects.
**Chapter 2:** "Methods for Community-Based Projects" includes a collection of 53 methods varying in complexity, organised so as to reflect the steps of a community-based ESC project. The methods are useful to the group of young people and also to the organisations and volunteers involved in volunteering projects or traineeships and jobs projects at different stages in a project: from identifying and analysing the need to assessing the impact of a project.
**Chapter 3:** "Solidarity within the Community" shows eight models of good practice that have been selected to provide also a grass-roots perspective on how to get the community involved in a change, how to bring about change by acting on a need that has been identified, and how to act in solidarity.

# Why a guide for solidarity?

## What is solidarity? How do we define it? What are its manifestations?

These are questions which have been on our mind ever since the first year of the Programme in Romania so as to give a meaningful direction to the projects funded under the European Solidarity Corps. They are simple questions, with answers not always so simple. Perspectives differ, sometimes quite a lot, when we get into details. However, paradoxically, any of us can immediately recognise an act of solidarity when we see it.

Solidarity is the bond which holds communities together and makes us social actors. It is a value underlying the European Union, and a frame of mind at the same time. Although it is a goal we strive to achieve, many times we find it difficult to "put a finger on" it and have it turn into something palpable.

This is why we wanted this Guide. We wanted it for transforming Romania by learning and also for transforming solidarity into something near at hand for us. And if we don't get it the first time, we'll keep on trying till we get it.

## Why solidarity in ANPCDEFP?

Because here at ANPCDEFP (Romanian National Agency for the EU Programmes in the Field of Education and Vocational Training), we know that a funding programme like the European Solidarity Corps is not about moving papers from one desk to another and about red tape. Inherently, like with any other large programme, we'll have these, too. But they are only tools and not a purpose by themselves.

However, it is more important that, since we have this European funding for volunteering, traineeships and jobs, and solidarity projects, we do it thoroughly, giving a new meaning to the lives of people who will be involved in these projects. Because, at the end of the day, our responsibility, of all of us, is to contribute as much as we can to bringing some added good into our society.

Solidarity can be seen in various ways, but to us, it is about shared values and respect for the values of others.

## Why this Guide for the European Solidarity Corps?

This Guide is a tool, not the only one, for all those who want to learn and feel differently; those who want to help others and also to (re-)discover themselves in the projects funded by this programme. We would like it to reach, through young people and youth workers, to as many people as possible, inspiring them to use the methods described, which they can use to make solidarity become an act and not just a word used too often.

We believe in the power of these projects, in their capacity to become real tools for the participation and inclusion of young people within a community. We believe that this can be done better when the activities are conducted in an active, participative way, by trying, discovering, and experimenting.

As to the objectives, the priorities, and the types of projects or activities that may receive funding, etc., the Guide of the ESC Programme is the document providing all the details that are necessary to potential beneficiaries.

In the framework of the Programme, we are constantly developing support instruments for organisations, informal groups and young people. We invite you to use the Programme website www.suntsolidar.eu confidently and to participate in the events and courses especially designed to help you do projects that are good and impactful as far as possible.

The ANPCDEFP course provision includes::
- CRESC (Certification and an Introduction to the European Solidarity Corps – for those interested in volunteering projects and traineeships and jobs projects)
- ACCES (Applied Workshop for the European Solidarity Corps – for writing projects)
- SUCCES (Support for Contracting under the European Solidarity Corps – for organisations and informal groups with approved projects)

You can find all these in the Events section on the website.

Andrei Popescu,
oordinator for the European Solidarity Corps
ANPCDEFP

# 1

SOLIDARITY AND
THE EUROPEAN
SOLIDARITY CORPS
PROJECTS

a guide to the implementation of projects in your community

# CONTENTS

**Solidarity and
the European Solidarity Corps projects**

## A. THE EUROPEAN SOLIDARITY CORPS

The **European Solidarity Corps** is one of the strategic instruments proposed by the **European Commission** in response to the challenges of nearly 100 million young people in the European Union, and also to the challenges of the EU as a whole, which may be addressed with and through young people.

The European Solidarity Corps aims to promote solidarity, one of the fundamental values of the EU, especially through volunteering, in order to increase the engagement of young people and organisations with solidarity activities.
The activities conducted under the European Solidarity Corps contribute to strengthening cohesion, solidarity, democracy and citizenship in Europe, responding to societal changes and emphasising the promotion of social inclusion.

Therefore, the **European Solidarity Corps** provides **European young people (18-30 year-olds)** with an opportunity to learn and (re-)discover themselves through volunteering periods, traineeships, jobs or projects which offer solutions to the challenges faced by communities.

## B. WHY WITH YOUNG PEOPLE AND FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

On 26 November 2018, the EU Council of the youth ministers adopted a resolution on the future **EU Youth Strategy** for 2019-2027.
The Strategy proposes a cross-sector approach so as to respond better to the needs of European young people.

### Why this Strategy?

**Because young people play a specific role in society** and they face challenges requiring appropriate resources and tools, as well as an environment ready to pay due attention to their voice.

Because, nowadays, young people from all over Europe are facing different challenges, are dealing with difficulties related to the access to their social rights, are faced with social exclusion and discrimination, as well as threats generated by fake and propagandistic news.

Many of them are handling an array of typical transitions in their personal lives and in their environment: *from education to work, living on their own, establishing partnerships or founding a family.*

*Others face uncertainties about their future, as a result of globalisation and climate change, of technological change, demographic and socio-economic trends, populism, discrimination, social exclusion and fake news, with yet unknown effects on jobs, skills or the way our democracies work (European Youth Strategy, page 1).*

In this respect, the **European Youth Strategy seeks to engage and empower young people to take control of their lives, and the programmes European Solidarity Corps and Erasmus+** together with other programmes, too are very important instruments for supporting and implementing the Strategy.

Europe cannot afford the waste of talent, social exclusion or the lack of engagement among its youth. Young people can therefore become the architects of their own lives and can contribute to changing society for the better. At the same time, it is well known that this generation benefits from the best education ever and is especially skilled in the use of information and communications technologies and social media platforms. So, the potential is unlimited.

The European Youth Strategy is aimed at three areas of action: **Engaging, Connecting and Empowering**, and the European Solidarity Corps, together with other programmes such as the Youth Guarantee, Erasmus+ and the EU Youth Dialogue, is one of the measures which have been implemented in order to act on the three dimensions of the European Youth Strategy.

The projects funded under the European Solidarity Corps are intended to bring young people closer to their community, to encourage their active participation, and support them to become more aware of their learning and development.
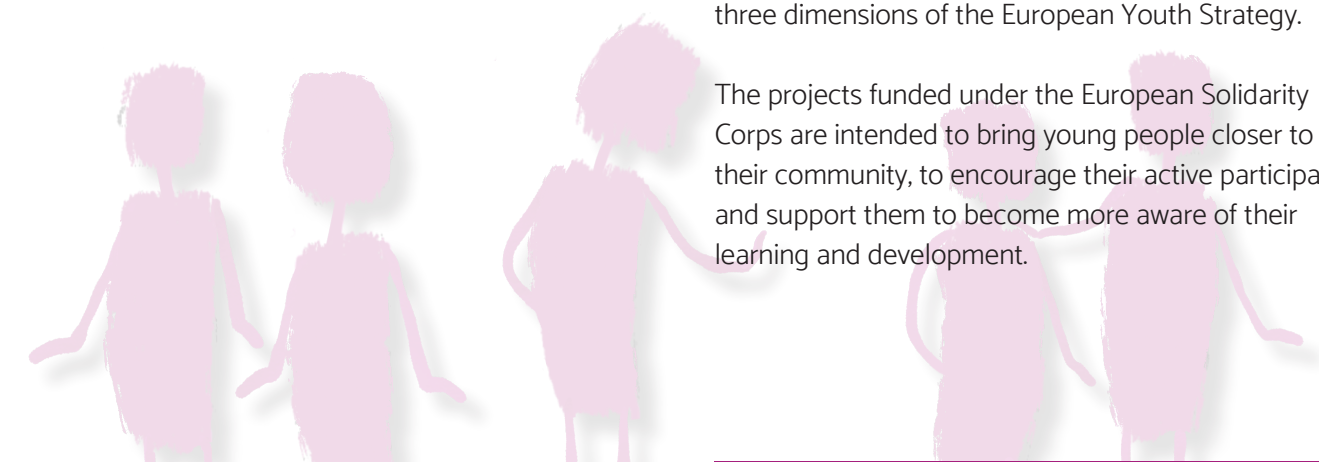
# C. WHAT IS SOLIDARITY?

You'll find many definitions of solidarity such as: *a close union based on a community of interests, feelings, ideas, a sense of understanding, and cohesion. Or feeling solidarity means being connected to someone or to something through a union of beliefs, feelings, interests, values and responsibilities. And even simpler, solidarity may be unity and brotherhood. (acc. to Dex Online)*

**Solidarity may be an act, an attitude, a feeling, a state** – however, obviously, solidarity is an attitude based on a set of values which satisfy a basic need of humans – the need for connection – which gives us the feeling that we belong to each other, that we are together and are part of a whole, that we are safe, are protected and can protect or provide support to others.
In other words: anyone wants only good things in their life. If you have this wish, attitude and care not only with respect to yourself, but to others around you too (your friends, neighbours, community etc.), then you understand solidarity as a value. The wish may be only at a rational level, but when this wish becomes care demonstrated through actions and doing, then we can truly say there is solidarity in action.

**Solidarity is an action arising from care and a feeling of connection.** The word "care" underlies the manifestation of solidarity and comes from a need for connection which lies in us as human beings that are a part of the same whole – irrespective of whether the whole is our family, community, country, class, dance group or ethnic group.

The word "solidarity" is also used at macro level with reference to social policies which guarantee the provision of services and social security in a society. Nevertheless, at a micro level, solidarity may be seen now as care and additional support provided by families, NGOs, philanthropists or volunteers.

In this respect, the EU encourages the Member States and the regional and local authorities to recognise the importance of solidarity in promoting social and economic cohesion: moreover, it encourages them, with programmes like Erasmus+ and the European Solidarity Corps, to promote volunteering and recognise it as an important manifestation of solidarity, and also as a part of lifelong learning.

# D. SOLIDARITY AS A VALUE OF THE EUROPEAN UNION

Fundamental documents of the EU point to solidarity as a fundamental value of the Union on several planes for action. According to the Treaty on European Union and the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union 2012/C 326/01 – *the Union is founded on the values of respect for human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, the rule of law and respect for human rights, including the rights of persons belonging to minorities.*
*These values are common to the Member States in a society in which pluralism, non-discrimination, tolerance, justice, **solidarity** and equality between women and men prevail.*

Solidarity is also found in the Preamble of the Treaty, whereby the States declare that they are decided to deepen the solidarity between their peoples while re-specting their history, their culture and their traditions.

In **Article 3 of the Treaty**, solidarity appears as one of the underlying principles which the European Union relates to:
- The Union combats social exclusion and discrimination and promotes social justice and protection, equality between women and men, solidarity between generations and protection of the rights of the child.
- It promotes economic, social and territorial cohesion, as well as solidarity between Member States.
- In its relations with the rest of the world, the Union upholds and promotes its values and interests and contributes to the protection of its citizens.
It contributes to peace, security, the sustainable development of the planet, solidarity and mutual respect among peoples, free and fair trade, eradication of poverty and the protection of human rights, and in particular the rights of the child, as well as to the strict observance and the development of international law, including the respect for the principles of the United Nations Charter.

Moreover, the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union stipulates that the Union is founded on the indivisible, universal values of human dignity, freedom, equality and solidarity.
The Charter reaffirms the rights resulting mainly from

the constitutional traditions and the international obligations that are common to the Member States, from the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, .. the Social Charters adopted by the Union and by the Council of Europe, as well as from the case-law of the Court of Justice of the European Union and of the European Court of Human Rights.

In this context, under **Title IV – Solidarity**, solidarity is mentioned in Articles 27-38 with regard to the following rights:
- workers' right to information and consultation within the undertaking,
- right of collective bargaining and action,
- right of access to placement services,
- protection in the event of unjustified dismissal,
- fair and just working conditions,
- prohibition of child labour and protection of young people at work,
- family and professional life
(legal, economic and social protection),
- social security and social assistance,
- health care,
- access to services of general economic interest,
- environmental protection and sustainable development, and
- consumer protection.

## E. WHY DO WE NEED SOLIDARITY PROJECTS?

As the world becomes more integrated and more inter-connected, we encounter unexpected scenarios which require skills for understanding better the realities and issues that are becoming more and more global, trans-national, and multidimensional.

Education stands out as being the context in which social cohesion, inclusion and transformation are pro-moted. One of the main tasks of education in the 21st century is to help the development of active, demo-cratic and multicultural societies, which promote better understanding among people.

Therefore, an efficient way is that of the ESC projects, which aim to build democratic, just and equalitarian societies.
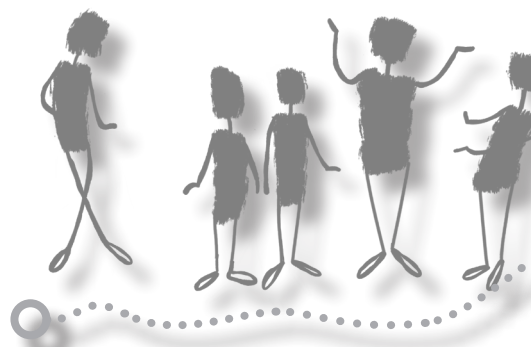
## F. WHAT ARE THE ESC PROJECTS?

The ESC projects are an efficient response:
- to be addressed to the needs of local/global communities, and
- to meet the educational challenges of the 21st century.
Solidarity projects are expected to facilitate the development of relevant skills while responding to the needs of a local community.

# ESC PROJECTS

The ESC projects may be:

**Volunteering projects:** these are the most common European projects involving volunteers both at local and transnational levels.

They are, de facto, the continuation of the European Voluntary Service within the European Solidarity Corps. Their purpose is to meet the important needs of communities through individual or team-based involvement of young people, providing the latter with an experience which contributes to their personal, social, civic and professional development by helping them to develop practical skills and competences which can increase their employability.

**Traineeships an Jobs projects:** they are projects which offer to young people the possibility to develop professionally in the framework of the ESC with two types of activities: jobs and internships/ traineeships. This is how the "occupational" projects contribute to the development of work-related skills and competences of the youth involved, facilitating their transition to the labour market and contributing to their employment.

**Solidarity projects:** these projects are an excellent starting point for engaging young people with the community. They have a very flexible and friendly approach, being targeted at both youth organisations and informal groups of young people. So, if you are young, have a few friends and think that you could together tackle a specific need of your community – not necessarily in a formal organised framework – these projects could be the most appropriate solution.

# G. SERVICE AND LEARNING IN ESC PROJECTS

A project implemented under the umbrella of the European Solidarity Corps, irrespective of its type, has two inseparable dimensions:

- It responds to **the needs of the community** in which the young person is engaged, showing solidarity as its main value – CONTRIBUTION/SERVICE (CS).

- It contributes in a planned manner **to the quality of the education and training** of the person actively involved in addressing the needs of their community – LEARNING (L)

CONTRIBUTION/ SERVICE

+ → DEVELOPMENT
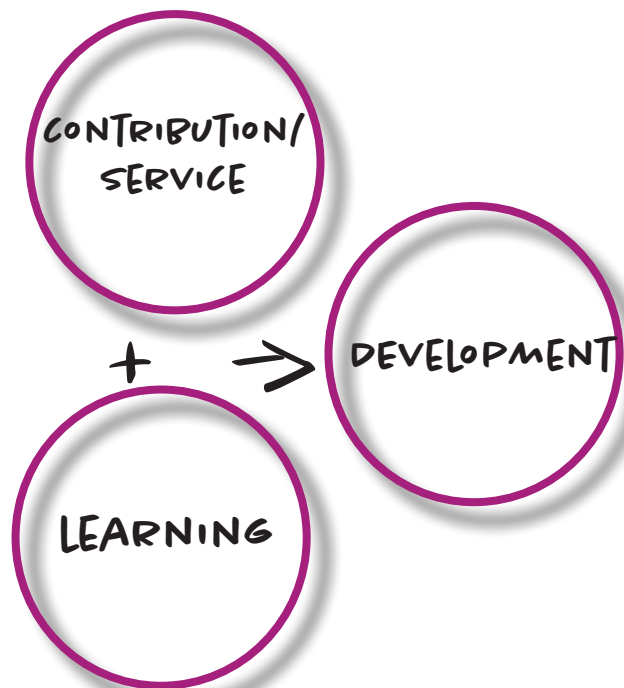
LEARNING

If you are an initiative group or an organisation implementing a project, ESC can help you build you project across the two dimensions: Contribution/Service and Learning.

A. **CS-L** The contribution/service objectives and the learning objectives are not correlated and are of little relevance to those involved in the project.
These are **mainly charitable or philanthropic projects**.

B. **CS-L** The learning objectives are a priority and the objectives related to contribution and the delivery of services for the community are secondary.
These are mainly **educational projects**.

C. **CS-L** The objectives related to contribution and services benefiting the community are a priority and the learning objectives are secondary, but still important.

D. **CS-L** Contribution/Service and learning are a priority, closely connected and equal in terms of significance and quality; they support each other.

**\*The European Solidarity Corps sustains especially the types C and D.**

Therefore, an ESC project involves both CONTRIBUTION/SERVICE and LEARNING.

If stress is laid on the learning of the young participant, while minimizing the needs of the community and the impact of projects in community, the local development dimension is lost. This is like we had a lot of competent people (in theory), but they do not use their competences to benefit the community and are not aware of the impact they could have in their community.

If too much stress is laid on contribution/service, while diminishing the interest in learning, there is some short-term local development, a non-sustainable one, because the young people involved do not satisfy their need for competence and the motivation to get involved on the long term is very low or ceases after a single intervention.

In conclusion, ESC projects start with the needs of the community and pursue an interaction between the learning needs of young people and their skills. The exercise is to keep on learning how to find the appropriate and efficient solutions for current and future issues of the world they live in.

Solidarity projects lie at the cross of these two types of motivations:

- deliberate **civic engagement** in solidarity with a specific target group to which I relate on an equal footing

- **purposeful learning** – a process taking place as from the moment I get involved in the project.
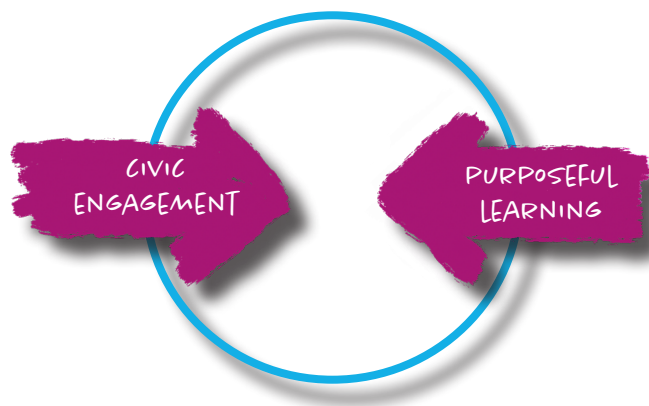


You don't need excessive knowledge in order to donate books for children with reading difficulties. On the other hand, you need a sound basis of knowledge and skills to set up a lasting initiative for encouraging children with reading difficulties to express their needs, to be motivated and supported to learn reading

## H. A PROJECT EXAMPLE

Many times we fail to differentiate between a learning activity, an act of solidarity and a solidarity project. You can see an example below to clarify the differences.

**A learning activity:** five young people are reading 2 articles about the challenges of children in foster care and learn about their lifestyle.

**An activity or an act of solidarity:** five young people donate books for 20 children in a foster care centre, who, as they heard on the radio, are having various difficulties.

### An ESC solidarity project

The five young people are implementing a literacy programme in a foster care centre to help 20 children to read. They visited the 20 children in advance and **asked them about their needs**. The children needed time for socialising and to learn to read better. **Together** with the children, the 5 young people **develop a programme** of weekly activities spanning 2 months, in which the children also play an active part and have specific roles. At the same time, they organised together a book donation campaign, which they promoted with videos in which the children talked about their wish to learn reading. They collected 500 books.

Before completing the project, they had **an activity to assess children's satisfaction and their reading ability, and also carried out an evaluation of the project outcomes and the learning** of the five young people. The youth learned about the children's needs, their potential, how to teach reading, organise an online campaign, persuade people, edit videos, etc. Children spent quality time with the young people and learned to read much better.

At the end of the project, **they organised together** an **event with the entire community**, where they invited other children and parents too. The children and the five young people in the initiative group conducted reading activities for community members and promoted the importance of reading from an early age.

Finally, **they all went out to a confectionery to celebrate**.

If we want to analyse in detail what a solidarity project involves, we could derive from the example above the characteristics set out in the following section.

# I. FEATURES AND PRINCIPLES OF ESC PROJECTS

**1.** A focus on the efficient response to a community need/issue, together with the community, and not only for the community.

**2.** Cooperation instead of "help".

**3.** Recognising the project participants' dignity as equals, irrespective of their socio-economic status.

**4.** Building mutual, equality-based relations with the beneficiaries of community-based projects: encouraging those with fewer (economic, educational or other kind of) resources to see themselves as being capable of developing and being actively involved in youth solidarity initiatives.

**5.** Sharing the protagonist's role in creating and implementing the project: actively involving young people in all the phases of a project, from planning to analysis, and to its implementation and evaluation.

**6.** Doing the project also depending on what the young people involved want to learn.

**7.** Learning with and from the others: creating a context of reflection on the impact of the project in the community, and also on personal development.
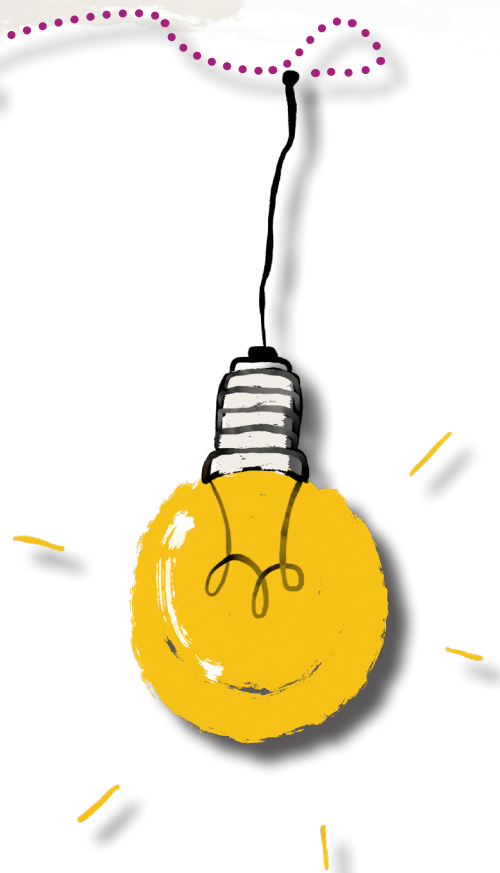
**VERY IMPORTANT!**
For a better understanding of the third principle – *recognising the dignity of those involved* – is important to see how young people relate themselves to the beneficiaries of ESC projects. We can say there are two ways to show solidarity in terms of attitude or intention – conscious or unconscious, *for example*:

A young volunteer or a group of young people showing **vertical solidarity** relate like that!

A young volunteer or a group of young people showing **horizontal solidarity** relate like that!

THE BENEFICIARIES OF OUR PROJECT:
DO NOT KNOW,
NEED HELP, CANNOT,
HAVE NO ROLE OR HAVE
A PASSIVE ROLE.

THE BENEFICIARIES OF OUR PROJECT:
DO NOT KNOW YET,
NEED SUPPORT,
CAN WITH SOME SUPPORT,
CAN HAVE AN
ACTIVE ROLE IN

WE CAN SAVE THEM
They come to help/save!
- from an unconsciously
superior position!
This deepens the cycle of
helplessness.

HELPING THEMSELVES
They come to support!
- from a position of
EQUALITY!
This empowers them to help
themselves, providing them
with support until they learn
to get along.
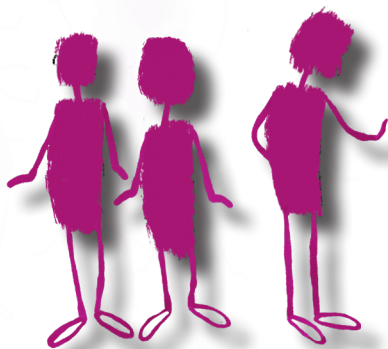
**Vertical solidarity** moves the beneficiaries down to the status of passive receivers, and consequently, leads to dependency and the repetition of the poverty or exclusion cycle. (*A passive intervention model*)

**Horizontal solidarity** seeks to overcome the vertical model, because it recognises the dignity of all people and communities, their right to cooperation, engagement and horizontal relations, on an equal footing. (*An active intervention model*)

# J. WHY WOULD YOUNG PEOPLE GET INVOLVED IN ESC PROJECTS?

The CONTRIBUTION/SERVICE – LEARNING continuum created by the projects taken into consideration by ESC ensure the framework for the personal and professional development of young people so they can live a life of fulfilment with self-determination and motivation.

For young people to be motivated and self-determined, these projects need to satisfy three of their fundamental psychological needs: (*acc. to Self-Determination Theory, Edward L. Deci & Richard Ryan*)
- the need for connection and belonging
- the need for competence
- the need for autonomy and control.

**The need for connection** in an ESC context is satisfied when a young participant feels that he or she is connected to a community, belongs to a group, where they find similarities and a common goal, where they feel appreciated, recognised and part of something bigger, where they have a well-defined role and can make a difference.

**The need for competence** is satisfied when young people autonomously determine what they want to learn, how and why; they reflect on what they have practiced, acquired, learned; they observe, enjoy their achievements and celebrate what they have learned.

**The need for autonomy and control** is satisfied when there is a context for young people to decide together where and how they want to get involved, they choose the issue and the solutions, take on the roles they wish and are responsible for their level of challenge and learning. Also, they learn to have control over their own lives – now and in the future.

COMPETENCE

CONNECTION

AUTONOMY&
CONTROL

# K. IMPACT OF SOLIDARITY PROJECTS ON YOUNG PEOPLE

Once motivated to get involved in the projects of the European Solidarity Corps, young people:

- develop a pro-social behaviour;
- have a deeper understanding of local/global issues – social, economic, political, environment, etc.;
- develop the competences demanded in the labour market; and
- contribute to the inclusion of disadvantaged youth.

# L. INCLUSIVE ESC PROJECTS

An added value of the ESC projects is that young people, who are traditionally seen as beneficiaries of support, are now volunteers or members of the initiative group.

Here are a **few examples** of solidarity projects undertaken by young people who would traditionally be seen as receivers of support and not as agents of change in their community:

Teenagers with cognitive impairment taking care of public areas in their town by applying their gardening skills to maintain the beds of flowers.

Young people in correctional schools creating educational materials on cooking for special education schools in the area.

Young people in rural areas helping to reforest a wood with sprouts that were grown up in their gardens.

Solidarity projects help vulnerable young people to become aware of their potential, questioning the failure and delinquency expectations that too often become a self-fulfilling prophecy.

More and more often, we can see young people who, if respected and encouraged, are motivated to attend a higher school, engage with productive activities and play an active role in social and political organisations. Solidarity projects may be inclusive by recognising the transformation capacity of young people, irrespective of their context or limitations.

**IMPORTANT!**

There is a risk to fall into the trap of believing that an ESC project may only be concerned with the issue of inclusion. However, if a community is faced with a political, economic, social, educational, cultural or an environment issue, that issue may be approached with an ESC project as long as the principles explained before are observed.

## M. POSSIBLE TOPICS OF ESC PROJECTS

Solidarity is a value underlying the ESC projects and we find it in projects in the practical application of the solidarity features and principles above. However, the community issues which are the starting point of any ESC project may be very diverse, such as (and not only):

Social inclusion

Climate change callengers

Integration of migrants

Prevention of natural disaster

Education

Democratic participation

Human rights

Health and  wellbeing

Clean water and sanitation

Decent work

Responsible consumption

Poverty alleviation

Generational gap

Pace and justice   Hunger reduction

Green energy, etc

# N. STEPS IN AN ESC PROJECTS

To make sure that a project complies with the principles of solidarity mentioned before, it needs to respect the following steps.
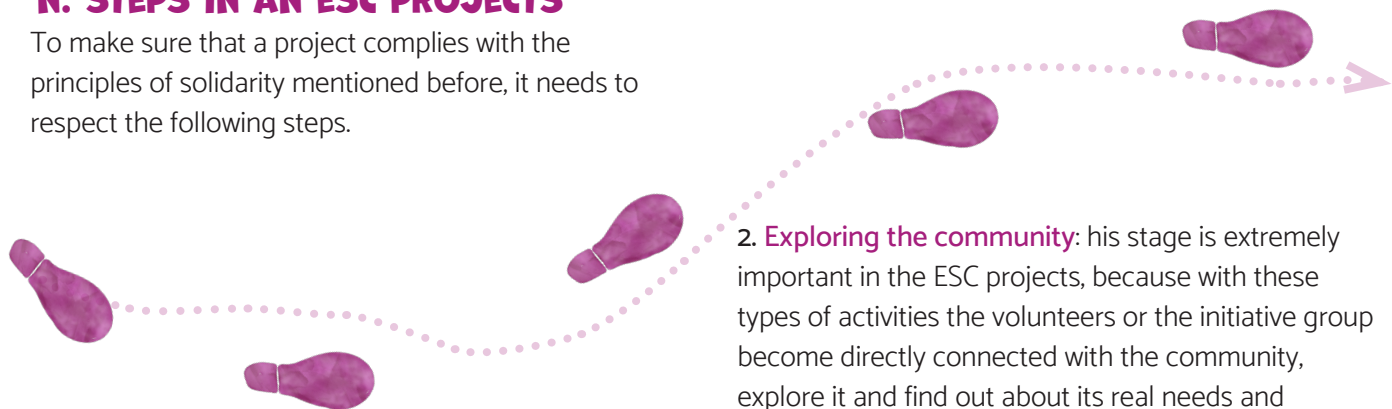
**0. Experiencing some pressures at societal level** or some issues: this is Stage Zero, which is usually the triggering stage or the stage motivating a group of people to come together because they feel uncomfortable about a particular situation, need or problem..

**1. Establishing an intervention group**: this involves the creation of the framework and context where the initiative group or the volunteers meet, learn to work better together, learn what solidarity means and how the principles of solidarity may be applied in their project. This is the time when a feeling of belonging and the motivation to play an active role, have a purpose while demonstrating care for the project beneficiaries build up within the group. With this step, young people satisfy plentifully their need for connection.

**2. Exploring the community**: his stage is extremely important in the ESC projects, because with these types of activities the volunteers or the initiative group become directly connected with the community, explore it and find out about its real needs and problems, and they do this with the right attitude for horizontal solidarity. This step satisfies greatly the need of young people for connection and belonging to a community.

**3. Analysing and selecting the need/issue of the community:** after the exploration of needs and issues in a community, the initiative group or the volunteers may select the problems they can deal with.
This step satisfies greatly the need of young people for autonomy and control, as there is plenty of room for them to decide what they can contribute.

**4. Planning the intervention and learning**: this stage is very important, because now the necessary decisions are made so that the intervention lies at the cross of community needs, the community's capacity and potential for growth/ autonomy, the learning needs of the young people and their existing competences.

# PLANING THE INTERVENTION AND THE LEARNING

A model based on the principle of Venn diagrams

COMMUNITY NEEDS

COMPETENCES OF YOUNG PEOPLE

CAPABILITIES AND POTENTIAL OF THE COMMUNITY

LEARNING NEEDS OF YOUNG PEOPLE

At the same time with the planning of the intervention there is a planning of what young people want to learn while working on resolving the problems or needs of their community. This step satisfies a lot the need of young people for autonomy and control, because they have a possibility to decide what they can contribute and what roles they can take on. Motivation increases substantially at this stage.

NOTE: So far, these steps are taken for ESC projects during the phase dedicated to the planning and writing of the project by the initiative group or an organisation. Once the project has been approved, the steps for establishing the group and getting a better understanding of the community (steps 1 and 2) are revisited.

**5. Implementing the intervention:** this involves the implementation of the main project activities by young people together with the beneficiaries while observing the practical principles of solidarity.

**6. Reflection and evaluation** with regard to the outcomes and the impact of the project: this involves the use of methods to evaluate the impact of the project, while actively involving the project beneficiaries in the evaluation.

**7. Reflection and evaluation** with regard to the learning outcomes: this involves the creation of a context where young people can reflect on what they have discovered and learned from their engagement.

**8. Celebration:** at this stage, the project achievements in terms of both contribution/service and learning are celebrated.

**9. Disemination:** this is the stage when you connect again to the community and a project multiplication effect is created in your community.

Steps 6, 7, 8 and 9 satisfy plentifully the need of young people for competence development and, especially during step 9, the need for connection and belonging to a community.

NOTE: Chapter 2 of the Guide will detail methods and activities that may be conducted with and by young people for going successfully through every step of the project cycle above. But this requires the active and lasting participation of young people or organisations providing them with support.

# STEPS OF SOLIDARITY PROJECTS

EXPERIENCE PRESSURES OR ISSUES AT SOCIETAL LEVEL

0

1 ESTABLISH THE INTERVENTION GROUP

2 EXPLORE THE COMMUNITY

3 ANALYSE AND SELECT AN ISSUE

4 PLAN THE INTERVENTION AND LEARNING

5 IMPLEMENT THE INTERVENTION

6 REFLECT AND EVALUATE THE IMPACT OF THE PROJECT AND THE LEARNING OUTCOMES

7

8 CELEBRATE

9 DISSEMINATE THE PROJECT OUTCOMES
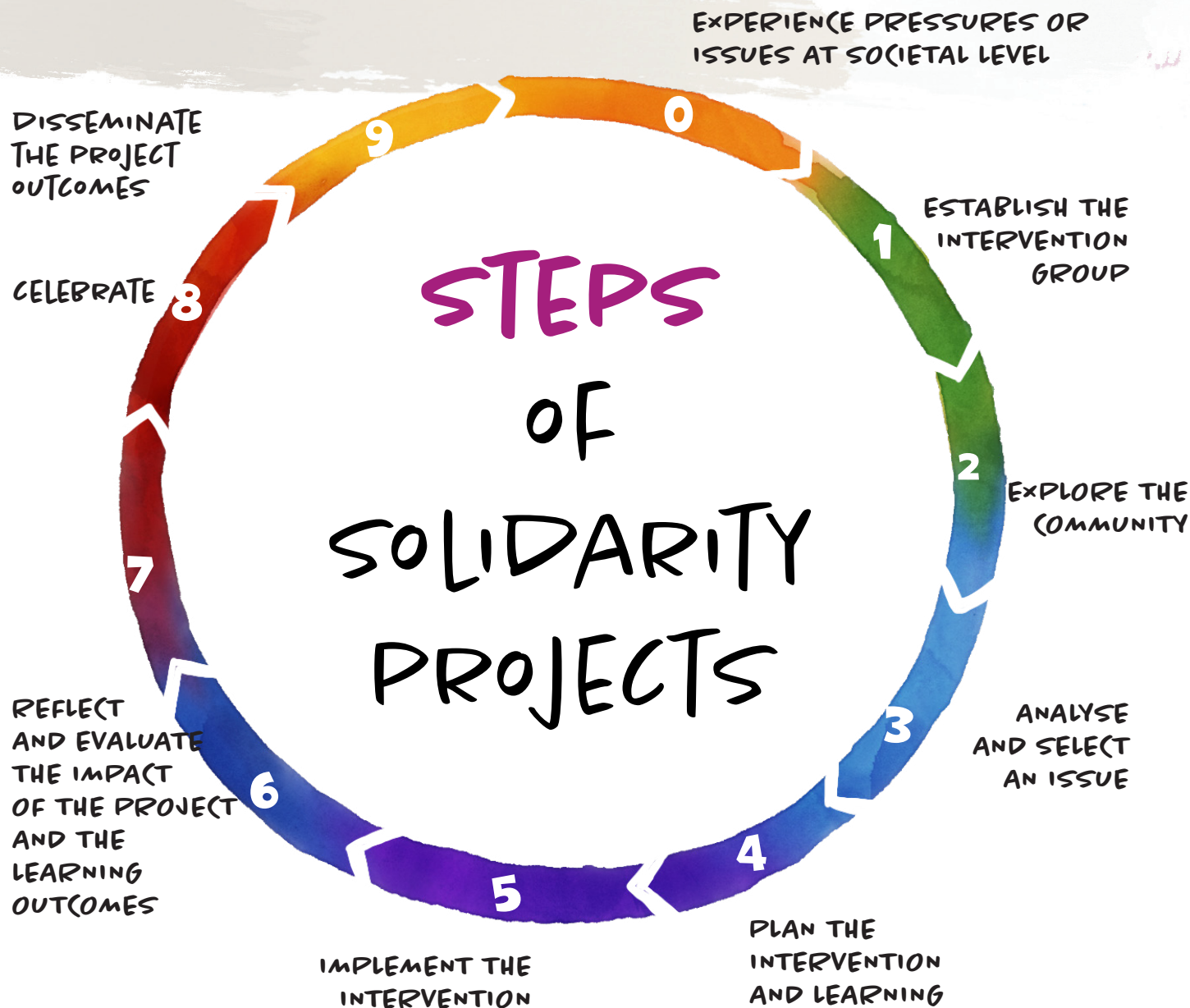
# O. PARTICIPATION OF YOUNG PEOPLE IN ESC PROJECTS

Participation is more than involvement in the decision-making. It is a manifestation of democracy. It is putting into effect the rights and obligations of young people to participate in the organisation of society. Participation is an indication of the civic attitude of youth and a factor in the development of their personality.

Accepting the opinion of young people as a value and as a critical element of the decisions and actions affecting them is essential in a truly democratic society.

Adults are often not ready or not willing to assign responsibilities to young people, using such arguments as the lack of competences or experience with the decision-making among young people, and also the lack of assumption of the decisions they make (responsibility).

For young people, participation is:
- a human right with a moral and legal dimension;
- an integral part of democratic principles;
- an indication of the civic attitude of young people and a specific indication of personality development;
- a means for the overall development of society.

**Attention!** The participation of young people is an integral part of ESC projects and, for this reason, simply promoting the participation of youth is not enough for supporting and validating this component in projects funded by ESC..

Activities that ignore
the participation of young people in the decision-making may lead to unfortunate situations in projects, such as:

- the adult discusses the issue with the young people and decides instead of them what needs to be done and how;
- the adult interprets the information or tampers with it so that the young people are no longer capable to make decisions by themselves;
- the adult indicates to the young people what they should do and how, and gives them no support afterwards etc.Finally, in a situation like those above, young people feel completely reluctant to participate.

A few principles
to be considered by the people involved in ESC projects (coaches, mentors or coordinators of organisations hosting volunteers or initiative groups) when they work with young people:

# 12 PRINCIPLES
## FOR YOUTH PARTICIPATION

**1.** Adults should not "lead"; they should support young people in making decisions, offering them guidance so that they can find solutions by themselves.

**2.** Everyone, therefore young people too, has the right to be heard, to express their opinions in matters concerning them..

**3.** Adults should not judge young people based on their sex, racial or ethnic origins, religion or belief, age, disability, sexual orientation or by their language, political opinion or any kind of opinion, social origin, wealth or genetic features, etc

**4.** They all are part of society and are participants with equal rights in social and political processes. In their work, adults should observe the principle of equality and work with all young people, irrespective of their race, sex, sexual orientation, age, social class, etc.

**5.** Young people, to be motivated, need to have their basic psychological needs satisfied: the need for connection, the need for autonomy, and the need for competence.

**6.** Trust young people. Educate their responsibility. Delegate them with tasks.

**7.** Facilitate an open dialogue between young people and their community!

**8.** Respect the right of young people to be wrong as being natural in the process of growing-up.

**9.** Give time to participation

**10.** Create relations based on trust in your collaboration.

**11.** Take the learning interests of young people into account.

**12.** The adult learns together with and from the young people they work with: the adult is open, honest, and democratic.

**Roger A. Hart,** using metaphorically the notion of "ladder" has developed a tool for analysing the level of participation among children and young people. This is a useful tool in the research, planning and evaluation of adults' activities with young people.

Experience shows us that if young people feel that a project is not theirs from its very beginning and are not involved in each of the 9 steps of a project, they will continue to be dependent on their facilitators/adults, without reaching their development potential and without being motivated in the long term to engage with the community. Next, you'll find a ladder of participation in projects depending on the type of adult (facilitator) – young person relation.

*It's important to understand "the ladder" so that adults may create conditions which are favourable to a youth participation level as high as possible.*

*Not all young people can be initiators in 100% of cases, but they may become engaged at different levels of participation.*
*It is important that the activity of an initiative group does not take place on the three lower steps: those of non-participation or false participation.*

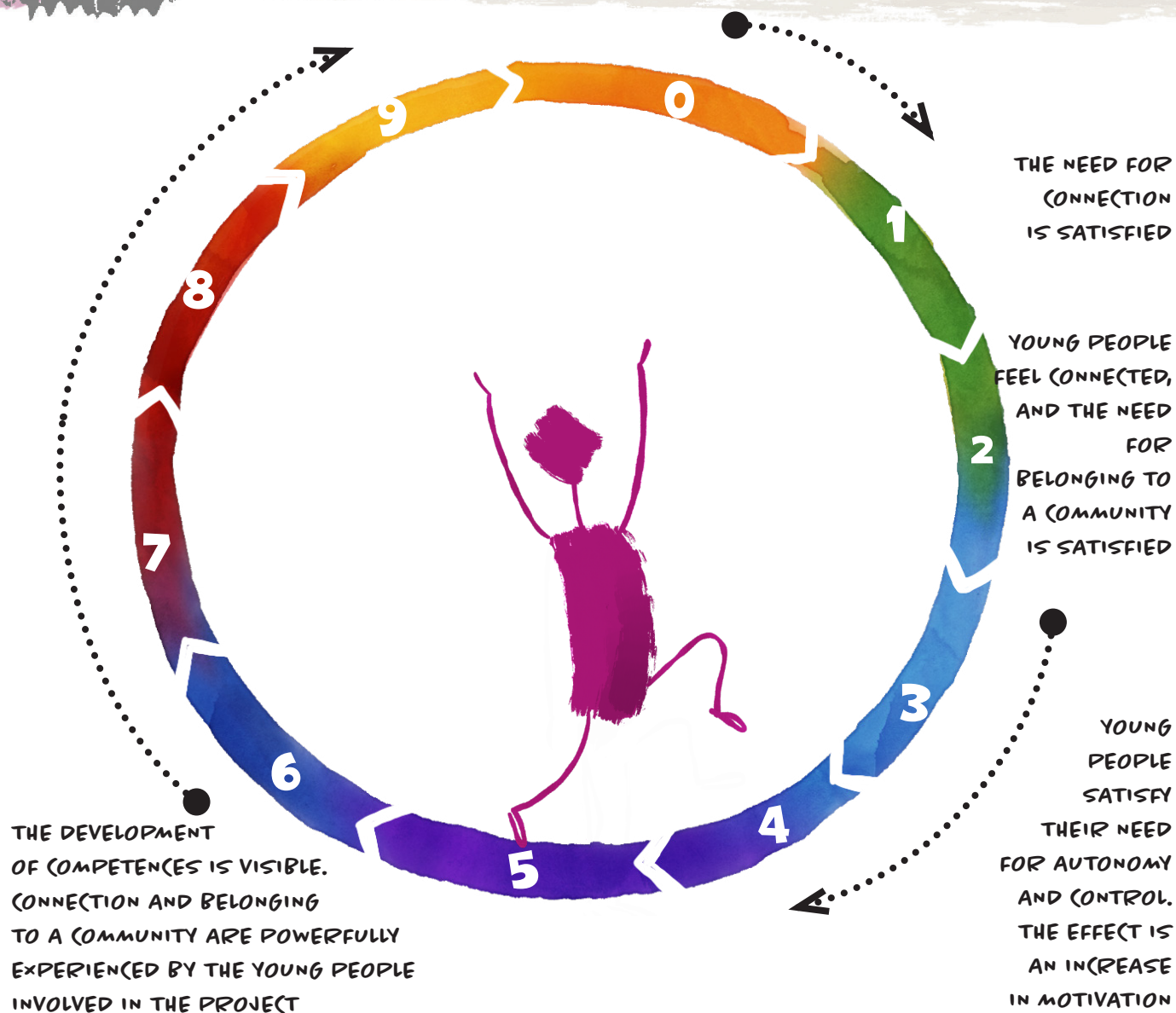| LADDER LEVEL | DESCRIPTION | DEGREE OF SATISFACTION OF PSICHOLOGICAL NEEDS necessary for a healty motivation to participate. |
|---|---|---|
| 1. Manipulation | Young people do not understand the projects they participate in and what they do. | |
| 2. Decoration | Youth participation is merely decorative. They do not understand their participation. The NGO runs the project. They are just occasional volunteers. | The need for connection is not satisfied. The need for autonomy/control is not satisfied. The need for competence is not satisfied. |
| 3. Tokenism | Young people participate, but their opinions have no real impact and are not taken into consideration. | **Very low motivation to participate.** |
| 4. Assigned, but informed participation | Young people do not participate in the planning, but they understand the actions proposed to them. They are simple volunteers. | The need for connection is satisfied at a minimum level. The need for autonomy/control is not satisfied. The need for competence is not satisfied. **Low motivation to participate.** |
| 5. Consulted and informed participation | Young people are consulted with regard to their participation and they get a project which is largely built on their ideas. Their ideas are taken into consideration. | The need for connection is satisfied at a middle level. The need for autonomy/control is satisfied at a minimum level. The need for competence is satisfied at a minimum level. **Minimum motivation to participate.** |
| 6. Participation in adult-initiated projects, but shared decisions with youth | Young people participate in the decision-making in a project initiated by adults and are asked what they have learned. | The need for connection is satisfied at a middle level. The need for autonomy/control is satisfied at a middle level. The need for competence is satisfied at a minimum level. **Average motivation to participate.** |
| 7. Participation in projects that are initiated and directed by the youth themselves | Young people initiate and direct the projects, while the adults participate facilitating the guiding and learning process. | The need for connection is satisfied at a high level. The need for autonomy/control is satisfied at a high level. The need for competence is satisfied at a high level. **High motivation to participate** |
| 8. Participation in projects initiated by youth, where the decisions are made by youth and shared with adults when they need guidance | Young people initiate and direct the projects. The young people decide to involve the adults in the decision-making process | The need for connection is satisfied at a maximum level. The need for autonomy/control is satisfied at a maximum level. The need for competence is satisfied at a maximum level. **Maximum motivation to participate.** |

*non-participation* (levels 1–3)

*Participation of young people in solidarity projects (adapted from Roger A. Hart)*

Steps of solidarity projects and
# FUNDAMENTAL NEEDS OF YOUNG PEOPLE

0
1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9

THE NEED FOR CONNECTION IS SATISFIED

YOUNG PEOPLE FEEL CONNECTED, AND THE NEED FOR BELONGING TO A COMMUNITY IS SATISFIED

YOUNG PEOPLE SATISFY THEIR NEED FOR AUTONOMY AND CONTROL. THE EFFECT IS AN INCREASE IN MOTIVATION

THE DEVELOPMENT OF COMPETENCES IS VISIBLE. CONNECTION AND BELONGING TO A COMMUNITY ARE POWERFULLY EXPERIENCED BY THE YOUNG PEOPLE INVOLVED IN THE PROJECT

# P. TYPES OF ESC PROJECTS

We can identify the following types of solidarity projects:

**.... depending on the level of intervention of the initiative group or the organisation:**
Solidarity projects with direct actions
Solidarity projects with indirect actions
Solidarity projects with an advocacy dimension

**.... depending on the topics approached, such as:**
social inclusion; climate change challenges; integration of migrants; preventing natural disasters; education; democratic participation; human rights; health and wellbeing; clean water and sanitation; decent work; responsible consumption; poverty; peace and justice; famine; green energy, etc.

**... depending on the time of intervention**
Projects with direct intervention actions
Project with prevention actions
Solidarity projects with mixed intervention *(prevention and intervention)*

## Solidarity projects with direct actions

A direct solidarity project is a project where the initiative group get involved personally, directly and frontally to meet a particular need of beneficiaries and of the community. *For example, the initiative group plans a day for planting trees in an area with many floods to reinforce the shores.*

Direct service has the benefit of high visibility and immediate reward for the initiative group, because they can immediately see the outcomes (the planted trees). This type of service is appropriate for initiative groups at their beginning as a group (but not obligatorily).

## Solidarity projects with indirect actions

Indirect projects involve channelling all the resources for providing indirect support to those in need. *For example, the initiative group organises a fund raising campaign in a large town in order to purchase some seedlings and plant them in their rural community which is affected by severe flood. They will mobilize many resources to raise funds and they will also involve communities which are not affected, as well as more than 100 members from the local community facing the problem.*

Such a project has more potential in terms of the effort-impact relation compared to direct projects. This happens because the initiative group also learn about the organisation of a campaign and about the importance of planting seedlings in a clearing area. This level of service is appropriate for initiative groups that are more mature in their engagement and have a minimum set of competences (but not obligatorily).

## A solidarity project with an advocacy dimension

engages the participants with the public education and political development of their community. The projects with an advocacy dimension approach deeper issues of the community, trying to remove their cause, not only the effects. *If an initiative group influences the adoption of a law which provides for a penalty for those doing illegal clearings, they are doing an advocacy project.*

These projects require much more effort, their effects are not visible in the short time, they usually become visible after a few years, but they have the biggest impact in relation to the effort involved.
Such a project involves the highest degree of challenge compared to any other type of action above and is more appropriate for more experienced initiative groups (but not obligatorily) or for those that want to learn about advocacy.

**Projects with direct intervention actions** are those with actions which primarily respond to urgent and punctual needs such as: rearrangements or constructions after accidents or natural disasters or of any other kind; the organisation of public events to deal with a local issue, etc.

**Projects with prevention actions** are those which train the community or the beneficiaries, through information and educational activities, to prevent negative situations in the future, such as: educational campaigns on topics like the environment, antidiscrimination, human rights, etc.

**Mixed projects** are those that have, with regard to a particular issue or need of the community, both direct intervention activities and prevention activities, in order to avoid the repetition of distressing or troublesome situations in the future.

*ATTENTION! This classification has only a guiding role for understanding better the level of intervention within a project.*

GROWing soliDARE!

## Q. WHAT IS NON AN ESC PROJECT?

~~PROJECT~~

An ESC project is not a context where you can do a project for your personal benefit or the benefit of your family.

An ESC project is not a cover for discriminating or abusing some people while creating inclusion contexts for others through your project.

An ESC project is not a place where the young people doing the project are not open to understand or do not apply in practice the principles of solidarity.

There is no solidarity in projects promoting anti-values such as hate, xenophobia, discrimination and racism.

An ESC project is not a context for the violation of human rights and manipulation.

An ESC project is not an opportunity to manipulate young people or to use them as a mask.

**RESOURCES**

Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union
https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/RO/TXT/?uri=CELEX:12012P/TXT
Treaty on European Union
https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/RO/TXT/HTML/?uri=CELEX:12012M/TXT&amp;from=EN
The EU Youth Strategy
https://ec.europa.eu/youth/policy/youth-strategy_en5
Revised European Charter on the Participation of Young People in Local and Regional Life, Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe
https://rm.coe.int/CoERMPublicCommonSearchServices/DisplayDCTMContent?documentId=090000168071b5c4

Carla Regina, Candelaria Ferrara, Service-Learning in Central and Eastern Europe Handbook for Engaged Teachers and Students, first edition, Ciudad Autónoma de Buenos Aires: CLAYSS, 2017, available online: http://www.clayss.org.ar/04_publicaciones/SL-EE_romanian.pdf

Roger A. Hart, *Children's Participation: The Theory and Practice of Involving Young Citizens in Community Development and Environmental Care*, UNICEF, New York, 1997.

National Resource Centre for Youth, Participarea copiilor și tinerilor (Children and Youth Participation), Chișinău, available online: https://drepturilecopilului.md/files/publications/Participare_ghid.pdf

Eurofound, *Social Inclusion of Young People*, Publications Office of the European Union, Luxembourg, 2015, available online: https://www.eurofound.europa.eu/sites/default/files/ef_publication/field_ef_document/ef1543en.pdf

# CHAPTER 2

# 53 METHODS
## FOR COMMUNITY-BASED
# PROJECTS

This section of the Guide includes short descriptions of some methods or manners which we considered as being relevant for a community-based intervention. If you want to apply one of the methods set forth, we encourage you to do some more research into the matter and, if possible, to take some courses on that topic.

Also, after each category of methods, we added to the suggested methods and/or manners some other sources for research and references, which you can use to start from in your own journey.

When you find yourself in a position to choose the method or methods for your intervention, we invite you to choose those which are suitable to the community, its need and the type of intervention.

It is important not to choose any methods only because they are "cool" and you like them and to choose those methods that can have some real impact and may facilitate the change process you envisage for the community. .

To make the difference between manners and methods more clear, we would like to offer you the following perspective, and some examples, for a better understanding. Therefore, a **manner** is the approach you use in order to achieve your goal.

A manner may be perceived as a direction you want to follow on your way to the identified solution. The way may have several routes, which all lead to the same destination, but propose different opportunities.

To identify the right manner, we suggest you to answer the question: *"What can we do to achieve the goal of the project?"*

Continuing the metaphor of the way, used before in explaining the manners, the **method** is the means chosen to travel the way. You may choose to walk; you may choose to drive or to fly. You may choose to go slowly and analyse every obstacle in your way or you may choose to go fast and notice nothing. You may use a clearly defined map and a well structured plan that tells you what steps to take to get from A to B, or you may walk and use a compass. It is your decision whether you use several methods on your way to fulfilling your goal or you'd rather have just one.

To identify the right method or methods, we suggest you, after answering the question *"What can we do?"* to answer the question *"How can we achieve our goal?"*

Example:
*Your purpose is to help children with disabilities from a rural community have access to education. To achieve your goal, you may choose, for example, to initiate an advocacy campaign whereby you ask the local council to lay down a procedure for helping children in the area (by building the infrastructure, allocating funds for transportation and equipment etc.).*

*The advocacy campaign is the manner you choose to achieve your purpose. In the advocacy campaign, you may use several methods and manners, for example: a legislative play (method), a photo-voice exhibition (method) and a media campaign (manner) with flyers and articles in the online media (media methods)*

WHAT CAN WE DO TO ACHIEVE OUR GOAL?

HOW CAN WE ACHIEVE OUR GOAL?

In the light of the above, in this chapter, we chose to present to you tested, structured and clear ways of intervention (generically called methods).

# CONTENTS

# A. COLLECTING INFORMATION IN THE COMMUNITY

One of the key elements to start with when you want to implement projects in a community is to identify the problem which is relevant to that community and suitable for being approached either by the group of youth you belong to, or by the organisation that conducts projects with the involvement of volunteers. In this subchapter you will find those methods which can guide you in your action of collecting information in the community, such as *observing the community, the interview* or *the questionnaire*.

How you will collect the information in your community determines the choice and the decision with regard to the issue which will be subsequently approached through a solidarity, volunteering, or traineeships and jobs ESC project.

## Why is it important to know our community?

Some of the major arguments, especially for those who want to get involved and serve their community, are:
- getting an overall picture of its strengths, and the challenges and issues it is faced with;
- perspectives on the community rules and unwritten norms, attitudes and opinions with regard to different community initiatives;
- a possibility to talk intelligently to its residents about the community issues, increasing the odds that different community initiatives are successful.

When we talk about collecting information, it's clear: the **community plays a key role**. It becomes that space where, through active engagement, we learn to respond to the needs and problems of our community and, at the same time, where we can grow.

**The term "community"** is usually associated with two elements which give it significance: (1) a group of people having something in common, and (2) a particular area or geographic location.

The term community also includes other elements besides the geographic area, such as the religious dimension, the economic, social, political, cultural interests, etc., as in:

- *local community* (village, town, regional capital, region)
- *ethnic community* (usually with reference to different races or ethnical groups)
- *religious community* (Orthodox, Catholic, Protestant, Muslim, etc. – with strict reference to the members of a religious denomination)
- *scientific or academic community* (with reference to the academic or scientific world)
- *community of visual artists* (with strict reference to visual artists)
- *community of businessmen* (with direct reference to businessmen)
- *virtual community* (with reference to people who communicate and keep connections especially via the internet, for personal, social, educational etc. reasons),
- *international community* – with a direct reference to larger groups of people or world governments; it usually involves the existence of a common stance on specific issues such as, for example, human rights, etc.

There are numerous definitions of the term 'community'. We propose the following definition of **"community" in the context of the European Solidarity Corps Programme.**

A group of people who
- live in a common geographic area;
- share a sense of belonging to that area and to that group;
- are animated by common needs, interests, beliefs, values and norms;
- participate in the life of the community and have a form of social and/or administrative organisation of their own.

When we consider a particular community, especially when that community is a large one, there are **several practical dimensions** which contribute to understanding it and they should be taken into account:

**Community history:** including its attestation in documents, important historical events, traditions, conflicts and achievements, etc.;

**Community geography:** geographic location, community size, topography, climate, neighbours and nearby towns, neighbourhoods and the most important streets, etc..;

**Demography:** the number of households, the number of inhabitants and their distribution across age groups, sex and gender, social, economic and marital status, size of families, ethnicities, spoken languages, etc.;

**Education:** the number of inhabitants with higher education, school education or with no formal education, the degree of qualification of the staff in institutions, the number of schools, etc.;

**Economy:** per capita income, the unemployment rate, local enterprises and businesses, employers, attractiveness and opportunities for investors, etc.;

**Institutions:** the mayor's office, the local council, schools, universities, libraries, cinema, theatre, hospitals;

**Tourist attractions:** historical buildings and monuments, churches and monasteries, parks and public gardens, historical and tourist attractions in the neighbouring areas, hotels, museums;

**Infrastructure:** roads, bridges, transportation (local public transportation, railways, airports, etc.), electricity, mobile/fixed telephony, etc.;

**Community leaders** - formal (elected or appointed) or informal (activists, businessmen, physicians, etc.);

**Community culture:** rules and traditions the community abides by, rules of conduct, etc.;

**Existing groups** – formal or informal, organisations, associations, religious denominations, youth clubs, local committees.

## Where can we look for information about the community?

There are numerous sources of information which allow you to get a picture of the community, each of them offering a different perspective, depending on the reference point:

**Members** of the examined community – the members of the group targeted directly or indirectly.

**Local media**

**Elected officials** – representatives in the Chamber of Deputies or in the Senate, members of the Local Council – may provide information on the situation of the region they represent, the legislative initiatives and development opportunities in the region.

**Representatives of different local institutions** – Mayor's Office, Prefecture, Police, School Inspectorate, cultural institutions, etc. – may provide information about the field they represent.

**Chamber of Commerce and Industry** – a representation forum for businessmen – where one can find information both about business opportunities and the possibility to interact with local businessmen.

**Non-governmental organisations** – they are institutions working independently from the government and pursuing to carry out activities of a general interest or in the interest of local collectivities.

## How do we collect information about a community?

The most usual ways to collect information about a community are: *direct observation – a community tour, opinion polls, individual or group interviews with members or representatives of the community, searching the archives or public records (such as the State Archives, the library, the local press, etc.).*

## What information can we get from such an analysis?

*Determination of the* economic, social, cultural, and religious *context*
*Identification of the* existing *resources*
*Evaluation of the infrastructure* existing in the area
*Identification of the needs of the population* and the existing issues (social, environmental, related to health, education, economic, cultural, etc.)

## What methods and tools may be used to collect information in a community?

Next, we present a number of methods, with a mention that the list may be extended:
- *Observation*
- *Questionnaire*
- *Interview.*

## What you can gain as an initiative group during the information phase with regard to the needs/issues of your community:

*Getting connected* to the reality of the community and its members.
*Deepening your understanding* of the community, its culture, and the relations established inside it.
*Identifying* the strengths, needs, issues, vulnerabilities and resources of the community.

# A.1.OBSERVING THE COMMUNITY

Observation is one of the most used methods for data collection. Observing the community is a practical and entertaining way to see ourselves what is the community like and what happens in the community. The greatest advantage of this method is that it is possible to know the community through direct contact and observing it in its manifestations.

**Duration:**
At least 1-2 hours, depending on the size and type of community.

**Supplies:** observation forms, pens, cameras, voice recorder (optional), a community map with predetermined tracks.

**Preparing and applying the method:**
Before going to the community, it's recommended to draw up an "Observation Form".
To simplify the information collection process with this method, you may draw up a form including the aspects of interest to you:
- the place or places where you are doing the observation (make a list of places where you identified issues you would like to examine);
- the span for doing the observation (for example, for a week, a day, a few hours);
- how you take down the observations (taking notes, taking pictures, video recording, etc.).

In a large town, the activity should be reduced to a particular zone or a neighbourhood which is familiar to you or where you want to have the intervention as an initiative group.

Therefore, before embarking on your tour, mark out a few routes that can be covered by the group in maximum two hours. Consider those aspects concerning the accessibility and the safety of your group. If you have cameras or smart phones, use them to take evidence of the observed aspects.

During the observation, it is important to write down both the issues and the resources and potential of the community, so you can have a list of positive things you noticed in the community. You should pay attention in your observation both to obvious problems, and to less obvious ones. Keep a list of the zones that need improvement.

It is important to talk to the people – to explain to them that you want to do a project and that you are looking for ideas or ways to work with the community.

# OBSERVATION FORM

Example

| ASPECTS TO BE OBSERVED | STRENGHTS | IDENTIFIED NEEDS OR ISSUE |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |

**IMPORTANT**

Once you have completed the observation, put all the information together and conduct an analysis, so you can make the best decision about how and where you want to intervene.

The Observation Form could include the following elements to be identified in the community: →

**Housing.** What are the age and the condition of housing in the observed neighbourhood?

**Accessibility for people with disabilities.** Are public and commercial buildings accessible to people with disabilities – access ramps, levelled entrances, toilets, streets, video or subtitled material, etc.?

**The quality of the environment.** How many usable green areas are there? Are they spread all over the community? Is there any smog or fog? Is there any smell of smoke, trash, exhaust gases, chemicals, industrial residues etc. in the air?

**Traffic.** How congested is the traffic in the community? Is it mostly commercial and industrial – microbuses, trucks, etc. – or is it rather due to private cars? Are there any traffic jam hours? Are there many bikes in the traffic? Are there any cycle tracks?

**Public areas.** Are there any public areas where people can gather? Are they well maintained? Are they provided with space for rest, with plants and trees, and do they have an attractive design? Is there any diversity?

**Parks.** Are the parks used by a variety of people? Are they well maintained? Are there any sports facilities? Are there any playgrounds?

**Culture and entertainment.** Are there any museums, libraries, theatres, restaurants, clubs, sports grounds, historical sites, etc.? Are they accessible to all the members of the community (located in the centre area, accessible by public transportation)? Do they reflect the culture of all members of the community?

**Street landscape.** Street landscape is the environment created by streets and sidewalks, buildings, trees, furniture, etc. Are there any trees and/or plants? Are there sidewalks? Are the building facades and the shop firms attractive and hospitable? Are the streets and the sidewalks clean? Are there any rubbish bins? Are there any benches?

**Businesses.** What kind of businesses are there? Are there active or just empty windows? Is there a mixture of big and small businesses? Are there any shops and supermarkets, pharmacies and other shops providing the necessary supplies in all parts of the community?

**Community and public services.** Are there any organisations and providers of community services – mental health centres, canteens, shelters for the homeless people, social help offices, etc.? Are they concentrated in a particular area? Are they accessible by public transportation?

**Community organisations.** What are the proofs indicating the presence of such organisations in the community? Are there any clubs for services? Are there any other organisations focused on community issues (environmental, sports or recreational activities, socialising, etc.)?

**A "sense" of community.** What is your overall perception of the community?
**Other observations**, strengths or vulnerabilities?

# A.2. QUESTIONNAIRE

The questionnaire is another tool which may be used to get valuable information from your community (opinions on issues, needs or solutions).

**Rules for constructing a questionnaire:**
- depending on its purpose (what you want to find out), you determine the minimum and possible number of people to be questioned;
- the members of the initiative group address the same questions to a larger number of people (personally or online);
- the questions are rather general and look for people's opinions;
- sometimes, closed questions (with YES/NO answers) may be used too;
- the people to be questioned don't have to be experts; they should be  as different as possible and with diverse social backgrounds;
- it should be easily understood by all those who will answer it;
- the respondents are supposed to be able to answer the questions (to have knowledge of the matter);
- it should not generate a tendency to misrepresent the answers;
- the data gathered from questionnaires are collected and analysed in order to make the best intervention decisions.

Duration:
it depends on the number of questions and the number of respondents.
Supplies:
paper, pens, telephones, website, application (that depends on whether it is applied physically or online).

You can use a questionnaire for **multiple purposes:**
**To identify** what are the stringent needs or problems of the community – if applied before or at the time of observing the community.
**To confirm** whether the issue chosen by the initiative group needs attention/ intervention – if an issue has already been chosen by the initiative group and you need a confirmation/invalidation of their choice.
**To decide** which of two issues/solutions is the right one – if you have two issues/solutions and you are not convinced which is relevant to the community and to the initiative group.

**Advantages of using a questionnaire:**
- it does not require significant financial resources;
-  it does not require much effort from
the person applying it;
- it may include standardised answers to make it simple to be completed.

*"The interview is a conversation, usually between two people, to gather information to the benefit of an unseen audience. The interview is often an exchange of information which may give rise to a level of enlightenment which none of the parties could have reached by itself."* (Ken Metzler, 1986)

a guide to the implementation of projects in your community
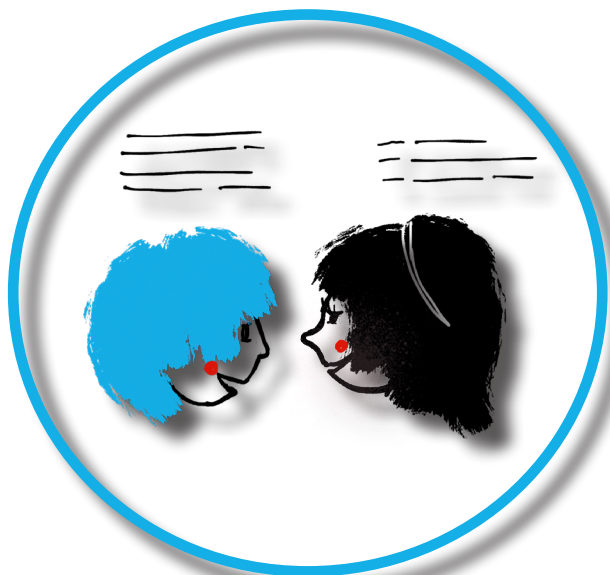
# A.3. INTERVIEW

The interview is a method for collecting information which provides multiple perspectives on a subject matter, given the diversity of the interviewed voices.

The **purpose** of an interview at this stage of a project is to get information, as specific as possible, about a situation or a context, and/or to identify potential solutions to an issue of the community, from experts or key people in the community

**Duration:**
It depends on the number of questions and the number of respondents.

**Supplies:**
paper, pens, telephones (that depends on whether it is applied physically or online).

## Usual types of interview:

*Face-to-face* – even if it takes more time and energy, it has the advantage of the possibility to take into consideration also the non-verbal communication.

*By phone* – it is faster, but there is a risk that the interlocutor suddenly hangs up; this is the most common and practical type.

*Via email* – it is also quick, you get more time, but you can no longer intervene with additional questions to help the interviewee when they don't understand a question.

## Rules of an interview:

- One or maximum two people may be interviewed at the same time.

- There are more questions and they are more detailed than in a questionnaire.

- The interviewer needs to be well prepared for the interview.

- The questions are prepared in advance, but the interviewer has to listen carefully to the answers and come with additional questions.

## Steps in an interview:

### a. Choosing the topic and the interlocutor.

You must always choose the right person for the topic of the interview. At first sight, one could say you cannot choose a doctor for an interview about education at school, or a teacher to talk about a flu epidemic, but in the context of a community, it is possible that precisely these persons can offer a valuable and relevant perspective for your project.

### b. Preparing the interview

#### Research.

Before the interview, you should do some research on the interviewee and the topic for discussion. This will help you ask pertinent questions.

**Plan of questions.** It is very important to prepare the questions in advance and write them on a piece of paper. If you rely on your inspiration at the moment, you may lose the logical sequence of questions. A number of 4-5 basic questions is the most appropriate.

**Setting the meeting.** No matter if the interview is by phone, email or otherwise, you should communicate to the interviewee: the topic, the venue (if the interview is not conducted via email or phone), the day, the time and the duration of the interview, how the collected data will be processed and, possibly, the reason for which you appealed to that interviewee.

### c. The proper interview

You should observe some basic rules:

**Mention the purpose** of the interview and how the information will be used, and reassure the interviewee that his/her name and answers will not be publicly released.

**Listen**, you are there to find out as much information as possible, therefore listening is the most important part of the interview.

**Do not interrupt your interlocutor**, let them enjoy giving you the information, let them talk. Observe the time limit; ideally, the interview should not last for more than 15-20 minutes.

At the end, **thank** the interviewee for their support.
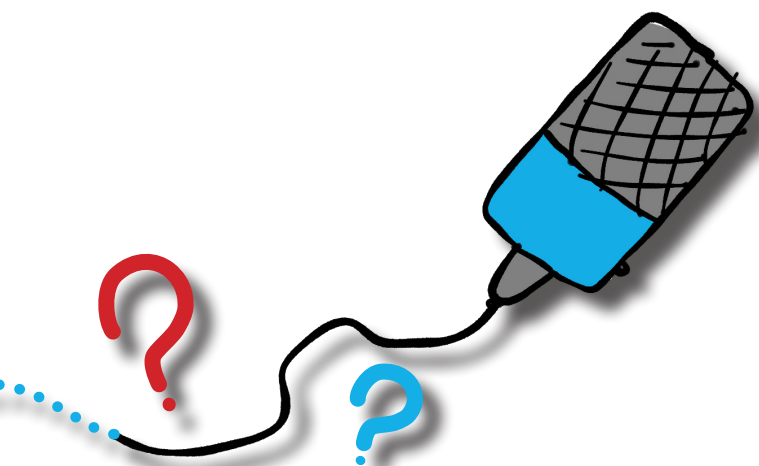
*Here is a set of questions you can ask in an interview:*

*What is your position/role in community x/institution x?*
*What do you like most in our community?*

*What challenges in the community affect you directly? How?*

*What can be done to solve this problem?*

*What do you think we could do about this problem? What could you do about this problem?, etc*
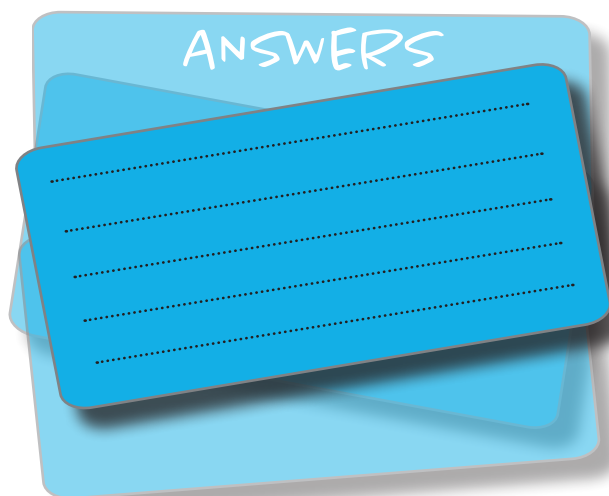
### d. Editing and summarising the answers

After completing the interview, you need to process the information you gathered: keep only the important elements of the discussion if you're trying to identify a community need. You will draw a scale where you will insert the answers from all the interviewees.

Moreover, the interview is also very appropriate for another step in the implementation of a solidarity project, i.e. the one identified as **Step 6 - Evaluation of the impact and project outcomes**. A specific way for its application is available in this Guide in subchapter **J. Participative evaluation within the community**, method J.5 A dialogue with the community.

**RESOURCES:**

Michael Bopp, Judie Bopp, *Recreating the World – A Practical Guide to Building Sustainable Communities,* Four World Press, Calgary, 2006.

Chris Hampton, Catie Heaven, *Understanding and Describing the Community,*
http://ctb.ku.edu/en/table-of-contents/assessment/assessing-community-needs-and-resources/describe-the-community/main

*13 most important characteristics or Elements of Community,*
http://www.yourarticlelibrary.com/society/13-most-important-characteristics-or-elements-of-community/6231/

Tiberiu Culiduc, Conectează-i la comunitate (Connect Them to Their Community), Fundaţia Noi Orizonturi, 2017,
https://www.noi-orizonturi.ro/resurse/Service%20Learning%20la%20clasa/Conecteaza-i-la-comunitate_2017.pdf

# B.
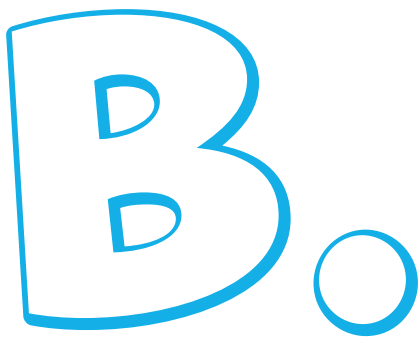
# AN ANALYSIS OF THE COMMUNITY

Once you have collected the information from your community, you need a detailed analysis of this information and a thorough exploration of the community in which you want to intervene. Exploring the community gives you the opportunity to connect with it and identify its actual issues. Without this step, it is more difficult to make out a case for the necessity and the type of intervention you want in that community, and to successfully implement an ESC project.

There are several ways in which you can approach this undertaking, each of them requiring the involvement of a group of people. Next, you will learn about three methods designed to help you conduct a deep, realistic and detailed analysis of the community in which you want to intervene:

*Community Map*
*SWOT Analysis*
*An analysis of media articles*

# B.1. COMMUNITY MAP

The Community Map is an inventory, planning and community analysis tool, which helps you put down on paper, in a graphic format, the assets and the strengths of the community, its problems, needs and shortcomings.
The Community Map method helps you organise the information you collected with the working group (young people) in an analysis of the community at that time.

The **advantages** offered by the map are that once you make it you can turn to it when you want to identify and choose the next issues or needs that may be solved through interventions specific to the European Solidarity Corps projects. The community map may be updated every time you start a new project.
It is basically a graphic illustration of the community, which contains information gathered from it: through systematic observations carried out during the community tour, from the interviews conducted with different members of the community, through surveys and polls or other methods used to collect information.

**Duration**: between 45 and 90 minutes (if you had an observation of the community in advance).
**Supplies**:
flipchart paper, markers, coloured pencils, watercolours and brushes, post-its, scissors and glue, etc., or, for those with IT skills, a tablet or a laptop and a software to create the map electronically.

Drawing up the community map requires the involvement of the entire initiative group and/or volunteers in the ESC project. Besides, other representatives of the community may be invited to contribute to the map.
The **venue**: an indoor area, airy, light, provided with tables, chairs, a flipchart stand, a projector, music, etc. You also need a facilitator of the analysis process, who can be a young person from the initiative group or a coach.

**To be successful**,
your community map should:
- lead to the identification of resources and how they are used, including any possible barriers to accessing them;
- allow for a comparison to be made between the perceptions of those involved with regard to different aspects in the community;

- encourage communication between the participants involved in its development;
- generate ideas and urge for action to be taken;
- make it possible to identify the needs easily, prioritise them and choose one (at a later stage) to serve as the basis for the next ESC project

**Preparing and facilitating the activity:**

In drawing up the map, you will use previously collected information (observing the community, an observation guide, interviews, polls and group discussions), which highlights:
- important characteristics like the community boundaries, roads, housing areas;
- important places: the market, the school, the community centres, the parks, water sources, institutions of public administration, hospitals, etc.;
- places where people/youth spend their time;
- places which they enjoy or dislike;
- places you consider safe or unsafe;
- resources in the community;
- the ethnic distribution across its territory;
- areas with issues;
- the lack of some strengths (no market in a residential area or no garbage containers, etc.).

**The geographic mapping of the community involves:**

- drawing on a sheet of paper: roads, paths, bridges and gates; houses, schools, health centres, monasteries, churches, other institutions and organisations; shops and markets; parks and entertainment venues, etc.;
- identifying also the assets and the strengths which these institutions, structures and people ensure for their community; and
- marking out these assets with a specific colour.

# COMMUNITY MAP
Example

CENTRAL PARK

CHURCH

FACTORY

CITY HALL NEIGHBOURHOOD

SCHOOL

PARKING

SUPERMARKET

LIBRARY
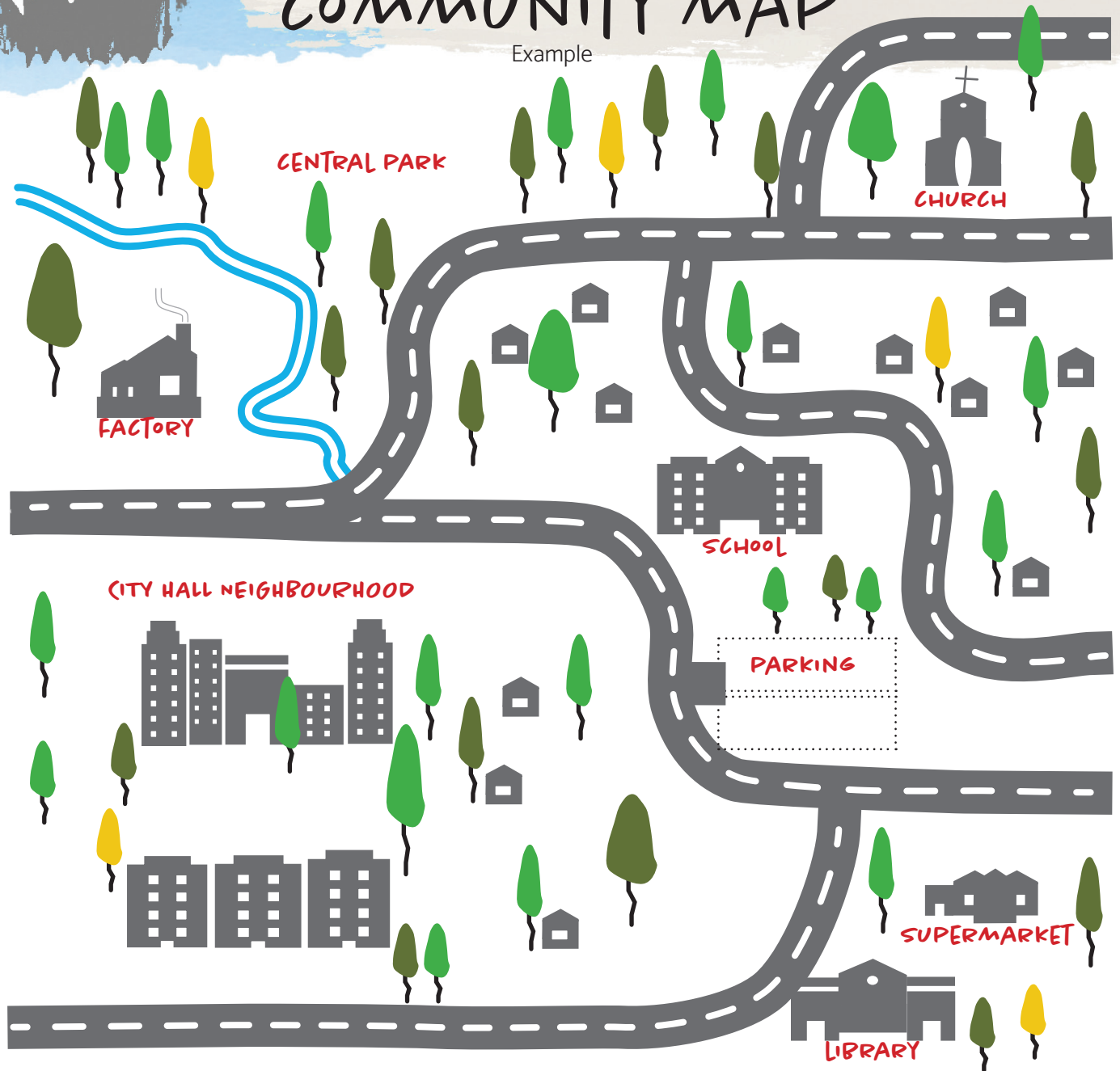
At the time when the map is drawn and its positive characteristics have been identified, **add to it the less pleasant aspects and issues**:
- identify inclusively the absence of some strengths, besides the presence of some issues – for example, the map could indicate the lack of a market in a residential area, making the supply of foods to its residents difficult;
- mark out these needs with a colour, different from the one used before.

Keep in mind that not all needs or weaknesses are issues. Issues have a negative impact on people or on the community as a whole.

In any case, even if a community has no issues, there may be aspects which could be improved.

After you have completed the map, **reflect on the aspects which you consider relevant in the view of the community**.
You may use the following questions to guide you:
- *Which of the needs of the community may be approached with an ESC project?*
- *Why this issue should be a priority?*
- *Which are some strengths/assets of the community that could help you in solving the problem identified as being a priority?*
- *Which of these problems could be approached by you as a youth group?*
- *Which of these problems motivate you most in terms of what you can learn while implementing the project?*

**Talk and decide together with your group on a single common idea to be approached in a solidarity project!**

Make sure that the problem identified may be presented realistically, based on the available information and your skills.

Argue and explain why you have chosen that issue, as well as why you thought it would lead to the initiation of a solidarity project.

Keep the maps, notes, images, photos and other documents you created, because they may be used in the project planning and implementation process.

*Do not forget you still have to go through a few steps until you complete the ESC project! This is just a stage at its beginning (the second step of the solidarity project).*

# B.2. SWOT ANALYSIS

**Duration**:
between 90 and 120 minutes
**Supplies**::
flipcharts, paper, markers, pens, colours, etc.

**SWOT is an acronym for**:
Strenghts, Weaknesses , Opportunities and Threats.

The concept of SWOT strategic analysis comes from some research carried out between 1960 and 1970 at Stanford Research Institute in USA, made popular by Albert Humphrey in the 60s.

The SWOT analysis is a tool for strategic analysis, flexible and easy to be applied, which an organisation or a project team may use to identify the most appropriate directions for action at a particular point. Any new project should be based on such an analysis, in order to determine the extent of its opportunity and feasibility.

A SWOT analysis is a framework for decision-making which facilitates a focus on the important elements in strategic terms and the projection of an overall vision on the organisation, team or the community.

The **purpose of the SWOT analysis,** in the context of solidarity projects, is to make a strategic plan or to find a solution to a problem, while taking into consideration the internal and external factors of a team of youth, an organisation or a community.

The **main advantage** of this analysis is that a consensus is reached between the members of the team or community. After they decide that they agree on the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats affecting the organisation, the team or the community, it is much easier to identify the appropriate solutions.

The SWOT analysis is conducted during the first phases of designing a project, so that the elements of the analysis may be used as a basis for the project plan and also subsequently in the project.

We recommend the use of this method for youth groups or organisations that are experienced, have implemented projects for and/or with young people or communities.

**Preparing and facilitating method:**

The SWOT analysis starts with an inventory of the qualities and internal weaknesses of the organisation/ team/community and continues with the analysis of opportunities and external threats which may affect the organisation/team/community.

Draw the table attached to this method on a board and display it so it is visible to all the participants.

After clarifying the significance of each zone, you may start to fill in the table, using also the suggested questions which may help you identify the most important factors for each quadrant. The team conducting the analysis must be prepared for an industrious process, where conflicting ideas may also arise, and for this reason it is recommended to have a facilitator of the meeting, an agenda and to use the brainstorming technique as far as necessary.

A good SWOT analysis starts with asking the right questions. This is why you also have a few guiding questions for each quadrant.
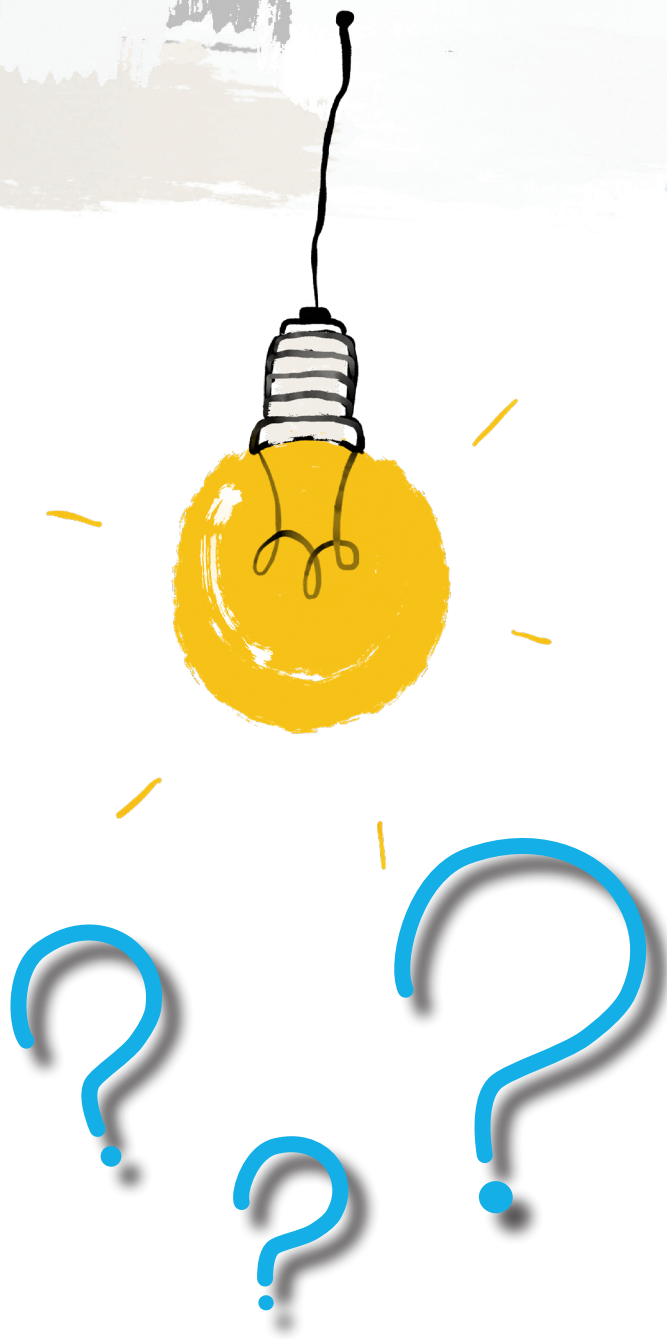
**Internal analysis:**

List the strengths (S) and the weaknesses (W). Several perspectives are useful. Strengths and weaknesses are "static" concepts, based on the descriptive parameters of a community over a determined period of time. They stand for **what is**. One critical question to be answered is: *What does strength mean for a community?*

**External analysis:**

Consider the main external elements (e.g. culture, economy, health, sources of funding, demography etc.) and identify those which can be opportunities (O) or threats (T) to your organisation, team or community. Opportunities and threats regard the future and refer to choices to be made by the people involved in the planning process or the community as a whole. They stand for **what will be**.

***Attention!***

*A simple, yet useful, rule for a correct SWOT analysis is to check whether there is a clear distinction between strengths and opportunities.*
*There should be a clear difference between these two parameters.*

**Strengths:** resources of the community, positive attributes of the people, their reputation or capabilities, etc. :

*For which aspects is the community recognised as being very good? Which could be the things that need improvement in this community? Which could be those unique characteristics of the community? Which are the financial aspects the community is dealing with? Which are the resources of the community (human, physical, financial)?*

**Weaknesses:** They are at the opposite end compared to strengths; they stand for shortcomings in the local framework. Weaknesses could include the lack of experience, limited resources, the lack of access to technology or the lack of community services, a low capacity, a poor service provision or a faulty positioning in people's perception of this community, etc.

*What should be improved at community level? What advantage has our community from its geographic location? What resources are missing in the community? What should the community avoid so it does not repeat mistakes of the past? What are the qualities and reputation of the community? What are the disadvantages of the community related to its geographic location?*

**Opportunities:** Opportunities are those conditions, current or potential, which represent an advantage for the community or the organisation.
*What resources may be drawn from outside the community? What changes outside the community may be exploited to its benefit? What partnerships/ alliances outside the community could contribute to improving the situation?*

**Threats:** Threats include factors out of control, which could keep the organisation or the community in a risk zone. They are external factors – you have no control over them, but they are factors which you can anticipate if you have an emergency plan to prevent and solve them. Threats also include the negative implications of adopted measures. External effects may somehow generate threats. Moreover, there is no exclusive correspondence between strengths and opportunities, on one hand, and between weaknesses and threats, on the other hand. Sometimes, some strength elements may lead to threats.
*Which external obstacles prevent the community from solving its problems? What are the resources the community can't get?*

## The interpretation of a SWOT analysis

is an important step of the method, which is overlooked many times. After getting all the information from the SWOT analysis, you need to make decisions on what you will do next.

For this purpose, the following steps are necessary:

### 1. Remember!

Build on Strengths.
Minimise Weaknesses.
Seize Opportunities.
Counteract Threats.

- Quadrant 1 (the intersection of Strengths and Opportunities): the decision concerns the efforts to be made to maximise the strengths and so to get the most out of opportunities.;

- Quadrant 3 (the intersection of Strengths and Threats): determine whether overcoming the threat with the forces of the team, organisation, or community is realistic. Usually, it is considered inefficient to keep some of strengths as long as the context has no opportunity to offer.

### 2. Determine the correspondences between quadrants.

Draw a new table with four quadrants and display it next to the board with the information of the SWOT analysis.

The following may be an example of S-O correspondence: *Strength (S): members with experience in project design and writing financing proposals; Opportunity (O): the ESC financing programme.*

### 3. Determine the directions for action.

- Quadrant 2 (the intersection of Weaknesses and Opportunities): examine whether the identified opportunities are sufficiently important to invest in transforming weaknesses into strengths. If yes, you may also use another strength or opportunity for that purpose;

- Quadrant 4 (the intersection of Weaknesses and Threats): all those involved should know that there is a serious and urgent problem in such an area, which may jeopardize the functioning of the team, organisation, or community.

### 4. Urgently identify solutions to remove the danger!

# B.3. AN ANALYSIS OF MEDIA ARTICLES

It involves an analysis of printed/online local publications, and also of radio and TV stations, so as to identify positive or negative aspects of the community.

**Duration:** variable, depending on the period of issue determined as being relevant for the analysis and the scope of the material to be analysed;

**Supplies:** a flipchart, paper for writing, markers, pens, coloured pencils, access to the local written or online media.

In your **research of articles and reports** in the media, it is necessary to consider and start with the answers to the following questions:

- *Which are the sources of information in the community? What sources may be regularly followed? What are the criteria for determining the relevance of a source?* (the number of consumers, how often the information is updated, their professionalism)
- *Are there any daily/weekly local news on community issues?*
- *Which are the most frequently signalled issues?* (environmental, related to violence, health, human rights, etc.)
- *Are there any mentions of local initiatives to solve the problems? Is the community involved? How?*
- *What are the solutions proposed by different organisations, as depicted in the local media?*
- *Do the articles mention any legislative aspects concerning those issues?*
- *Are there any articles with examples of projects and good practices?*

**In the analysis of media articles**

it's important to establish some criteria that may be helpful in the phase in which the priority needs/issues of the community are determined.

Therefore, you may consider:
- the number of people affected by the identified issue, the manner in which some issues and/or events are reported;
- the topics covered (environment, health, violence, education, social, etc.);
- the frequency of that issue/topic (number of published articles, news released).

At the end, you may select for the project either the frequent problems, or those requiring an urgent i ntervention, or those which had a special emotional impact on young people/community members, or the topics which answer to a learning need, or the taboos.

A model table for recording the outcomes of media monitoring:

| NAME OF THE ARTICLE | NAME OF THE PUBLICATION/ AUTHOR | DATE OF ISSUE | TOPICS APPROACHED |
|---|---|---|---|
|  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |
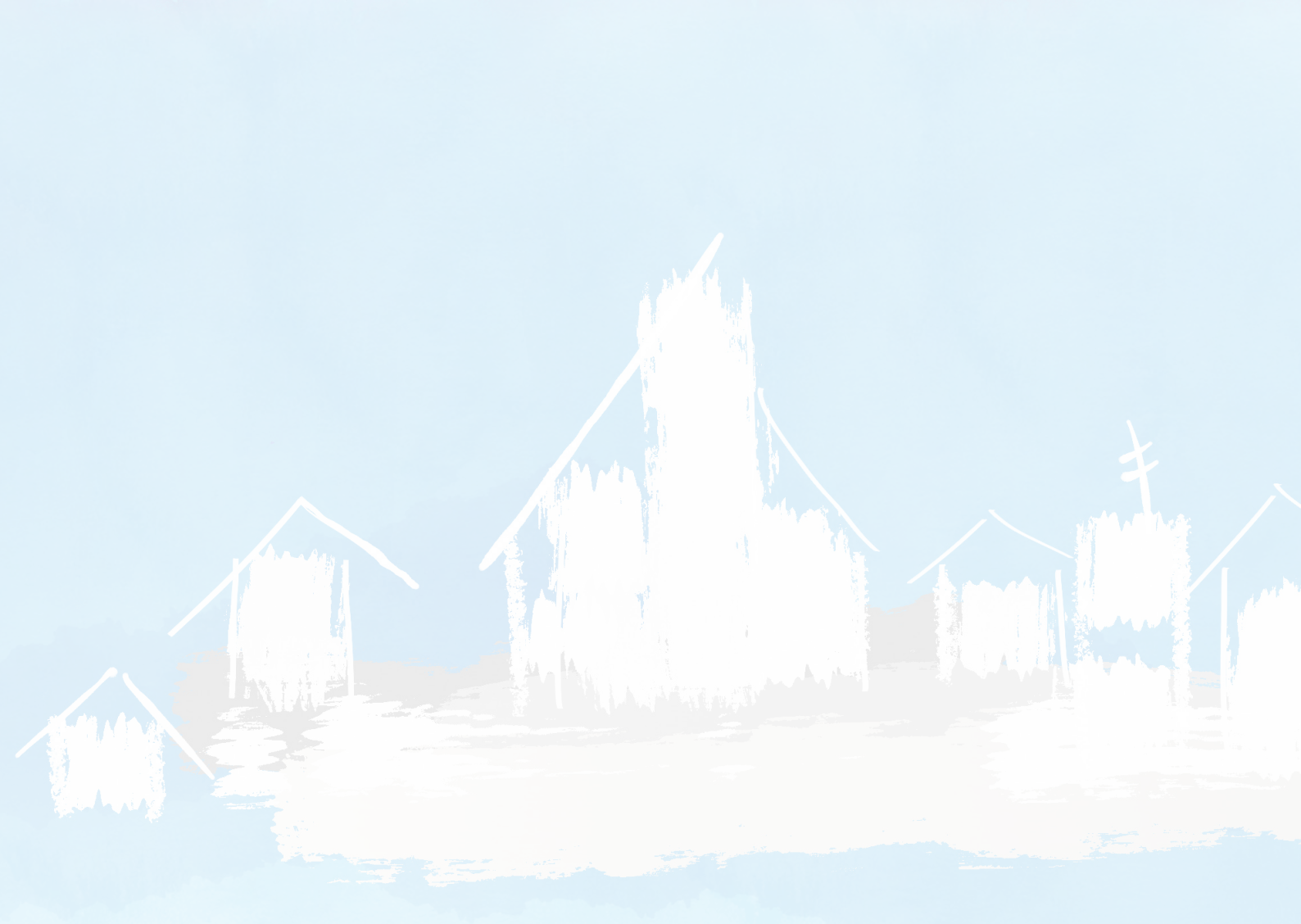
**RESOURCES:**

Tiberiu Culidiuc (coordinator), Maria Butyka, Kelly Organ, *Curriculum Cetăţenie Activă-module obligatorii, (Active Citizenship Curriculum – Compulsory Modules)*, 3rd edition, Fundaţia Noi Orizonturi, 2016.

Diane Dorfman, *Mapping Community Assets Workbook*, Asset-Based Community Development Institute, 1998, http://www.abcdinstitute.org/docs/Diane%20 Dorfman-Mapping-Community-Assets-WorkBook(1)-1.pdf)

# C.
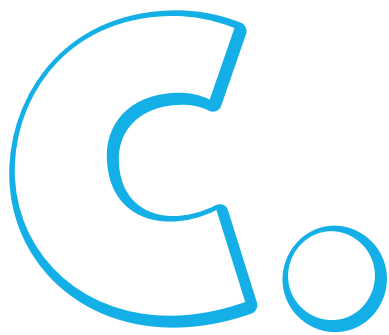
# CHOOSING A COMMUNITY ISSUE

In the previous chapters, you have learned about methods for collecting information in the community and analysing the issues and the needs of the community, such as observations, interviews, questionnaires, or the community map.

Once you have collected this information and analysed it, the natural continuation is a decision on the appropriate issue to be approached by an ESC supported project.

Please remember that the decision-making process in a group is very important for the motivation of the team, because the members of the youth group satisfy, through decision-making, their need for autonomy and control.

In this subchapter, you will find several methods which can help you select the problem to be approached, together with your group, in an ESC project:
*Multiple voting*
*Decision matrix, and*
*Preparing the decision.*

The **quality of the group decision** on what community issue to approach depends on:

- a focus on the purpose – in our context, this overlaps with the principles of solidarity projects below;

- the availability of resources for solving the issue;

- planning the time you have at your disposal for approaching the issue;

- the feasibility or the degree of realism in approaching the problem;

- the adequacy for the initiative group: their competences, motivation and capacity for learning and implementation.

There are **various ways to make decisions** on a project choice:

- *a decision made in the absence of an answer from the group members*: when the members of the group do not respond and someone has to make a decision;

- *a decision made by a formal authority*: when the group does not play a role in the decision-making, and the coordinator makes the decision;

- *a decision made by a majority*: when more than 50% of the group members have the same opinion;

- *a decision made by a minority*: some members of the team have got the relevant information, the others don't have access to it and, in this case, the engagement of a majority is no longer necessary;

- *a decision made by consensus*: the opinions differ within the group, but they have been listened to and discussed; the members of the group feel that they have an opportunity to influence the decision or to support the decision that is made;

- *a decision made by unanimous voting*: all the members of the team uphold the same opinion

**In making a decision on the project idea** you should also consider the compliance with the ESC principles, also mentioned in Chapter 1 of this Guide, namely:

1. Focusing on the efficient response to a need/issue of the community, together with the community, not only for the community.

2. Cooperation instead of "help".

3. Recognising the project participants' dignity as equals, irrespective of their socio-economic status.

4. Building mutual, equality-based relations with the beneficiaries of community-based projects: encouraging those with fewer (economic, educational or other kind of) resources to see themselves as being capable to develop and be actively involved in youth solidarity initiatives.

5. Sharing the protagonist's role in creating and implementing the project: actively involving young people in all the phases of a project, from planning to analysis, and to its implementation and evaluation.

6. Doing the project also depending on what the young people involved want to learn.

7. Learning with and from the others: creating a context of reflection on the impact of the project in the community, and on personal development, too.

Do not forget that **the project lies at the cross of the two motivations**:
- deliberate civic engagement, in solidarity with a specific target group (in relation to which I position myself as an equal);
- motivated by purposeful learning, which happens once you enter the process.

The methods presented hereinafter suggest a few creative ways in which the project team may decide based on consensus or voting which of the identified issues should become the basis for the construction of your project.

# C.1. MULTIPLE VOTING

**Duration:** between 30 and 60 minutes.
**Supplies**: flipchart paper, markers, sticky dots – 4 for each participant.

Multiple voting is a technique for narrowing a list of ideas or options and involves a decision-making process in a group.

It is usually used after a brainstorming session with the initiative group or the project group to quickly identify the best idea or the best decision for the group.

This technique is the most appropriate for being used in large groups or when it is difficult to choose the issue to be approached in a project.

It is valuable when there are difficulties in reaching a consensus. Multiple voting makes it possible for each participant to participate equally in the decision-making process.

**Preparing the method**: Write down on flipchart paper the three or four issues which you have identified in the community. Prepare sticky dots for all the participants and make sure there are enough of them for two rounds.
You need 4 dots for each member of the team.
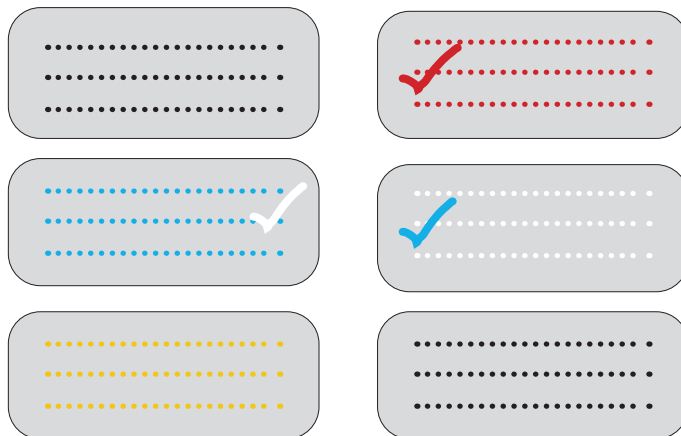
**Facilitating method:**

**1.** Explain the working process to the group.

**2.** **Present the options** and the selection criteria on the flipchart for every participant, and remind them how you got there – the method you used.

**3.** **Give** to each member of the team 3 **dots** representing 3 votes they can use.
Each dot stands for one vote.

**4.** **Each member** of the team **shall vote** for the issue he or she believes is the most important, while considering the features of an ESC project described above and the following criteria:

- at which level the beneficiaries of the project may be actively involved in the project;

- the impact they could have with a project tackling this issue;

- the motivation of the team member to learn and develop personally with regard to the issue by getting involved in the project – what skills he or she wants to develop;

- how realistic and approachable it is for the group to tackle the issue taking into consideration their current competences, and the existing or potential resources.

Mention – during the presentation – that each participant may offer all their votes for one option, divide their votes between several options or vote for individual options until they run out of votes. Give yourself enough time for thinking before the individual vote.

**5.** Add the votes.

**6.** **Select one-two options** which received the greatest number of votes through a majority decision.
Give each member one more dot. Remind the team members of the criteria above again and invite them to give arguments for choosing one of the issues identified. Allocate enough time so that everybody can argue hoping to reach a consensus or unanimity.

**7.** Finally, **invite them to place their dot** on the issue they want to approach.

**8.** Add the votes again and check out the order.

**9.** If there is one idea left with the most of the votes, then it is obviously the right issue (an unanimous decision).
However, if it looks like there are two ideas at the top, you may continue with another round of arguments or give yourself some more time to analyse that issue, too.

The **purpose** is for you get at the end of the voting as close as possible to a consensus or unanimity, because everybody's motivation for involvement will be greater. In this situation, the members of the group will assume both the project and its consequences.

# C.2.DECISION MATRIX

**Duration:**
between 30 and 60 minutes.
**Supplies:**
flipchart paper, markers.

The Decision Matrix is useful when you have several good alternatives to choose from and a lot of different factors to be considered.
It is a very good technique in case there is no preferable, clear and obvious option.

**Preparing the method:**
Draw a table on a flipchart, including in the first column the options you are going to weigh and in the first row the factors you have to consider.

**Facilitating the method:**
Add items in the columns of the table, marking every option for each of the factors in your decision. Assign a score to each option from 0 (weak) to 5 (very good). Eventually, you add up the scores for each option. The option with the highest final score is the winner.

You may let the row of factors empty and **decide together with your group** what factors need to be considered, for example:
- *the capacity for engaging the community, visibility, time, resource consumption, the impact of the project in the community, how much you can learn from this project.*

# DECISION MATRIX

Example

| PROJECT on the approached issue | VIZIBILITY | TIME | IMPACT | COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT | REOURCES | TOTAL |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| A project on HIGH LEVEL OF ROAD ACCIDENTS | 0 | 3 | 4 | 1 | 1 | 9 |
| A project on HIGH LEVEL OF POLLUTION IN THE LOCALITY | 0 | 3 | 2 | 4 | 2 | 11 |
| A project on HIGH LEVEL OF DISCRIMINATION AGAINST ROMA CHILDREN | 2 | 4 | 5 | 3 | 5 | 19 |

# C.3. PREPARING THE DECISION

**Duration**:
beteen 30 and 60 minute.
**Supplies**:
flipchart paper, markers.

**Preparing the method:** To prepare the decision properly, you may start with an exercise of inventiveness and imagination, whereby you conduct a brainstorming to find solutions to the problem for each identified issue. Everyone should come up with ideas, no matter how sketchy they are, because they will be developed later, after a decision has been made, with help from the group members.

After taking down on the flipchart all the ideas for each issue, proceed with a first selection:  strike off for each problem the ideas/solutions which could be applied with big costs and small benefits, or could have also detrimental effects on the project.
For each community issue, choose two or three realistic, approachable, motivating etc. solutions (you should decide together on the criteria).

| ISSUE IDENTIFIED IN THE COMMUNITY | SOLUTION 1 | SOLUTION 2 | SOLUTION 3 |
|---|---|---|---|
| ISSUE 1 | | | |
| ISSUE 2 | | | |
| ISSUE 3 | | | |

Further on, you may approach the following variants:

*Variant 1* – for making a final decision, choose one of the two methods introduced before (Multiple Voting and Decision Matrix).

*Variant 2* – you may thoroughly examine the solutions laid out in order to choose the best variants, which will obviously influence you in choosing the appropriate issue for your project. Only after this thorough analysis, you can make a decision.

*Variant 3* – after alternative solutions have been kept, move on and assess them in terms of advantages and disadvantages. You may use the following table.

Assign points from 1 to 5 with regard to the goal pursued. It is important to consider the goal of the ESC projects at this point, and not your person.

Because there are several members in a team, it is recommended that each of them considers the same solutions and assigns points individually, and at the end you'll calculate the arithmetic average of the points. This increases the fairness of the process leading to a decision.

After assigning points, add them up. The adopted solution shall obviously be the one with the highest total score for "advantages" and the lowest score for "disadvantages" (or, anyway, with the largest difference between the two totals).
From now on, the solutions proposed for each issue will have an influence in your decision-making.

| | ADVANTAGES | POINTS | DISADVANTAGES | POINTS |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 5.1 | | | | |
| 5.2 | | | | |
| 5.3 | | | | |
| TOTAL | | | | |

a guide to the implementation of projects in your community
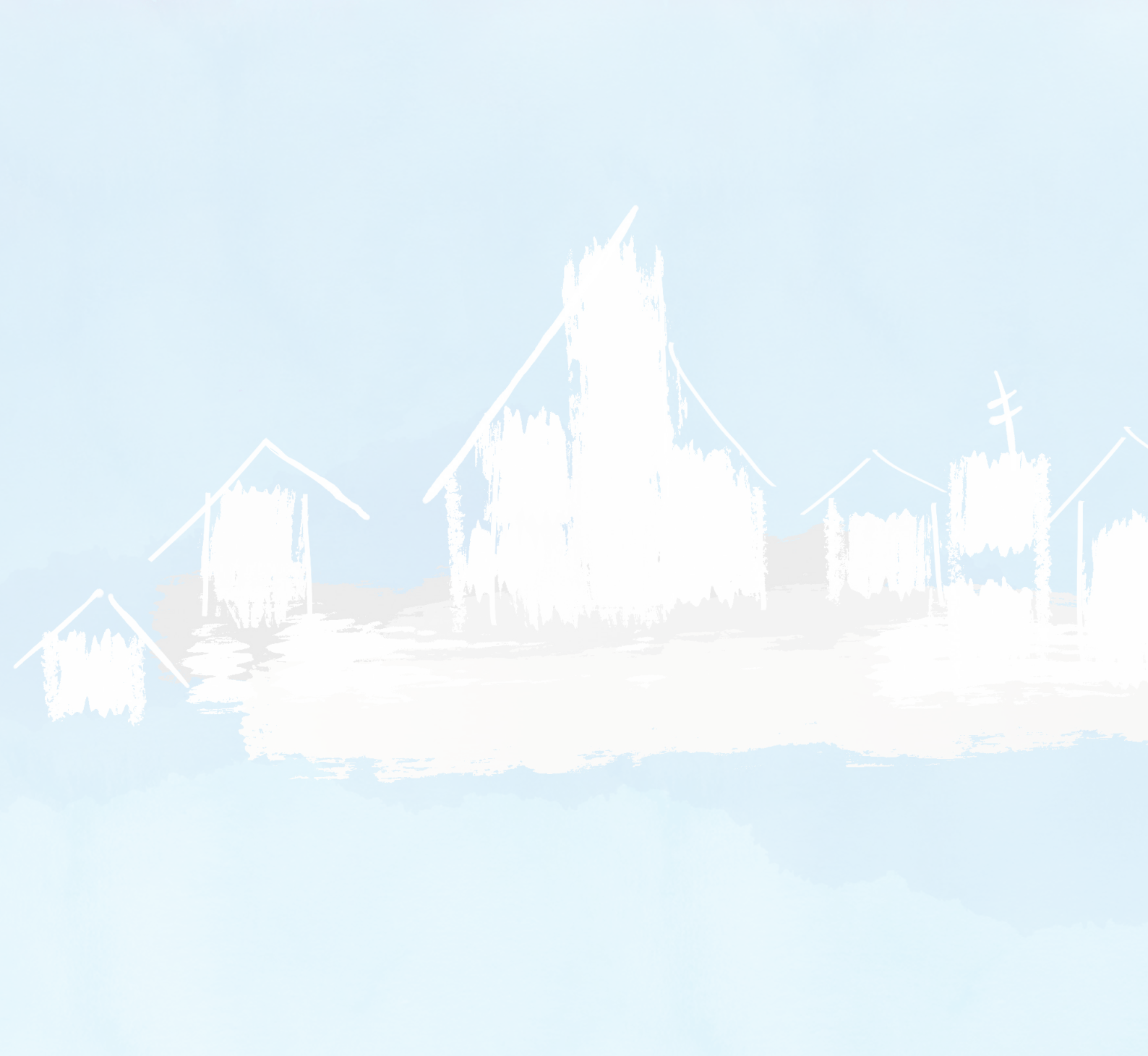
# D. INTERVENTIONS FOR SOCIAL CHANGE

In your plan to bring about a change in the community, it is important that you identify, together with your team and the community concerned, WHAT you can do to reach the identified solutions and HOW you can apply the manners you have chosen.

We suggest a few manners and methods you can apply in order to achieve your goal for solving or alleviating the issue identified in your community.
(Please review the introduction at the beginning of Chapter 2 on the difference between manners and methods.)

Manners:
- *Volunteering*
- *Lobby and advocacy*
- *Workshops and courses*
- *Media campaigns*
- *Meetings, actions and community-based events*
Methods:
- *Theatre of the Oppressed (Forum Theatre, Legislative Theatre, Invisible Theatre)*
- *Photo Voice*
- *Story Telling*
- *Living Library*
- *Street actions – Flashmob*
- *Living Exhibition*

# D.1. MANNERS
## D.1.1.VOLUNTEERING

"Volunteering is the ultimate exercise in democracy. You vote in elections once a year, but when you volunteer, you vote every day about the kind of community you want to live in."
(Marjorie Moore, Minds Eye Information Service, SUA)

At **European level,** the European Commission defined volunteering in 2011 as:
"When it comes to volunteering, each country has different notions, definitions and traditions. Volunteering is defined as all forms of voluntary activity, whether formal or informal. Volunteers act under their own free will, according to their own choices and motivations and do not seek financial gain. Volunteering is a journey of solidarity and a way for individuals and associations to identify and address human, social or environmental needs and concerns. Volunteering is often carried out in support of a non-profit organisation or community-based initiative."

Also, the Commission considers that "Volunteering is a creator of human and social capital. It is a pathway to integration and employment and a key factor for improving social cohesion. Above all, volunteering translates the fundamental values of justice, solidarity, inclusion and citizenship upon which Europe is founded into action."

In **Romania**, volunteering activities are governed by law. The Volunteering Law 78/2014 stipulates the rights and obligations of both organisations and volunteers, when they conduct or get involved in such activities.

To conclude, volunteering is a manner you can use to empower the community to take action about the issues they have as a community. It is a manner of working together, where everyone contributes with values and competences in the actions conducted together, for a common cause. Volunteering has no deadline, a required time for involvement, or a specific number of people who can practice it. It is practiced as an act of solidarity with people, communities and the environment.

Volunteering within the ESC Programme is a solid component and an activity with several specific characteristics – *the age of the volunteers, the duration of the volunteering activity,* etc. This is why it is important that you carefully read the Programme Guide.

# D.1.2.LOBBY AND ADVOCACY

"An advocacy campaign is an organised process, whereby citizens or organisations transparently influence the decision-makers (mayor, minister, local counsellor, head-teacher, etc.) to make a decision or to stop the implementation of a decision with a negative impact on the community they represent."

## WHAT IS AND WHAT DOES AN ADVOCACY PROCESS INVOLVE?

"Advocacy consists of organised efforts and actions that take over "invisible", neglected issues, trying to influence the public and political attitude. These efforts start from the reality of "what is" trying to construct the reality of "what should be". Advocacy results in increased access of individuals to the decision-making influencing their lives. Advocacy means that people take some of the power of the institutions which affect their lives."

There are several definitions of what is and what does an advocacy process involve?
We invite you to get familiar with three of them, which we consider relevant and which provide a pretty clear picture of this specific manner of carrying out an intervention in a community:

"Advocacy is an organised political process involving people's coordinated efforts to change policies, practices, ideas or values that perpetuate inequity, intolerance and exclusion. Advocacy improves people's capacity to participate in the decision-making and the accountability of institutions."

## Solidarity projects

nvolve, together or separately, community development actions, community organising, social intervention and/or community engagement (*see details on these concepts in Chapter 3, page 209 of the Guide*).
Many of these contexts require advocacy processes which propose public policies, uphold the respect for the civic and human rights of the concerned groups.

**Example** of how to use an advocacy process in solidarity projects:
*Identified issue: Students with disabilities in University X do not have fair access to the educational process.*
***Proposed solutions** (implemented in this manner): A public policy proposal to amend the University Bylaw and to establish rules for its application by the board of the University, so that the rights of the concerned students are observed.*
***The methods** leading to the implementation of the solution may be various. You may find some of them on the following pages of this subchapter.*

**It is important to keep in mind** It is important to keep in mind that advocacy is a process with a few key ingredients:

- **it is focused on people** – helps them understand their power and use it in the active participation process for making a public decision;

- **it is focused on values** – an advocacy campaign serves a legitimate public interest;

- **it changes the balance of power** – those who apparently have no power and "no say" know their rights and get mobilised to defend them and have them respected. In this case, 'power' is the capacity to persuade someone to support an undertaking/public policy proposal you make;

- **it influences the decision-makers** – it changes decisions made by institutions and public authorities;

- **it is inclusive** – it involves many people, as different as possible, affected by the identified problem for which they are taking a stand.

### D.1.3. WORKSHOPS AND COURSES

Workshops bring together a group of people to thoroughly examine and discuss an issue. Also, workshops and courses are manners which you may use in solidarity projects for the purpose of developing the competences and values of a group we want to empower so that they become actively involved in improving the quality of their lives and the community life. As regards the methods used to develop competences, we suggest that you employ the ones which are as participative as possible, experiential, in the area of non-formal education and participatory art.

Workshops also create an opportunity for those who participate to establish a community of people who exchange ideas and develop an action plan, recommendations or proposals for issues they want to approach together.

**It is important that workshops and courses**
are about a theme which supports a real need of the group that will participate. It is also important that workshops and courses are followed by a phase where the developed competences are put into practice, and a phase for monitoring the impact of the learning context on the participants and following up on this process.

**Duration**: Courses may span several days, depending on the learning goals and their purpose. They can be split into 60-90 minute work sessions.

**Supplies**: materials and resources will depend on the theme. They may be office items or stationeries, electronic equipment, sports items, books, toys, etc. Other important resources to consider are human resources (facilitators, trainers, moderators, etc.), rooms, financial resources, catering services.

**The number of participants**
is at least 10 and at most 20, and the participants' age will be determined depending on the group concerned, i.e. the group faced with the problem you want to solve or ameliorate.

We suggest you to encourage the people taking part in your workshop to pass on to other members of the community the knowledge they get *(e.g. The participants in workshops will hold, in turn, small workshops for other members of the group concerned or will organise community events so as they can practice what they have acquired).*

# D.1.4. MEDIA CAMPAIGNS

A media campaign is a planned series of techniques *(articles in online or offline newspapers, interviews, testimonials, brochures, flyers, radio spots, letters, emails, street advertising, etc.) that* are intended to achieve a particular aim. *(Cambridge Business English Dictionary)*

**Examples:**

- *a media campaign for raising awareness about the importance of selective collection;*
- *a media campaign against domestic violence;*
- *a media campaign to support a public policy proposal concerning a non-discriminatory salary policy;*
- *a media campaign encouraging people to vote, etc.*

**In designing a campaign, we invite you to think of the following elements:**

Purpose – t is important to know *Why* you are doing the media campaign and why this manner is appropriate for the issue you are dealing with.

Target group - Be clear about your target public and identify all the efficient ways to deliver the information to it.

Media strategy – *When, where, why, how?* – Plan the steps you want to take in the campaign, the appropriate language (*formal, informal, etc.*), what information you want to give first, what information you want to give later on, what communication channels you want to use..

A variety of techniques – Identify what techniques you want to use for implementing the strategy. We advise you not to use just 1, 2 techniques (*interviews and flyers, for example*), and identify several ways to communicate. Analyse the community and your target group and be creative, free-spirited (*if appropriate*).

Media partnerships - If necessary, you may enter into media partnerships and you may ask for advice from other organisations that have experience with the implementation of cause-based media campaigns.

Distribution - When you give out posters and flyers, for example, it is important to identify several areas in the community where you can distribute them (*schools, hospitals, churches, supermarkets, local shops, etc.*).

# D.1.5. MEETINGS, ACTIONS AND COMMUNITY-BASED EVENTS

You can also get close to the community and work with the community with activities like:

- *Film projections*
- *Thematic nights/days (for example: an evening dedicated to the traditions of the Roma community, where you may organise together with this ethnic group a night with several elements – dance, food, music, etc.; a wellness/personal wellbeing day, where, together with the community, you discuss and practice different ways of taking care of yourself; an afternoon dedicated to responsible consumption, where you conduct workshops and gather ideas about how to put it into effect, etc.).*
- *Contests and competitions in connection with the theme of your initiative*
- *Theatre, dance, music festivals*
- *Socialising meetings between the members of several community groups (to encourage inclusion and social cohesion, for example)*
- *Marches, parades, demonstrations*
- *Actions for raising funds and items*
- *Debates and world cafés.*

The examples in the list may continue. Instead, what is important for choosing the appropriate manners is to know very well the community, the issue you are trying to solve or ameliorate and to identify the right ways to reach out to the community.

Do not forget that an important principle of solidarity is working with the community and not for the community. Therefore, it is important to plan and conduct the organisation of an event together with the members of the group concerned.

**In organising events/meetings, it is important that you:**

- make sure that the topic is closely connected with the goals of the project;
- make sure that the event observes the identity and the rights of all people (present or not) and that it neither deepens stereotypes, prejudice, nor does it support a group while marginalizing another;
- look after the safety of the attendees;
- make sure the event also allows the access of people with (any kind of) disabilities;
- identify a moderator/facilitator/host of the event;
- comply with the laws in force (for outdoor events, for example, there are many aspects to consider when it comes to actions in public areas: permits, medical assistance, security, etc.);
- have a clear idea of how to capitalize on the event also after it has finished (articles, other actions in the community, video clips, etc.;

# D.2.METHODS

### Introduction to the methods of the
### Theatre of the Oppressed

The Theatre of the Oppressed (TO) describes theatrical forms which the practitioner Augusto Boal first developed in the 70's. Boal was influenced by the activity of the educator and theorist Paulo Freire.

Boal's techniques use theatre as a means to promote and encourage social and political change. With the methods in the "Tree of Theatre of the Oppressed", the audience becomes active, the spectators become actors, and they explore solutions, show how they could be put into practice, analyse and transform the reality in which they live.

TO helps different groups to discover the power they can have if they get together and work together. TO brings together different groups of oppressed people (victims), it lets them know each other's reality and find solutions together. TO brings together oppressed as well as non-oppressed people and they work together to find solutions to problems of real life.

**Solidarity with your peers is an essential part of the Oppressed Theatre**. TO, in all its forms, always looks to transform society so as to release the oppressed. It is both about taking a stand at present, and getting prepared for future actions. Augusto Boal says about the methods included in TO that they are a rehearsal for life because they propose a transformation of the reality first in a closed setting and then in a larger one. We will present in short below three of the TO methods. If you find that one or more of them are appropriate for being applied in connection with the topic of your solidarity project, we invite you to research it further and also consult other groups and organisations having experience practising the method.

*For example, the A.R.T. Fusion Association is one of the organisations with a lot of experience of working with communities and practicing the methods below. You also may find on the organisation website additional materials they have developed precisely for supporting groups and organisations that want to bring a change to a community using methods of participatory art.*

**It is important** to keep in mind that none of the methods below requires theatrical studies, and moreover, the actors in TO are called non-actors, precisely because they are ordinary people who are confronted with problems, are victims or allies and want to fight against abuses of power.

# TREE OF THEATRE OF THE OPPRESSED

DIRECT ACTIONS

LEGISLATIVE THEATRE

INVIZIBLE THEATRE

NEWSPAPER THEATRE

FORUM THEATRE

RAINBOW OF DESIRE

IMAGE THEATRE

GAMES

SOLIDARITY

MULTIPLICATION

IMAGE

SOUND

WORD

ECONOMY

POLITICS

PHILOSOPHY

HISTORY

ETHICS

*Drawing after Augusto Boal*

# D.2.1.FORUM THEATRE

Forum Theatre is a form of participatory theatre which encourages democratic forms of interaction between the participants.

Forum Theatre **is not an entertainment performance**; it creates a context where a group of people depict, in a 10-15 minute play, a real issue to the community faced with that issue. The forum play shows a common situation, with characters which are easily identifiable, portrayed such as the audience can identify themselves with them. The attendees analyse and discuss the problems of oppression and the manifestations of power, they explore together solutions to these problems, and the audience is empowered to find solutions to their own problems.

The situation to be acted out is chosen following an analysis of the community.
*If a major issue in a community is a high level of domestic violence where the man is the aggressor and the woman is the victim, then it is important to approach this problem and not the problem of corruption (which maybe is not even an issue in that community).*

**Duration**: preparing the play – about 2 months.
Performance – a 15 minute play at most.
Forum – about an hour.

**Supplies/resources**: a meeting room, resources for an analysis of the community (questionnaires, observation forms)

**Number of participants involved:**
non-actors
(the team working on the play) – maximum 7.
the audience at a performance:
at least 10 – at most 30 people..
**Participants' age**: non-actors – at least 18. (Or younger if they belong to the group facing the problem identified in the community. If they are less than 18, it is important that parents give their assent to the participation of their children).

A Forum Theatre performance has **3 stages**:

**A. Theatre** (the performance)
- the presentation of the oppression situation/abuse of power in front of the audience.

**B. Discussion** – with help from a character, called joker in TO, the audience discuss based on the situation they watched about who the characters involved are, what the issue is, where the oppression is, who the victim is, and the aggressor, the allies of each one and what characters stay neutral in that situation. The audience, helped by the joker (who only asks guiding questions), review the situation and decide whether there are things which could be done differently by the people involved.

**C. Forum** (the re-played performance) – The play is acted out again. At this stage, the audience become active. They know the situation, saw the end which they would like to change, and identified the characteristics of the individuals involved. In turn, people from the audience may come on stage, replace a character (except for the aggressor), and enact a solution, a different attitude which a character could have, a change that might help to reduce the oppression. The joker moderates the interventions of the audience.

**It is very important** to keep in mind that no change acted out on stage is held unless it is validated by the audience. If the audience think that the change brought is not a realistic one, it is not kept in the play.

The Forum Theatre may be used to approach issues concerning an abuse of power where the aggressor (called the Oppressor) is a person, and not the system. There are 5 types of characters in the Forum Theatre: the oppressor, the oppressed, allies of the oppressor and allies of the oppressed and neutral characters. It is important that the situation played out includes all of these. Therefore, we invite you to take also these aspects into account when you choose the method

*For example, if you want to raise awareness of endangered species, this method is not a suitable one.*

# D.2.2.LEGISLATIVE THEATRE

*Th*e Legislative Theatre is a method that combines the Forum Theatre with the conventional rituals of a parliamentary chamber or assembly. Its specific purpose is to propose coherent and viable drafts of law. Augusto Boal used theatre as a civic instrument to generate laws. This method of social intervention theatre is intended to create social responsibility and provoke political engagement
from the decision-makers.

The **purpose** of the method is to develop active citizenship and to create communication and consultation bridges between decision-makers and communities.
*"Citizens in a democratic society should not be simple spectators of their parliaments. They should assume responsibility for their lives through action."*

*Augusto Boal*

Augusto Boal devised a democratic methodology that involves collective reflection, dialogue and transformation. He renamed it "democracy in transition". He transformed the Forum Theatre into Legislative Theatre, adding a participatory methodology which closes the cycle of desires or transforms proposals and desires into laws.

**Duration:**
Creating the play – about 2 months.
Performance – a 15 minute play at most.
Forum (including the debates and outlining the legislative idea) – from 1 hour to 3 hours at most.
The legislative process – from 1 day to a week at most.
**Resources**: a meeting room, resources for an analysis of the community (questionnaires, observation forms).

**Numărul de participanţi non-actori**
(the team working on the play) – maximum 7.
The audience at a performance: at least 10 – at most 30 people (it is important to include policy-makers, too).
**Participants' age**:
non-actors – at least 18 (or younger if they belong to the group facing the problem identified in the community). If they are less than 18, it is
important that parents give their assent to the participation of their children.

The methodology of the Legislative Theatre has three main stages:
a) Collective creation (of the play)
b) Forum Theatre
c) The legislative process, which includes a legislative theatre workshop to clarify the topic, the concepts, and settle the undertaking.

The situation depicted in a **Forum Theatre** play which is enacted within a Legislative Theatre process concerns a real issue, a conflict, a situation affecting the community.

It is presented in front of those who are faced with it and are affected by it. It is very important, however, that the audience includes political actors with decision-making powers, so that, at the end of the process, they contribute to the solutions and amendments arising from the play, and assume publicly their engagement with the solution to the problem.

Their presence throughout the event is important and has an impact on them, too. They can see, feel and understand by themselves the situation and which could be the consequences if measures are not taken. Thus the decision-makers have the occasion to feel the pulse of the community and understand the issue not from behind some papers, but from people themselves.

The third stage or **the legislative stage** starts when the proposals for solutions coming from the audience are collected by the legal practitioners in the room. They need time to check whether the proposals fall into the current legal system. They will also produce a summary of the concrete measures proposed for implementation which will be later voted by the audience in the room.

„IN THE SAME WAY AS THE SPECTATORS BECOME SPECT-ACTORS IN THE FORUM THEATRE, CITIZENS BECOME LEGISLATORS IN THE LEGISLATIVE THEATRE."

-AUGUSTO BOAL-

The purpose of this process is both to create a basis for the advocacy processes that follow, and to plan the strategy for approaching decision-makers

# D.2.3. INVISIBLE THEATRE

The Invisible Theatre is a direct intervention in society, on a specific topic of general interest, to initiate debates and clarify the issue which needs to be solved. It will never be violent, because its purpose is to unveil the violence in society and not to reproduce it.

Invisible Theatre is a play (and not just some improvisation) enacted in a public area without telling anyone that it is a theatrical performance, rehearsed in advance.

The Invisible Theatre involves acting out a scene in a different setting, other than a context where people know there will be an event. The place can be a restaurant, a sidewalk, a market, a train, a queue at the baker's, etc. The people witnessing the scene are those who happen to be there. During the "show", people should not have the faintest idea that it is a "show", because this would make them "spectators".

*Examples of issues that may be approached by using this method: street violence, sexual harassment in buses, people acting disrespectfully towards nature and the environment (throwing litter on the ground at a fair, for example), the lack of empathy of medical staff or clerks towards the diseased people in a hospital, etc.*

**Duration:** preparing the play – about 2 months.
Performance – a 15 minute play at most.
Forum – about 1 hour.
**Resources:** a meeting room, resources for an analysis of the community (questionnaires, observation forms).
**Number of non-actor participants** (the team working on the play) – maximum 7,
**Participants' age**: non-actors – at least 18 (or younger if they belong to the group facing the problem identified in the community). If they are less than 18, it is important that parents give their assent to the participation of their children.

The Invisible Theatre requires a detailed preparation of the play, with a full text or a simple script. You need to rehearse the play enough so that the actors may integrate in their play the reactions coming from witnesses' interventions.

The Invisible Theatre is an action happening in the middle of the community, apparently a natural one. Actors disguised as passers-by and citizens who are in the area by chance are either part of the conflict situation or of the on-lookers who, with their reactions and words, instigate the public to engage in the discussion or take a stance. The Invisible Theatre encourages debate, asks questions and brings before people real situations which happen every day around them, but which they don't even notice many times.

# D.2.4. PHOTOVOICE

Photovoice is a method developed by Caroline C. Wang and Mary Ann Burris. It is a method to influence and raise awareness among decision-makers at local or governmental level by showing them "living photographs" taken by members of those disadvantaged or marginalized groups that have no capacity to determine the introduction of their problems on the public agenda and also no capacity to mobilise for pursuing a common interest.

**Purpose** Photovoice allows the person organising this process to reach out the opinion of those who influence least public decisions. The photos are not focused on the artistic component, but on a depiction as authentic and real as possible of issues and situations which people are facing. Given that one of the main objectives of the method is to reach out the decision-makers (administrations, councils, mayor's offices, etc.), the photos and their accompanying texts should not depict the "beautiful and cover face" of a situation, but the real one.

**Duration:** A Photovoice process may take from one week to 3 months, depending on the profile of the group of beneficiaries and the people involved.
**Resources:** cameras (disposables or other kind, including mobile phones with a camera), material resources for printing the photos.

**Number of participants:**
at least 10 – at most 20 participants (the ideal number of people taking photos).
**Participants' age:** at least 18 (or younger if they belong to the group facing the problem identified in the community. If they are less than 18, it is important that parents give their assent to the participation of their children.). The maximum age is not relevant. It may depend on the theme of the intervention and the profile of the target group.

**The goals of Photovoice:**
- to enable people to identify and reflect on the strengths of their communities and their concerns;
- to promote the exchange of information and a critical dialogue on topics concerning people's personal lives or the community in general through group discussions;
- to reach out those who make public decisions (public administration, elected people, experts, etc.)
**Photovoice is a three phase process:**

**A. Preparation:** this phase will be conducted by the team. It is important that you ask yourself questions like: *Who are we working with? Why – What are the goals we want to achieve?*

**B. Taking the photo sessions** – it may include in turn several steps:

**a. Instructing the beneficiaries**

who will take the photos. The instruction should:
- explain the process;
- clarify, and possibly reword the theme for Photovoice;
- clear up aspects related to the legislation and the ethics of photography;
- include technical instructions for using the camera;
- explain how the discussion workshops will take place and the facilitation of the discussions on the photos;
- decide on a particular format for the story, the voice which will accompany the photo (how to take down the indications about the photo: the time, the character, mood, etc.);

**b.** Alternatively,

**photo sessions and discussion sessions**:
- meetings for discussing the photos;
- taking the photos (usually, the participants go home with the cameras and take pictures in between the meetings);
- meetings for the final selection of photos and for completing the text accompanying the photos.

**Possible questions during the facilitation of the discussion workshops:**
*Who is in the photo? What does the captured image represent? The place and time? Why have you taken a picture of this? What feeling has this picture evoked in you? How did you feel? What message would you like to send with this photo? What would you like to say to the authorities (mayor, local council, county council, prefecture, etc.) with this photo? If we displayed this photo publicly, what would you like the viewer to get from it?*

**C. Presentation of the Photovoice outcomes** - The presentation may take place in the framework of a photo exhibition, a public event, through printed post cards, albums, calendars, on a webpage, etc. It is important to follow-up and evaluate whether the objectives you set at the beginning have been reached or whether you need more actions, improvements, etc.

# D.2.5.STORYTELLING

We are surrounded by stories and, sometimes, one of the most efficient ways to reach out a person is through a story.

There are all kinds of stories and they may be used in many contexts and for different purposes.
In the context of ESC projects, you may use storytelling for 4 different purposes.

"THE POWER OF A STORY IS THAT IT HAS THE CAPACITY TO CONNECT WITH PEOPLE EMOTIONALLY."

- PIXAR -

**To learn** – Stories help the community "to learn", to find and evaluate their needs and strengths and the problems they are facing. Stories may also be used to evaluate the intervention you had in a community.
*Example: You may invite the community to send you video clips, articles, stories, where they are offering testimonials on a given topic (what bothers them most in their environment, what is their opinion about the services they can access in their community, etc.).*
Based on stories, you can get information about the real needs of a community, straight from source, through stories told from personal experience.

**To educate** – Stories may reach to large groups of people, different people in different contexts. They may be used online, in civic dialogue processes or in the public education system.
Example: You can tell people about global warming and its effects with animation clips or video clips made by volunteers. Then you can share the stories using different online channels and educate the audiences watching the clips.
It is important to tell the story so that it is accessible and captivate the group or groups you want to reach out to.

**For advocacy** – Stories can bring closer different civic actors to build large scale election schemes, raise funds and for an advocacy campaign to propose public policies which may help the communities where you intervene.

*Example: in advocacy campaigns, you may use real stories to emphasise the importance of changing or amending inefficient public policies. You may use stories in the form of social theatre, blog articles, letters to public authorities, videos for raising awareness and calling for action, Ted discourse sessions, etc.*

**To organise** – Stories may help you build up strength and leadership within an organisation or inside a group or a movement. They serve as a means of changing strategies for a balanced social change with a real impact.

*Example: The community organiser and Harvard professor, Marshall Ganz, developed a method for spreading stories called "Public Narrative", where the members of a group or an organisation share their stories underlining aspects such as "I", "we" and "now". People who participate in this process become more invested and motivated to contribute within the group or the organisation they belong to, because they feel they have contributed with something inside them to the experience and the context they are in.*

This example comes to support the principle of solidarity which aims to share the responsibility of the intervention with the community members. You may sketch a storytelling event with the entire community to bring its members closer together and create cohesion with the organisation or the group you belong to.

Next, we offer a list of "ingredients" we recommend you to include in any story, if you want it to fulfil its goal and its message to captivate the audience.

**It is important that a story:**

- has a clear topic. The topic must be connected with the message and the moral you want it to convey;
- has a protagonist. In other words, it is important to be clear about who is the character we are following throughout the story, the character who encounters obstacles, has needs, is faced with various situations, etc.;
- is real and not made up or taken from books, other articles, etc.
- depicts a truth;
- follows a structure such as: the beginning, the body of the story and conclusion – these stages have to be clearly highlighted and identified by the audience having access to the story. ;

**In outlining the structure and developing the story** we invite you to answer the question: *What do you want the audience to find out, when and how?*
- has a clear description of the "world", the context in which the actions unfold. *What is the setting in which everything takes place? What are the rules and principles governing this world? etc.;*
- says clearly what is at stake. *Why do we care about the main character? Why are we following him or her? Why are we listening to him or her? Why do we wish the best for him or her?;*

- includes aspects about how the situation used to be, how it is now, what happened in the meanwhile and what led to a change of the reality and how could the situation be in the future;
- appeals to emotions;
- includes elements of surprise. This may be considered especially when conceiving the story and the style you choose to deliver it.

**In outlining the story and choosing the way to share it** with the group concerned, it is important to know your group very well. Knowing the group helps you determine the most appropriate language, the most appropriate style, the most useful communication channel which can deliver the story to the group. Therefore, you may choose to write letters, have a Living Library, or tell a story through a Photovoice exhibition or a video.

Moreover, it is very important to know WHY you are telling a story. The answer will help you determine both the topics of your stories and how you can use them later in the change process you implement together with your team and the community.

# D.2.6. LIVING LIBRARY

The idea of a Living Library was initially developed by the Danish organisation Stop the Violence, as part of its activity for visitors at the 2000 Roskilde Festival.

Based in Denmark, Stop the Violence was an organisation that used to work with young people and aimed to educate them to be more active in violence prevention activities.

The Living Library intends to draw attention to the acceptance of diversity because, many times, the differences between people are not used as resources. Most times, these differences lead to labelling and stereotypes, and eventually to discrimination, suspicion and exclusion.

**Duration:**
1 – 3 days or more
**Resources:**
office items and stationeries for making the catalogues and the bulletins, a printer for the necessary forms, an area to host the living library

**Number of participants:**
the organisation team – 5-10 people (depending on the roles and the size of the living library); the books in the living library – 10-30 (depending on the duration and the size of the living library)
**Participants' age** (organisers or books):
at least 18 (or younger if they belong to the group facing the problem identified in the community). If they are less than 18, it is important that parents give their assent to the participation of their children.
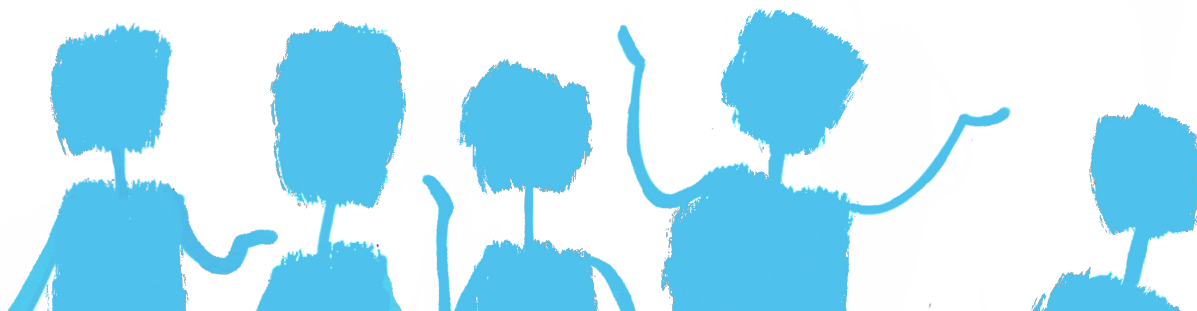
The **Books** in the Living Library are people representing groups that are faced or may be faced with prejudice or stereotypes (related to gender, age, education, occupation, ethnicity, race, religion, etc.) and that could be victims of discrimination or social exclusion, or, in the end, they could be people with stories which could offer to the reader a unique learning experience in diversity.

The **Reader** in a Living Library may be anyone who is ready to meet their own prejudice and stereotypes. The reader is a person who wants to spend 50 minutes of their time to gain a meaningful learning experience. In a library, books don't speak, they rather answer questions, and they can ask their own questions so the learning and awareness raising experience takes place both ways. [14]

**Other roles and elements** in a living library are closely connected with those we can find also in a regular library**: Librarian, Dictionary, Borrow Permit, Book Catalogue, Shelves** to lay the books on (a strictly confined place)**, borrow office, return office, reading room** (a clearly confined area, where books and readers can talk).

As the developer of the method says in a quote given below, the Living Library is not an entertainment event, where books are celebrities, is not an event which you can use, for example, to create contexts for high-school students to find more about different occupations and careers before deciding what kind of university they want to go to.

In case that a need of your project implies such an event, we encourage you to choose other methods or to use only the model proposed by the Living Library method, which is interaction and dialogue between people, but not its name.

*"The Living Library is not a public relations exercise looking for spectacular headlines; it is not a zoo or display case for rare and exotic species; neither is it a job recruitment agency or a place to exhibit famous people."*

# D.2.7.STREET ACTIONS- FLASHMOB

A flashmob (*flash + mob*) is a gathering of people in a public place. They conduct an action, seen as maybe unusual, for a short period of time (usually, a few seconds/minutes), and after that the group splits as if nothing happened.

Flashmob is a "presentation" for accidental spectators for the purpose of creating feelings of puzzlement and interest. Flashmob is a mass action, a way to express and convey a message to society.

**Duration:**
Planning – from 1 day to several days (depending on the topic and the materials you need to prepare); Flashmob – a few minutes
**Resources:** they may be diverse, depending on the topics approached
**Number of participants:** to be visible, a flashmob must be organised with as many people as possible, and the number becomes larger as other people join it in real time.
**Participants' age:** at least 18 (or younger if they belong to the group facing the problem identified in the community). If they are less than 18, it is important that parents give their assent to the participation of their children.

**Flashmob is not:**
- an action intended to promote a commercial product or which involves making a profit afterwards;
- an event where the participants are paid to carry out the action; or
- an event which does not pursue to raise awareness of an issue, or just an entertainment event.

In projects guided by the principles of solidarity it is important to take into account that the topic of a flashmob must be specific and the purpose of its organisation likewise.
Flashmob is an action that shocks and brings to light some urgent aspects which require the attention of those around. If the purpose of organising such an action is just to entertain, the method is not applied coherently and does not contribute to the goal of your project.

**In organising a flashmob** we invite you to take into account the following:

- the action must be spontaneous, but planned and instantaneous; the participants are not allowed to draw people's attention before the action;
- the impression should be that the participants do not know each other and, before the action, they should not reveal in any way that they are getting ready to do something unusual;
- all the actions should be carried out based on a script determined in advance by the organising group;
- the action should not include aggressive reactions from the participants;
- the action shall not send negative, discriminating or marginalization messages;
- the action does not encourage people to break the laws in any way;
- the action neither defends, nor supports political interests or views;
- after it has been completed, all the participants should immediately leave the place of the action, without showing that there was something special there.

# D.2.8.LIVING EXHIBITION

Living Exhibition is a method developed by Go Free Association.

In a living exhibition, the public area becomes an open "gallery", where the "exhibits" (the initiators of the action) come to life, interacting with the "visitors" (members of the community) in order to send a message of interest to the community. The members of the community may become themselves "exhibits" in the "gallery", so long as they do not depart from the initial message of the action.

It is a flexible method which may be implemented by a group of at least 12 people, as well as by large groups (the more living exhibits in the gallery, the more dramatic and interesting to the audience the exhibition becomes).

Living Exhibition is an active method that promotes the dialogue between a group concerned with a specific issue and the members of a community, through creative expressions in a public area (streets, parks, markets, malls). The initiators of the living exhibition choose the right support (e.g. the human body, customised articles of clothing, etc.), the technique and the manner of expression (e.g. drawing, painting, caricature, photography, etc.) so as to send a concrete, coherent message to the audience, visually supported by a creative and interactive presentation.

**Duration:** The organisation process of a living exhibition may take from one week to several weeks, depending on the profile of the group involved and the complexity of the issue approached.

**Resources**: depending on how the message is presented and its support, you may need consumables such as coloured cardboard, various colours for paintings, textiles, photographic paper, etc.

**Number of participants**: at least 12
**Participants' age**: at least 18 (or younger if they belong to the group affected by the problem identified in the community).

**The Living Exhibition is a dynamic method** which may be used when you intend:
- to engage the community as an active party in developing and/or debating the identified message/problem;
- to involve the community in an awareness raising process about an issue affecting it directly;
- to inform the community with regard to various topics on the public agenda and identify with it ways of working together where necessary;
- to encourage positive attitudes in the community and/or behavioural changes;
- to support an advocacy process;
- to promote and/or preserve (inter)cultural elements, etc.

In the "gallery", the living exhibits have several advantages which they will use to support the message of the living exhibition – on one hand, they can use their own voice and are free to move, improvise, surprise, thus enhancing their interaction with the visitors, and on the other hand, the living exhibits serve to provide visual support to the message – they can choose, for example, either to hold photos taken during the preparation of the exhibition, or to create some statutes with their bodies, paint their bodies or wear customised clothing.

**In the organisation process** of a living exhibition it is important to go through the following stages:
- **Clarifying the message** you want to convey. It is recommended that a living exhibition focuses on a single message – all the living exhibits in the gallery will support that message through their presence and their interaction with the audience.
- **The target group** – *Who are you addressing? To what category (or categories) of people you want to send the message?* (for example, teachers of grades 1-4 from School X, in town Y).
- **Choosing the venue** for your living exhibition – knowing the target audience also helps you identify the right venue for the exhibition.
- **Determining how the message will be presented** – it is important that the application of the method involves creativity.

*The methods presented in this Guide are just a few of the methods you can use to achieve the goal pursued. We invite you to see the list of resources for additional inspiration in finding methods that are appropriate for your intervention.*

## RESOURCES:

**Non-formal education resources** (including Living Exhibition, Flashmob)
www.nonformalii.ro
SALTO- Toolbox for Training and Youth Work https://www.salto-youth.net/tools/toolbox/

**Volunteering**
Law 78/2014 on the regulation of volunteering in Romania
Council Decision No 37/2010/EC on the European Year of Voluntary Activities Promoting Active Citizenship (2011),
27 November 2009.

**Resources for the implementation of the Volunteering Law**
http://federatiavolum.ro/legea-voluntariatului/
Ghid de Securitate şi sănătate în activităţile de voluntariat, (A Guide for Security and Health in Volunteering)
Federaţia VOLUM, Bucharest 2016,
http://federatiavolum.ro/wp-content/uploads/2014/09/ghid_de_securitate_si_sanatate_editia_1.pdf

**Advocacy and lobby**
*Manual de advocacy* (Advocacy Toolkit), CeRe - Centrul de Resurse pentru participare publică (CeRe – Resource Centre for Public Participation), Bucharest, 2015
David Cohen, Rosa De la Vega, Gabrielle Watson, *Advocacy for Social Justice: A Global Action and Reflection Guide*, Kumarian Press, 2001.
Lisa VeneKlasen, Valerie Miller, *A New Weave of Power, People, and Politics: The Action Guide for Advocacy and Citizen Participation*, Practical Action Publishing, 2007.

**Photovoice**

Sorina Bunescu, Sînziana Dobre, *Photovoice. O metodă de implicare a publicului în influenţarea deciziilor. Manual de aplicare (Photovoice. A method to engage the audience with the decision-making. An application kit),* Centrul de Resurse pentru participare publică - CeRe, Bucharest, 2009,
http://cere.ong/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/Manual_PV_web.pdf

**Storytelling**

Paul VanDeCarr, *Storytelling and Social Change. A Guide for Activists, Organizations and Social Entrepreneurs,* Working Narratives, 2015,
https://workingnarratives.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/story-guide-second-edition.pdf

**Living Library**

Maria Neagu, Roxana Turcu, *Biblioteca Vie: ghid de bune practici (Living Library: A Good Practice Guide),* Asociaţia A.R.T. Fusion, Bucharest, 2010,
http://www.artfusion.ro/docs/Ghid.bibliotecavie_varianta%20finala.pdf
Nick Little &all, *Don't Judge a Book by its Cover! The Living Library Organiser's Guide* 2011,
Council of Europe, Budapest, 2011, https://rm.coe.int/16807023dd
Human Library https://humanlibrary.org/
Living Library project of the Council of Europe https://www.coe.int/en/web/youth/living-library

**The Theatre of the Oppressed**

Augusto Boal, *Theatre of the Oppressed, Theatre Communications* Group, New York, 1985
Augusto Boal, *Games for Actors and Non-Actors,* second edition, Routledge, 2002
Ronaldo Morelos, *Symbols and Power in Theatre of the Oppressed,* Queensland University of Technology, Academy of the Arts, Centre for Innovation in the Arts, 1999,
https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/0e25/0b9cf604da8e5a02e93dd72f636711b4dd3c.pdf
*A Compendium of Daily Lesson Plans and Resource Materials in Community Engagement,* Solidarity and Citizenship, Republic of the Philippines Department of Education Region III, San Fernando City, 2017.
Fernando Fantova Azcoaga, *Building Social Intervention, Psychologist Papers,* Vol. 39(2), 2018, pp. 81-88,
https://doi.org/10.23923/pap.psicol2018.2863

# E.
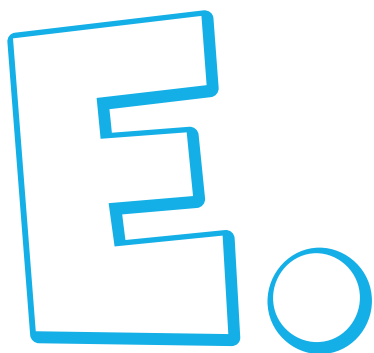
# PROJECT PLANNING AND PROJECT MANAGEMENT

The project planning and project management stage is a challenging one even from the writing phase. Putting down on paper and going through numerous, optimistic or pessimistic, scenarios may prove to be a mission requiring data collection and arranging those data logically, and especially, chronologically. Scenarios involve anticipating how the project will be implemented and how the team will be working, and also estimating the beneficiaries' reactions to the activities proposed by the young people of the initiative group or/and volunteers.

In an ESC project, during the planning step (*which includes collecting, organising and analysing the selected data, developing some working scenarios and writing the project idea*) and then in the project management, the most important variable is the community.

It is useful to take into account the resources which the community makes available for solving the problem and, implicitly, the openness of the community members to offering support in the implementation of the solution proposed and agreed on.
A few useful tools in project planning and project management are set out in this subchapter:
- *Gantt Chart*
- *Risk Matrix*
- *CPM Chart.*

### A triple constraint: cost/performance/duration

To judge a project as being a successful one, you need to consider how well you have attained its objectives, while meeting the conditions of finishing the project within the set period of time and with the financial resources initially estimated. The costs, performance and duration are interdependent and any change brought to a component influences the others.
*Example: if the project has delays in the implementation of activities, then the manager may ask the team to do extra hours, which may lead to a budget amendment and a drop in the quality of the work delivered, and consequently the initially requested and agreed performances will be affected.*

### The approach of Harold Kerzner

*(Project Management, 2003)* includes a new component influencing the project: the customer.

In an ESC project, the "customer" is the community, and for the implementation of activities to be successful, they need to satisfy the needs of the community and solve the identified issue within the agreed parameters. This component also helps to ensure the sustainability of the project.

Any type of tool used in the project planning and management stage is subject to adjustments from the time when the project is written until it is implemented. For ESC projects, where an important component is the community where they take place, it is exactly the community which influences this planning. How the community members accept the intervention of the initiative group, support the team in solving the identified problem, involve actively in solving the problem and do not hinder the implementation of the agreed solutions are elements which influence the planning and the implementation of the project.

Developing the capacity to respond to the needs identified in the community, to learn and to apply the proposed model, the capacity to pass on to the next generations what they have developed and learned from a solidarity project in a community, all this ensures the sustainability of the initiative.
Here are several methods – *the Gantt Chart, the Risk Matrix, and the CPM Chart* – intended to help in the project planning and management part.

## E.1. GANTT CHART

The method was created in the early 1900s and named after the one who first used this procedure – Henry Gantt. The chart is easily accessible and shows the beginning and the closing periods, and also the duration of activities.

It's a graphic method for planning and monitoring a project during its implementation.

The most common model is that in a table format and includes, vertically, a list of activities and sub-activities, and horizontally, a division in months or weeks, depending on the frequency of activities, and a person responsible for each activity.

Even more detailed information may be added on the vertical axis, about the necessary resources for each activity – *like in the example below, a list of materials/ documents to be delivered by the end of the imple-mentation of each activity.*

**For a solidarity project**
it is recommended that the Gantt Chart includes, under necessary resources, both financial, physical and human resources which the team and the grant make available, and the same kind of elements identified in the community.

*For example: the actors in a community may become partners and make available meeting rooms, materials, documents which need to be consulted – laws, rules, etc., or even access to the target group of the project.*

It is very important that all the team members get involved in drafting the plan of activities, because it will serve as basis for assigning the roles and responsibilities in the ESC project.

# GANTT CHART
Example

| | ACTIVITY | FEB. | MAR. | APR. | MAY | IUN. | JUL. | AUG. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | PREPARATORY ACTIVITIES/GETTING STARTED | ▮ | ▮ | | | | | |
| 1a. | Identifying the community concerned | ▮ | ▮ | | | | | |
| 1b. | Visits in the region | | ▮ | | | | | |
| 1c. | Creating the documentation for evaluation and monitoring | ▮ | ▮ | ▮ | | | | |
| 2. | PROJECT PROMOTION | | | | ▮ | | | |
| 2a. | Making the promotional material | | ▮ | ▮ | | | | |
| 2b. | Information activities inside the community | | | ▮ | ▮ | | | |
| 3. | PREPARING THE WORKSHOP | | | ▮ | ▮ | ▮ | ▮ | |
| 3a. | Registering the youth | | | ▮ | ▮ | ▮ | | |
| 3b. | Registering the representatives of public authorities | | | | ▮ | ▮ | | |
| 3c. | Planning & preparing the schedule with the facilitators and the guests | | | | | ▮ | ▮ | |
| 3d. | Delivering the workshop | | | | | | ▮ | |
| 4. | FOLLOW-UP & CAPITALISATION | | | | | | | |
| 5. | PROJECT EVALUATION | | | | | ▮ | | |
| 6. | PROJECT MONITORING | ▮ | ▮ | ▮ | ▮ | ▮ | ▮ | |

## E.2. MATRICEA RISCURILOR

This is a tool for analysing and predicting the risks that may arise during the implementation of a project. In case that the risks do happen, they may affect the quality of the outcomes, may lead to additional costs or make it necessary to extend the duration of the project.
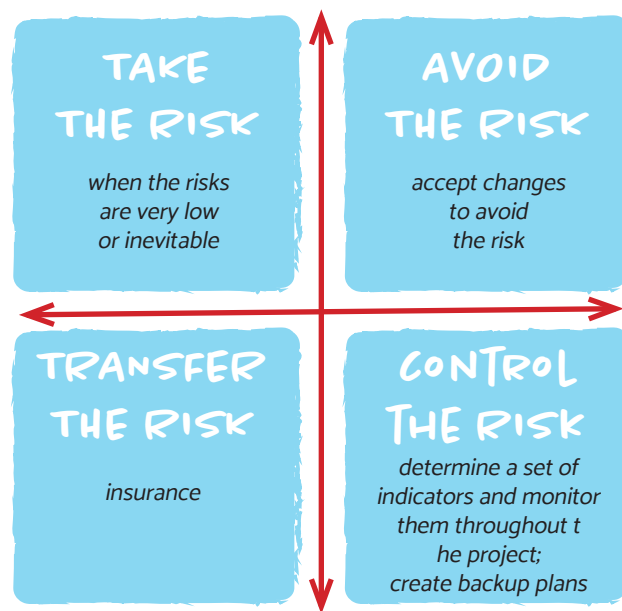
The method is applied in several phases, as follows:
**1. Identifying the risks** that may arise during the implementation, the variables influencing the implementation process.

**2. A description and an analysis of the risks**, dar, mai ales, and, especially, **estimating to what extent** the identified element may affect the project.
**Measures to counteract the risks** are identified, so that they may be avoided, prevented, or quickly solved. People from the team are appointed to be in charge with the application of measures.

Depending on the impact and the probability of risks, you may choose the strategy the implementation team may follow during the implementation – this tool is called a risk matrix.

| **TAKE THE RISK** *when the risks are very low or inevitable* | **AVOID THE RISK** *accept changes to avoid the risk* |
|---|---|
| **TRANSFER THE RISK** *insurance* | **CONTROL THE RISK** *determine a set of indicators and monitor them throughout the project; create backup plans* |

*Here are a few examples:*
*a. Risk – delay in the implementation of activities; approach – avoidance through a realistic estimation of the necessary duration and adding a buffer period;*
*b. Risk – defects of the printing equipment or of machines; approach – transfer the risk to an insurance company;*
*c. Risk – delay in the delivery of purchases from suppliers; approach – take the risk;*
*d. More complex risks – the approaches need to be estimated based on the specificity of the project and they must be controlled*

# PROBABILITY

|  | VERY LOW 1-20% | LOW 20-40% | AVERAGE 40-60% | HUGH 60-80% | VERY HIGH 80-99% |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **MINOR** | I | II | III | IV | V |
| **LOW** | II | III | IV | V | VI |
| **AVERAGE** | III | IV | V | VI | VII |
| **HIGH** | IV | V | VI | VII | VIII |
| **MAJOR** | V | VI | VII | VIII | IX |

**IMPACT**

a guide to the implementation of projects in your community

# RISK WORKSHEET

## NAME OF THE RISK

## DETAILS ABOUT THE RISK

**RISK DESCRIPTION**
*A short description of the identified risk and its potential impact on the organisation (e.g. its scope, the impact on resources, outcomes, deadlines and/or budgets)*

**RISK ASSESSMENT**

**LIKELIHOOD OF THE RISK**
Describe the likelihood of the risk to happen

1   2   3   4   5

*1. Very low 2. Low 3. Average 4. High 5. Extremely high*

**IMPACT OF THE RISK**
Describe the impact of the risk in case it happens

1   2   3   4   5

*1. Very low 2. Low 3. Average 4. High 5. Extremely high*

## COUNTERACTING THE RISK

**PROPOSED PREVENTIVE ACTION**
*What should be done to prevent the identified risk from happening?*

**REQUIRED ACTIONS IF THE RISK HAPPENS**
*What should be done, if the risk happens, so as to reduce its impact on the organisation and on the project?*

## PERSON IN CHARGE

# E.3. CPM CHART

**The Critical Path Method** is a method for analysis and for estimating the time allocated to an activity. It is useful for all complex projects/projects with several activities, with beginner teams in the implementation of projects, and also for monitoring the project throughout its implementation.

CPM involves dividing an activity or a task to be implemented into small steps and estimating the time allocated to each section.

It shows the connections between events/actions and arranges them chronologically as they take place. It is mostly a working method to be complemented by an activity plan/Gantt Chart. *On the next page, you can find a CPM chart for preparing breakfast.*
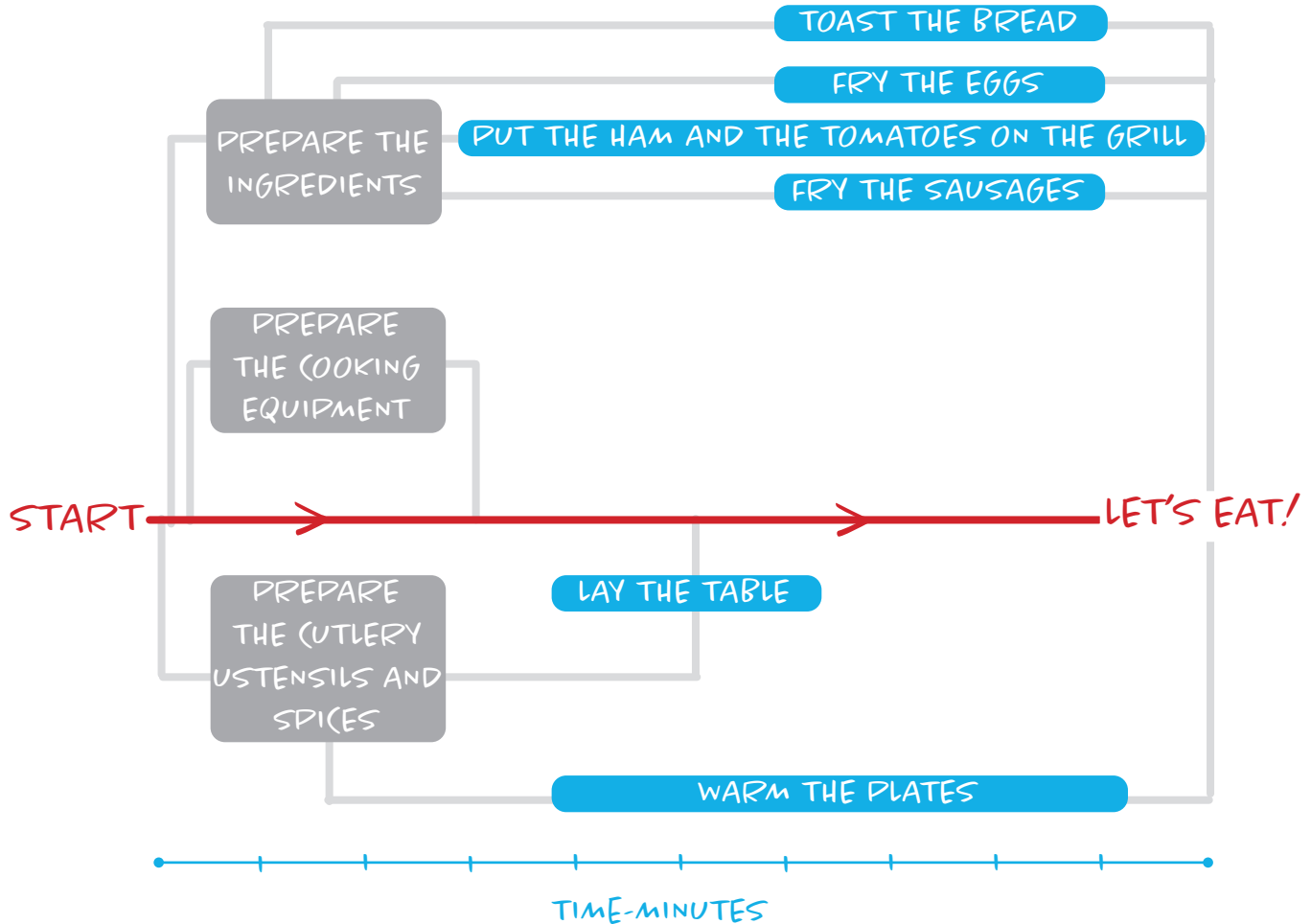
In case of an ESC project, the analysis could include activities varying in complexity and spanning a longer period – weeks and months. It is useful to create a chart in electronic format, which makes it possible to calculate the total, to insert cost estimations or necessary resources for implementing the project.

**There are several management programmes (software) and applications** to ensure the planning process.

# CPM CHART
# - PREPARING BREAKFAST-

Example



TOAST THE BREAD

FRY THE EGGS

PREPARE THE INGREDIENTS

PUT THE HAM AND THE TOMATOES ON THE GRILL

FRY THE SAUSAGES

PREPARE THE COOKING EQUIPMENT

START ————→ ————→ LET'S EAT!

PREPARE THE CUTLERY USTENSILS AND SPICES

LAY THE TABLE

WARM THE PLATES

TIME-MINUTES

*Source of the model Businessballs.com*

**RESOURCES** for project management:

https://www.businessballs.com/project-management/
http://www.scritub.com/management/INTRODUCERE-IN-MANAGEMENTUL-PR45124.php

Harold Kerzner, *Project Management. A Systems Approach to Planning, Scheduling, and Controlling,* ediţia a 11-a, John Wiley, 2013

prof. univ. dr. Dumitru Oprea, *Suport de curs „Managementul fondurilor Europene"*
*(Coursebook "Management of the European Funds")* 2011,
http://www.cse.uaic.ro/_fisiere/Documentare/Suporturi_curs/suport_curs_MP_CSE_10_11.pdf

*A Super-Quick Guide to PERT, Critical Path, and All the Other Ways to Manage a Project,*
https://redbooth.com/blog/quick-guide-pert-critical-path-project-management
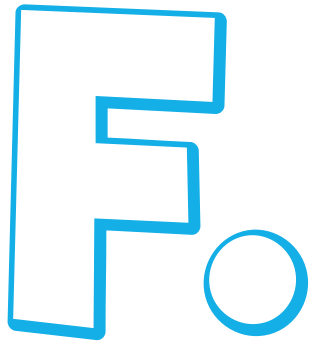
# F. PLANNING THE LEARNING GOALS

In practice, the team implementing an ESC project is many times very focused on the community and what happens within the community.
As the attention of the team is directed at how the community is organised, on the successful implementation of the project activities, etc. they forget the opportunity which the young people or volunteers in the project team have: to turn the community into their space for learning and personal and professional development.

The learning component is a priority of the ESC Programme, closely connected with and equal in significance and quality to the contribution and services brought to the community.

It is important to know that setting the learning goals takes place ever since the project planning stage, in accordance with the needs of the young people in the group, of the volunteers, but also with the type of action benefiting the community in which they participate.

Planning the learning process begins with the attention the coordinator, the coach or the mentor pays to this section and how he or she prepares the group or the volunteers for this activity.
A few of the manners which you can use to identify the learning needs of the youth/volunteers involved in the project are those described in this subchapter: *Hand Method, Quadrant Method, Personal Learning Plan, and A Letter to Myself.*

An important step is to get the members of the initiative group acquainted with defining learning objectives and how they can be formulated so as to be clear, feasible, specific and directly connected with the activities set out in the ESC project.

Considering these aspects, the coordinator or the coach of the group is responsible for facilitating a learning process for the members of the initiative group. Similarly, in volunteering and traineeships and jobs projects, the mentor plays this role in close cooperation with the coordinator of volunteers, employees, interns.
*You can find details for each of the specific roles of ESC projects – coordinator, mentor or coach – in the Programme Guide, which we invite you to see.*

### Articulating the learning objectives
Learning in the context of an ESC project entails getting involved in bringing about the change and "being" part of it (attitude), "knowing" how to solve the issues of the community (knowledge) and "making" things happen (skills).

The competences developed in the framework of a solidarity project are composed of knowledge, skills and attitudes and behaviours that are necessary to the intervention for solving the community issues.
<span style="color:red">There are two competences which should be developed and practiced in all ESC projects: learning to learn and reflective learning.</span>

The definition of learning objectives employs key words and, next, there are a few examples from Benjamin Bloom's taxonomy (1956, 2011).
In 1999, Lorin Anderson and his co-workers brought complements to Bloom's taxonomy and put forward the difference between "know what" – t*he content of thinking* and "know how", which emphasises *problem solving and especially "creating" and learning by doing something new.*

### Types of verbs for creating learning goals:
**to remember**– to recognise, to list, to describe, to identify, to name, to locate, to find;
**to understand**– to interpret, to sum up, to paraphrase, to classify, to compare, to explain, to exemplify;
**to apply**– to implement, to use, to perform;
**to analyse** – to compare, to organise, to deconstruct, to assign, to underline, to structure, to integrate;
**to evaluate**– to check, to issue hypotheses, to review, to experiment, to judge, to detect, to test, to monitor;
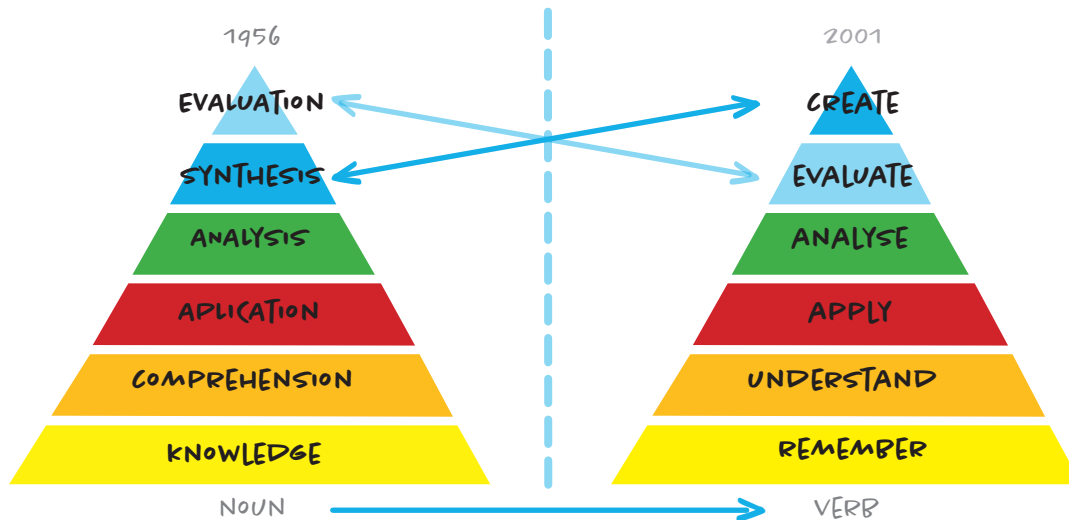**to create**–  to construct, to plan, to produce, to invent, to make.

# BLOOM'S TAXONOMY

Examples

| CAPACITIES | DEFINITION | KEYWORDS |
|---|---|---|
| KNOWLEDGE | Remembering information | identify, describe, name, label, recognise, reproduce, follow |
| COMPREHENSION | Understanding meaning, paraphrasing a concept | summarise, modify, defend, paraphrase, interpret, give examples |
| APLICATION | Using the information or the concept in a new situation | construct, make, form, model, predict, prepare |
| ANALYSIS | Breaking down information or concepts into parts to understand them better | compare/contrast, break down, distinguish, select, separate |
| SYNTHESIS | Using ideas to produce something new | categorise, generalise, reconstruct |
| EVALUATION | Issuing value judgments | appraise, criticise, judge, justify, argue, support |

# ANDERSON & KRATHWOHL TAXONOMY



1956

EVALUATION
SYNTHESIS
ANALYSIS
APLICATION
COMPREHENSION
KNOWLEDGE

NOUN

2001

CREATE
EVALUATE
ANALYSE
APPLY
UNDERSTAND
REMEMBER

VERB

SMART is an acronym you may use to guide you when you articulate your goals, where each letter stands for an essential characteristic of a right, complete, clear and accessible wording of a goal:

**S – specific**
**M – measurable**
**A – achievable**
**R – realistic**
**T – time delimited**.

Very used in the area of management, SMART may have now different meanings in different contexts and to different people. (For example: "S" may also mean simple, sensible, or significant; "M" may signify motivating, or meaningful=having a purpose); "A" means attainable or accomplishable, and "R" means reasonable.)

Moreover, the definition of the acronym SMART may have updated forms, extended so as to reflect the importance of effectiveness and feedback, to include additional areas of focus.
One of its appropriate forms in the context of ESC projects could be SMARTER, which includes two characteristics:

**E - evaluation** şi
**R - readjustment**.

**Example of a SMART learning goal:**
*Developing communication skills together with institutional partners – mayor's office, hospital and police – within the solidarity project in the community X throughout 6 months.*

In this example, E-evaluation and R-readjustment may be implicit when making a communication plan which you can permanently adjust if one of the chosen mechanisms doesn't work as expected.
*For example: choosing electronic channels – email, Facebook, etc. – for communicating with the partners in a small community may prove inefficient compared to face-to-face meetings.*

More often than not, the articulations of learning goals are much more direct, such as:
- *to know how to write a press release;*
- *to know how to be a team player;*
- *to be able to communicate with the mayor, etc.*

Depending on the experience and the age of the members in the initiative group, the articulation of the objectives for the planning phase is decided by the coordinator, who will choose the best method to work with.

**S**

**Specific**,  i.e. the goal/objective is clearly expressed and concise; it indicates precisely what you want to get, is focused on creating, acquiring or developing;

**A**

The objective/goal is **Achievable/Accomplishable/ Approachable**- and especially connected with the reality of the community where the project takes place and is appropriate for the setting intended for developing the competences of the youth involved;

**T**

**Time** delimited – every objective/goal has a time limit within which it has to be achieved, irrespective whether it is about developing competences, applying some competences or transferring competences developed by the young people to the community, etc.;

**R**

**Readjustment**  – at the time of the evaluation, if progress is not made as expected, you may intervene on the manner in which the competence is developed and change how learning takes place – *online vs. face-to-face, peer-to-peer learning vs. training course/ workshops, coaching or facilitation*, etc.

**M**

the objective/goal is **Measurable**, ao you can follow progress – quantitatively and also qualitatively. Evaluating the progress helps you stay focused, meet your deadlines, and feel the enthusiasm of approaching your goal; and in a community context, there is also the "*Why?*", which reflects on the motivation to make a change both inside, a personal one, and outside, in the community;

**R**

**Realistic**– the objective/learning goal is relevant to the target group or the group that sets it, and is also relevant to the community;

**E**

**Evaluation**- athis phase includes the development of their proper system or identifying a person who can provide support in analysing how learning takes place, and how the competence is developed;

The **European Solidarity Corps Programme** emphasises learning in all its forms, in formal, non-formal or informal contexts, the learning which leads to personal and professional development, through contributions to the common good of the community. Here are a few methods to facilitate the planning of learning goals in your team.

# F.1. HAND METHOD

This method is suitable for the initiative group or the implementation team of a solidarity project. Its role is to identify elements related to competences, knowledge, skills and attitudes, which the members of the working team say they have and they want and intend to develop further throughout the solidarity project.

**Duration:** 330-45 minutes (it includes both an individual work phase and a group discussion phase)

**Supplies:** white/coloured paper, ball point pens or markers/felt-tipped pens (depending on the number of participants), chairs laid out in a circle and a facilitator (for a solidarity project: a coordinator or a coach).

**Number of participants:** maximum 10 (it depends on the size of the initiative group and also on the facilitation skills of the group coordinator).

KNOWLEDGE, ATTITUDES, SKILLS WHICH I THINK I HAVE AND I CAN USE IN THE COMMUNITY-BASED ACTIVITY
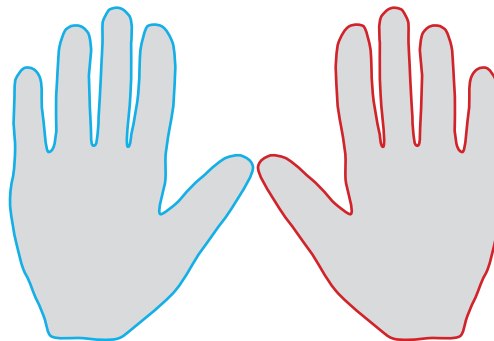
KNOWLEDGE, ATTITUDES, SKILLS WHICH I WANT TO DEVELOP IN THE PROJECT, I WANT TO LEARN, OR I NEED SUPPORT TO DEVELOP

This method may be used at the beginning of collaboration in a solidarity project, in the phase when expectations are set about the project and about how the members of the initiative group want to develop.

**Preparing and facilitating the method:**
the participants are invited to draw the shape of their right hand on a piece of paper and the shape of their left hand on another.

### Individual reflection phase

On the piece of paper with the shape of their right hand, on each finger, they will indicate elements such as K - Knowledge, S - Skills and A - Attitudes, which they consider they have and may use in their community work.

On the piece of paper with the shape of their left hand, based on the model above, they will indicate ASK elements which they want to develop in the framework of the project, want to learn or need support to develop.

### Group discussion/facilitated discussion phase

The participants are invited to list the ASK elements – Attitudes, Skills and Knowledge – which they mentioned on the shape of their right hand. They can make a common list for the group, and then they do the same with the elements on the left hand shape.

### Types of questions used in the facilitated discussion:

*Which elements are of common interest? How can we develop them in the solidarity project? Which support do you need to accomplish this throughout the project? Based on the list of project activities, in which phases do you think you can develop one of the competences pursued?*

**Attention:** The forms which result after this exercise may also be used in the learning evaluation process at the end of the solidarity project or of a community work stage – a more intense activity or an activity with a greater impact in the community.

The **questions** below may be used in the **evaluation phase** with regard to the progress made in the learning process or for the final evaluation of learning among the members of the initiative group*:
How do you intend to pass on what you have learned in this community-based project?
How do you intend to apply what you have learned in this solidarity project? Which future activities would you like to engage with – in this community or elsewhere?*

The elements they want to develop may be connected with the objectives and activities of the solidarity project. This way, the members of the initiative group may identify the stages during which they can develop the listed competences. Starting with the competences written on the left hand shape, the members of the initiative group may put together a personal development plan.

# F.2. QUADRANT METHOD

This is a method for the self-evaluation of the group members with regard to competences which are necessary for the implementation of an ESC project, or competences intended to be developed during the implementation of the project.

**Duration:** up to 45 minutes (depending on the size of the group and the phases considered – the individual phase and discussion, or the individual phase, the group phase and discussion).
**Supplies:**
chalk, adhesive tape, pens, white or coloured paper.

## Preparing and facilitating the method

First you draw a square with 4 quadrants and put the following letters in each of them and explain the significance of each letter:
- A (excellent): I have those skills/that knowledge and I am able to help other colleagues acquire them.
- B (very good): I have these skills, attitudes or knowledge, but I don't know how to explain, I can do everything without help, but I am not able to help somebody else do it.
- C (good): I need support, feedback to complete the given tasks using knowledge, skills and attitudes developed during the task.
- D (insufficient/to be developed): they have not skills, attitudes and knowledge that are necessary to complete the tasks, they need support to develop and apply them in the future.

**One possibility** is to work individually, where the participants carry-out a self-evaluation based on a list of competences made by their coordinator/coach.

*This form may be used at the beginning and at the end of a community-based project.*
*Participants can re-evaluate themselves and can see their progress in the project.*

**Another variant** is to conduct this activity as a group exercise, and the quadrants explained below may be drawn on the floor with chalk or adhesive tape, and the participants may position themselves inside the quadrants depending on how they think they can perform those tasks.
The positioning decision is a personal one, and they become resources for other colleagues or may be helped by the others to develop.

The participants positioned in this area may become resources for the others and so peer-to-peer learning can take place;

The participants positioned in this area need specialised help; they need training or a workshop, support from their coordinator/ coach depending on the type of knowledge, skill or attitude concerned;

**A  D**

**C  B**

The participants positioned in this area are those who can be helped by the ones positioned at A;

The participants positioned in this area may carry out what they have to; they need encouragement and being valued;

# WORKSHEET

Example

| TYPE OF COMPETENCE | PARTICIPANT'S NAME | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | **A**<br>EXCELLENT | **B**<br>VERY GOOD | **C**<br>GOOD | **D**<br>INSUFFICIENT |
| I CAN EDIT AN ANNOUNCEMENT | | | | |
| I CAN ANALYSE A PROBLEM | | | | |
| I CAN OFFER SOLUTIONS | | | | |
| I CAN BE A TEAM WORKER | | | | |
| I CAN GIVE A PUBLIC SPEECH | | | | |
| I CAN MANAGE THE PROJECT BUDGET | | | | |
| I CAN KEEP IN TOUCH WITH INSTITUTIONAL PARTNERS | | | | |
| ETC. | | | | |

# F.3. PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

**Duration:**
we recommend you to have the participants work individually, and the time for completing the form should be 30 minutes or less – it may be adjusted depending on the participants' needs (it may also include work in depth in privacy, at home, after the meeting with the members of the initiative group).

**Supplies:**
a standard table, which may be drawn on paper or electronically, a laptop and a projector or flipchart paper showing the activities in the solidarity project

This is a method for individual work, which may include support, if the person making the plan needs help (from either the facilitator, or a colleague, or the coach).

During the individual work/reflection phase, the participants may ask the facilitator for information on the project, and this is why we recommend that an excerpt of the planned activities is projected or displayed on a flipchart in the meeting room.

Depending on their experience with such reflection tools, the participants may be divided in small groups of 2 people (dyads) so that they may consult each other and also to ensure the evaluation component throughout the implementation of the solidarity project.

**Preparing and facilitating the method::**
A Personal Development Plan includes several analysis steps:
1. Identifying the knowledge, skill and attitude elements which the person wants to develop during the solidarity project.
2. Articulating the learning goals.
3. Identifying which activities in the solidarity project may help them achieve those learning goals.
4. Identifying the achievement or success criteria.
5. Elements for assessing achievement and how they can apply what they have learned in the future.

# MY PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

for the next 3 months

| KNOWLEDGE | SKILLS | ATTITUDES |
|-----------|--------|-----------|
| I KNOW... | I CAN... | I AM MORE... |

_____  _____  _____

_____  _____  _____

_____  _____  _____

Which activities in the solidarity project can help me achieve the goals above?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Which indicators will show me that I have accomplished my goals? (I'll give a public presentation, I'll write a press release, I'll work efficiently in a project team, etc.)

_____

_____

_____

_____

How am I going to put into effect what I have learned in this community-based project?

_____

_____

_____

How can I pass on what I have learned to my colleagues or to another community?

_____

_____

_____

# F.4. A LETTER TO MYSELF

This is a method for individual reflection and needs a facilitated discussion

**Preparing and facilitating the method:**
The members of the initiative group imagine that they have completed their solidarity project in the community and send letters to themselves – the ones in the past, listing the elements mentioned by the facilitator during the reflection time.

Questions: *What have you learned in this project? What learning goals did you set? What learning goals have you achieved in the project? How are you emotionally at the end of the project? And throughout the project? Who are the people who supported you? What resources did you use to achieve your learning goals? What elements motivated you during the project?*

During the reflection, some music in the background may be helpful in the process. Letters shall be put in envelopes and kept by the end of the project, when an evaluation of the elements written in them will take place to see if they have been attained.

**Duration:**
30 de minutes.
**Supplies:**
white or coloured paper, pens, envelopes – the number of sets is equal to the number of participants.

**The facilitated discussion** at the end of the reflection phase will include questions like*:*
*How was it to imagine yourself at the end of the project? What emotion has it caused in you? How were you emotionally at the end of the project? What two elements you wrote in your letter can you share with the others? Which activities help you fulfil what you wrote in your letter? Which resources are necessary to achieve your learning goals and can you find all of them within the project or in your group? What do you plan to do as from tomorrow so you can accomplish the elements in your letter?*

If you detail the process above, this can lead to a personal development plan. We recommend this method especially when a tool such as a detailed plan does not work, there is not enough time dedicated to reflection or the participants need additional support to do the reflection as in the case of a personal development plan.

**RESOURCES:**

Anita Silva, Darko Marković, Paul Kloosterman, *Handbook Valued by You, Valued by Others – Improving the Visibility of Competences in Youthpass*, SALTO Training and Cooperation, https://www.youthpass.eu/en/publications/valuedbyyou/

*Learning out of the box* – a card game, https://www.youthpass.eu/en/publications/card-game/

Richard C. Overbaugh Lynn Schultz, *Bloom's Taxonomy*, https://www.clemson.edu/studentaffairs/sabo/assess-ment/documents/Blooms_Taxonomy_Comparison_of_Old_and_New_Models.pdf

David R. Krathwohl, *A Revision of Bloom's Taxonomy: An Overview, în Theory into Practice*, Volume 41, Number 4, Autumn 2002, College of Education, The Ohio State University, https://www.depauw.edu/files/resources/krathwohl.pdf

*Setting S.M.A.R.T.E.R. Goals: 7 Steps to Achieving Any Goal*, https://www.wanderlustworker.com/setting-s-m-a-r-t-e-r-goals-7-steps-to-achieving-any-goal/

*Făcut şi învăţat! 36 de activităţi de reflecţie prin care îi ajuţi pe elevi să extragă lecţii din orice experienţă*, (Done and learnt! 36 reflection activities to help your students learn lessons from any experience) Fundaţia Noi Orizonturi, 2017, https://www.noi-orizonturi.ro/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/F%C4%83cut-%C8%99i-%C3%AEnv%C4%83%C8%9Bat_2017.pdf

# G. CONSULTATION AND PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

The essence of public participation is the bidirectional communication and the interaction between the organisation/informal group and the community/people who are interested in or affected by a decision, an initiative, or an intervention you pursue.

As we emphasised in the previous sections, in solidarity projects, the involvement of the community in the social and community-based intervention is vital. The identification of a real need of the community and then the outline of an intervention plan is a responsibility which is important to be shared between the organisation/informal group and the community.

This chapter shows techniques which may be used to consult with the community and to encourage active participation in the implementation of the intervention, such as *Consultative groups and working groups, Appreciative Inquiry, World Café and Open Space.*

Some of these techniques also ensure interaction, some are tools for a general use, while others serve more specific purposes.
In choosing the consultation technique, is very important to dwell first on the questions:
*Why do I have a public consultation? What is the purpose of the consultation purpose? What do I do with the outcomes of the public consultation process?*

These are **the important steps to be taken in planning a public consultation process:**

Decide who is important to be part of the team planning and implementing the consultation process.

Identify the stakeholders and any possible challenges you may encounter during the process.

Evaluate the likely level of controversy around the subject/topic of the consultation.

Set and lay down the objectives of the public consultation.

Identify what information is important to give to the public and what information you need to achieve your objectives.

Identify whether there are any special considerations which might influence the selection of the consultation techniques.

Select the techniques which are appropriate for the public you want to consult.

Prepare a plan for the implementation of the consultation process(es).

Outline an information collection system.

Make a plan for using the information collected from the outline of the intervention plan.

Identify ways to engage the community with the implementation of the consultation plan, and the intervention plan, sharing the responsibilities for the action and the outcomes.

Next, we recommend you a few methods and techniques for consultation.
They are not the only methods which may be used for this purpose.

# G.1. CONSULTATIVE GROUPS AND WORKING GROUPS

**Duration of the activity:** between 60 and 180 minutes.
**Necessary resources:** flipchart paper, markers, video projector, laptop (for keeping notes electronically).
**Number of participants:** minimum 10 - maximum 30.
**Participants' age:** at least 18. (Or younger if they belong to the group facing the problem identified in the community. If they are less than 18, it is important that parents give their assent to the participation of their children.)
The maximum age is not relevant. It may depend on the theme of the intervention and the profile of the target group.

A technique often used for both participating in the decision-making and consulting the public is the consultative group.

A consultative group is a small group of people representing various interests, fields of expertise, and views. Such a group is established to give advice to an organisation or an informal group on their programmes or actions addressed to a community.

If the actions are not outlined, the consultative group becomes a working group that works together for making the action plan, based on the real needs of the community, found in advance.

ome organisations use consultative groups as the main mechanism for involving various actors in the process of identifying problems and/or issues, as a mechanism for checking whether the outlined intervention plan is rooted in reality and responds to the proposed objectives and to the profile of the people involved.

Others use consultative groups in specific circumstances, for example, as an adjuvant to other types of public participation activities.

# G.2.APPRECIATIVE INQUIRY (AI)

**Duration:**
from 60 minutes to 180 hours. The process may be split across several meetings, but this is not recommended.

**Supplies:** flipchart paper, markers, coloured paper, coloured pencils, post-its, pens, laptop (for centralising the outcomes), paper adhesive tape, tables, available area

**Number of participants:** the method may involve up to hundreds and thousands of people.

**Participants' age:** at least 18 (or younger if they belong to the group facing the problem identified in the community). If they are less than 18, it is important that parents give their assent to the participation of their children. The maximum age is not relevant. It may depend on the theme of the intervention and the profile of the target group.

Appreciative Inquiry is a method developed by David Cooperrider and Suresh Srivastva in 1980 (USA) while researching "What's wrong with the human component in an organisation", at Case Western Reserve University.

Appreciative Inquiry (AI) is a method that primarily aims to look for and find what is best in a community, it its people, in the organisations and groups they belong to and, in principle, in the world.

**Advantages of AI**

Focusing on the positive aspects is an exercise where people discover the existing strengths and resources which they can use in solving a problem instead of dwelling on problems. This principle may be a powerful incentive for change and for going from the role of a passive actor in the community to that of an active and engaged actor.

The method involves a systematic discovery of those ingredients that "give life" to a system, a context, a community at the time when they work effectively and are in full capacity in an economic, ecological and human perspective.

AI involves the practice and the art of asking questions that strengthen the capacity of a system to grow and realize its positive potential.

The method creates the context for finding out about and inquiring a system through positive questions.

### Appreciative Inquiry:

- accelerates change,
- increases the improvement rate and the speediness of achieving the objectives pursued,
- creates/increases motivation and energy among people who contribute and want to make a change,
- improves communication, trust, understanding and the relations between people,
- contributes to raise the team/initiative group/ intervention group (the initiative group and the community) and discovers, extends and supports the use of what is best and already existing,
- changes the basic focus from the problem to the opportunity,
- raises curiosity and the feeling of vitality,
- empowers and gives people the trust to take risks and accept responsibilities.

AI is based on discovering what works in a context, what "gives life", what generates energy and enthusiasm and then helps to determine how to create more of the existing energy. In terms of solidarity principles, this translates into involving the community to use to the fullest the potential existing inside the community, making use of any kind of resources (human, material, etc.) in the change process.

AI focuses on the positive aspects and on how they can be spread, re-viewed and how they can contribute to raising the quality of life, without requiring additional resources.
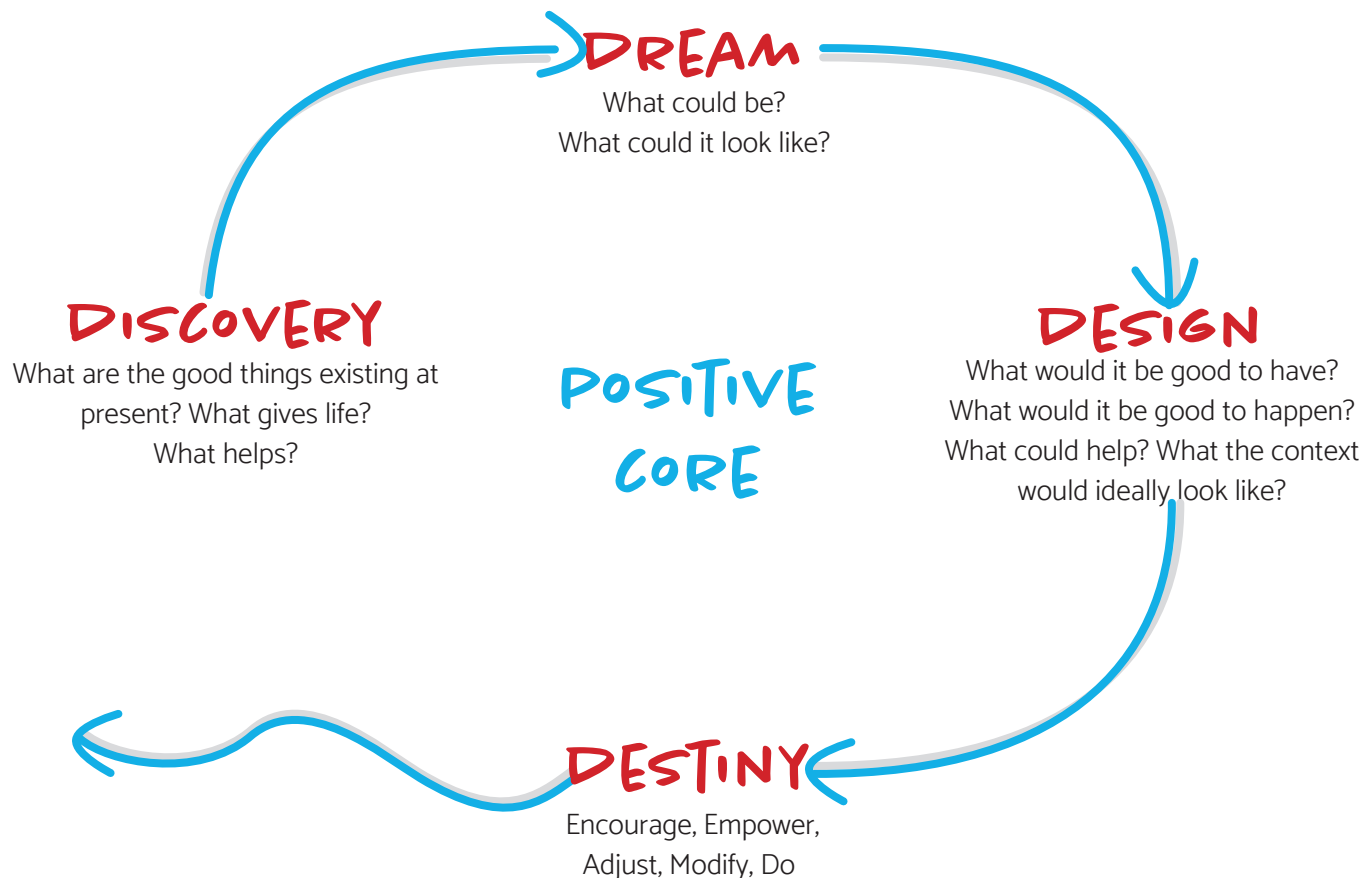
### AI = 4D a model – a 4 step process

David Cooperrider and Diana Whitney, the developers of the method, describe 4 steps in the inquiry and consultation process: Discover, Dream, Design, Deliver. The last step is also called sometimes Destiny.

The 4 steps entail reflection and contribution based on a positive core. This "core" is the topic chosen for inquiry and consultation.

*For example: The educational system in the village Izvoarele (next, the examples for the 4 steps will be given for this topic)*

# APPRECIATIVE INQUIRY

## DREAM
What could be?
What could it look like?

## DISCOVERY
What are the good things existing at present? What gives life?
What helps?

## POSITIVE CORE

## DESIGN
What would it be good to have?
What would it be good to happen?
What could help? What the context would ideally look like?

## DESTINY
Encourage, Empower,
Adjust, Modify, Do

SYSTEMS DEVELOP
IN THE DIRECTION
OF THE QUESTIONS.

*Reproduction after Cooperrider et.al*

**1. Discover** – The purpose of this step is to inform. It is a listing of all positive aspects, existing (in the past and at present) in connection with the proposed theme. (*Example: 2 schools existing in the village, 1 of them is provided with the necessary equipment for a quality educational process, motivated teachers, etc.*). Attention – the challenge in this step is not to list things that do not exist, or do not work properly, etc.

**2. Dream** – Keeping in mind the results of Step 1, at this stage, invite your participants to dream. Now it is important that the contributing actors put down on paper all the ideas coming to their minds about what the ideal image of the proposed theme would look like. As the name says (dream), this is the step when everything can be listed, without considering the realism of the idea, the possibility of putting it into effect in the near future or in the given context. This step encourages creativity and the emergence of all ideas coming to the minds of those present. (*Example, exchanges of experience between schools, at national or international level, student rights lessons, sexual education workshops, joint activities with the parents, the existence of dedicated student transportation between villages, etc.*). From all the ideas that have been listed, at the end of this step, they will choose those ideas and topics based on which the discussion/ inquiry will continue during the next step – Design. The choice will take into account the community context and its urgent needs.

**3. Design** – In case of large groups, this step may be taken in small discussion groups. Each group may focus on one idea/topic chosen during the previous step. Invite the group to elaborate on the idea, to envisage it and to describe what it would look like when put into effect. Each group will thus have a picture of the future with regard to the idea they focus on. Invite the group to keep the positive view in articulating the plan and the description. This step is intended to determine what will be in the future and how the community will be transformed.

**4. Delivery/Implementation/Destiny** –  During this step, the work in small groups will continue on the topics developed at the previous step. The membership of the groups may be different, which would actually be ideal. Invite each group to draw up a plan, with steps, about how the elaborated idea could be put into effect, which are the necessary resources and how long it will take to be implemented. This is a time for outlining responsibilities, tasks and stages which might lead to the realization of the idea about how the ideal, desirable future could look in the community. This step may also be compared to a laboratory for creating the future. The ideas generated during this stage should be realistic and tied to the present situation.

It is important that after step 4, you also have an idea about who are the people willing to contribute to the outlined picture and how they can involve in making the future happen.

**Preparing and facilitating the method:**

The method may be applied in an enclosed area, and also in a space arranged outside. It can be applied as an event where all the actors concerned with and relevant to the consultation theme are invited.

It is important that the space is divided in 4 well defined areas, one for each step.

You may use tables and chairs, you may arrange an area with pillows and blankets around a flipchart, you can display the flipchart paper on the walls together with post-its, pens and coloured felt tips. The ideas generated during each step will be written each of them on a post-it, so you can easily pick-up those for carrying out steps 3 and 4.

For each single step, supporting questions may be outlined and displayed to encourage the participants to come up with as many ideas as possible (*e.g. What does work well in the community? How do you see the reality – what are the good things that you can see? What would you like the future to look like? What would it be good to have? What do you need so you can act on the plan?, etc.*).

If you work in small groups, each group will manage its own discussions, data, time and gathering of ideas.

For this self-management to work, there are a few roles below which the participants may take on in turns.

1. **Discussion facilitator** – makes sure that every person wishing to speak is heard during the available time. He or she keeps the group focused on the discussion topic so that they can finish in good time.

2. **Time keeper** – keeps the group informed about how much time has left. He or she monitors the ideas listed on paper and signals the remaining time for speaking.

3. **Recorder** – writes down the ideas coming from the group members; writes the outcomes of the group on the flipchart and on post-its.

4. **Reporter** – sets out the main ideas – the outcome of discussions – for the large group. People playing this role may also assist with writing the electronic report of the process.

## G.3. WORLD CAFE

World Café is a method for active dialogue, exchange of information and finding creative solutions for action. Generally, a world café is used when you want a relaxed debate about a particular topic, which also allows increased interaction and close relations between the participants.
It is also a very good method for consultation and participation in the decision-making. In the context of solidarity projects, the method may be useful both in the need analysis process and in outlining the set of solutions and actions for community intervention.

It is important that a world café calls into question aspects about which you want to find out the opinion of the community and of other actors involved in the identified issues. The participants must include both those directly affected and those indirectly affected by the issue/discussion topic, and also representatives of public institutions, who might provide support for the implementation of systems and procedures which improve the state of affairs. The method is one that encourages cross-sector cooperation. For it to have a long-term impact, it needs a final report which gathers the answers from all the participants and also recommendations for actions, documents, policies which may be implemented.

**Duration**: between 60 and 120 minutes

**Supplies**: flipchart paper, markers, paper adhesive tape

**Number of participants:** at least 12 – at most 40 (for the process to be efficient). The upper limit is not very strict.

**Participants' age:** at least 18 (or younger if they belong to the group facing the problem identified in the community). If they are less than 18, it is important that parents give their assent to the participation of their children.
The maximum age is not relevant. It may depend on the theme of the intervention and the profile of the target group.

**Preparing and facilitating the method:**
The following seven principles for the design and the implementation of the World Café method are an integrated set of ideas and practices underlying the original pattern as developed by Juanita Brown and David Isaacs in 1995.

## 1) Setting the context

It is important that the purpose for organising a world café event is very clear to you. *Why do you want to gather those people? What do you want to find out? What do you want to use the outcomes of the meeting for?*

Knowing the purpose will help you outline the event better, identify all the actors you want to consult and the profile of the participants in the consultation process. This will also help you to communicate with them and to draw them closer to you. You will know, for example, who should participate in the conversation, what topics and questions will be the most appropriate and relevant, which way is the best for getting impressions and presenting them later, etc.

## 2) Creating a welcoming setting

It is important that the setting where the world café takes place is welcoming, hospitable, where people feel safe and comfortable to contribute. When people feel comfortable with being themselves, creativity is enhanced, listening is more active and there is more willingness to contribute.  The setting may be arranged like a café or it may be a café. It is important to be quiet, to have coffee, tea, water. The creation of a beneficent environment is also linked to how the host of the event invites people to take part in the process and how he or she guides what happens afterwards.

## 3) Exploring the right questions, those that matter

Knowledge comes like answers to convincing questions. Find relevant questions for concerns related to the real life of the group, correlated with the central theme of the meeting. Powerful questions, which guide them well, help to draw some collective energy, lead to contribution from intuition and the availability to take action as the understanding of the issue or the theme becomes deeper.

Depending on the available time and your goals, a world café may explore just one question or may use a line of inquiry progressively deeper, across several rounds of conversation. You may have a central topic and 3-4 questions depicting various aspects of it. The central topic may be an issue or a solution you want to submit to the consultation process.

### 4) Encouraging all the participants to contribute

In the context of solidarity projects and projects having solidarity as a transversal principle, we underline that it is important that the method does more than invite people to dialogue. It is important that the participants, the community, go beyond participating and expressing opinions and assume roles in the implementation of the ideas which come up and are subsequently approved in the extended group. It is also important to encourage everybody to contribute with ideas and to mention why their contribution is valuable both in the consultation process and subsequently, in the implementation process, when they have an opportunity to make a difference. Moreover, participation also means active listening and observation. It is important that people don't feel any pressure to talk.

### 5) Collecting different perspectives

A world café offers an opportunity for the participants to move between tables, meet new people, contribute actively to the process shaping ideas, identifying solutions, outlining intervention steps, etc. You, as the organiser, have the opportunity to link the basics coming from the conclusions of the discussions to the thinking circles which are continuously growing and, consequently, to see different perspectives on the situation. In a world café, there are great opportunities for the generation of new and innovative ideas.

### 6) Listening together to new models & perspectives

Listening is a gift which we offer to each other. The quality of our listening is maybe the most important factor determining the success of a world café. By practicing active listening, together with the others, and paying increased attention to the discussion topics, patterns and perspectives, a connection with the whole (the community, the group, etc.) takes shape. Certainly, a world café creates the premises for integrating and complying with the principle of solidarity – the care for the whole. It is important to encourage the participants to pay also attention to the things that are not spoken, to identify them and to put them forward with the ideas so as to make sure that all possible ideas are revealed.

### 7) Sharing the collective conclusions

The conversations taking place at a table reflect an outcome of the whole, an outcome connected with the conversations at the other tables, making together the collective whole. The last phase of the world café involves a presentation of the outcomes of each discussion group for all the participants.
The presentation may be delivered in many ways – a verbal presentation, a flipchart gallery which each participant can visit and read etc. Invite all those who are present to take a few minutes and reflect quietly on the outcomes and encourage them to ask clarifying questions, if any.

15 MINUTES

**1**

15 MINUTES

**2**

SPREADING AT
THE TABLES
10 MINUTES

**OPENING**

10 MINUTE

**3**

**CONCLUSIONS**
CLOSURE

„HARVESTING"
THE
PROPOSALS

3 SOLUTIONS
+ 1 SPEAKER

15 MINUTES+
5 MINUTES

20 MINUTES
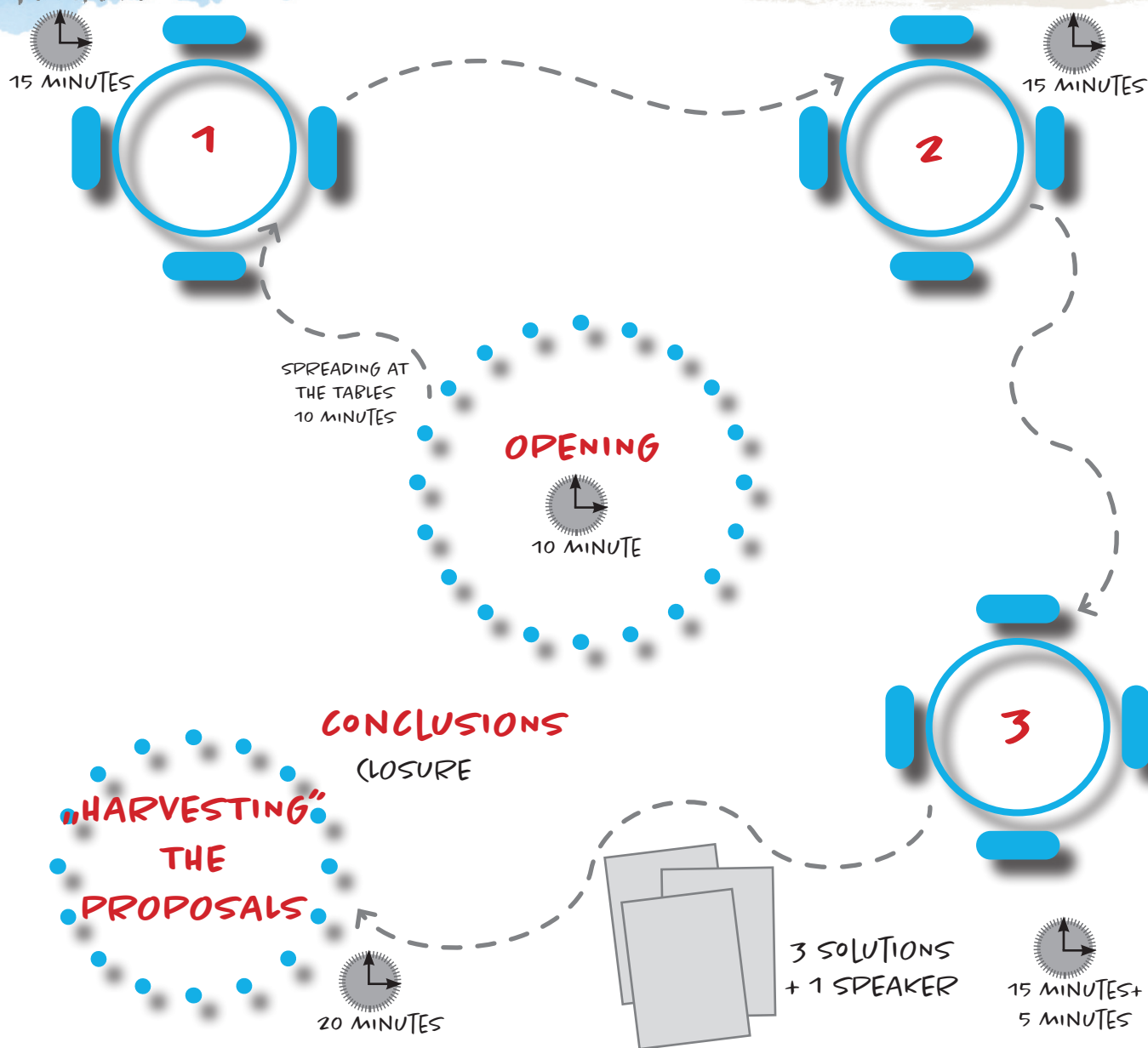
# G.4. OPEN SPACE

Open Space is a method developed by Harrison Owen. The method works like a meeting. It brings people together in a clearly delimited setting and encourages them to contribute with as many ideas as possible about the proposed topics for discussion.

### Duration:
The method explores the issues in an 8 hour meeting. Nevertheless, depending on the complexity of the outcome (planning an intervention, community strategic planning, etc.), the process may take up to several days, the method being a complex one.

### Supplies:
lipchart paper, markers, coloured paper, a large room or several small rooms/settings arranged outdoor (if the weather allows it), a laptop for centralizing the outcomes.

### Number of participants:
There is not a minimum or a maximum number of participants. The method is appropriate instead for a large number of participants.
However, in numbers, Open Space may be organised with groups of up to 20,000 participants.

**Preparing and facilitating the method:**

Open Space has the following basic rules, which you should consider when you want to apply this method:

**1.** It is important that the venue is a large room, with sufficient space available for arranging several settings for meeting on different topics. It can also be a place with several rooms which may be used simultaneously. It is important that you can affix flipchart paper to the walls or have a dedicated area for displaying them – the outcomes of the discussion groups, for each topic.

**2.** The facilitator (who can also be the host of the event) will launch the meeting by announcing the general theme. This is typically done in such a way as to intrigue and to encourage the participants to contribute. It is important that the topics for discussion are exciting for them, interesting to the community in the room/setting and derived from their clear and real needs.

**3.** The facilitator invites the attendees to express their opinion and to identify the issues and/or opportunities in connection with the proposed theme. It is important that they express their own views and indicate the things that deeply concern them and not to speak on behalf of others, generalizing and issuing value judgements on the discussed topic.

The main purpose for the participants is to identify also ideas in connection with which they would later take on a responsibility, in an attempt to initiate an intervention process on the identified issue. Similarly, the role of the facilitator is to encourage people to propose solutions which they would apply themselves, and not ideas or solutions about what "someone should do". This aspect also supports the respect for the principles of solidarity which encourage the engagement of the community with the change processes and sharing the responsibility for the implementation of an intervention.

**4.** Everyone having an idea writes a short title for it on an A4 piece of paper or on flipchart paper. It is important that the person making a proposal for a theme writes his/her name on paper. The person making the proposal will also guide, at least at the beginning, the discussion on that topic.

After all the topics for discussion, in connection with the theme of the meeting, have been proposed, the participants are invited to join the topic that interests them.

As mentioned above, a proposed topic is either an issue or an opportunity suggested for the theme of the meeting (*e.g. "The problem I have identified is... My name is ... and I propose to discuss about this."/ "One possible solution I have identified is... . My name is... and I suggest that we should see what we can do together in this respect, to see if this solution is viable, etc."*)

**5.** Every person who identified an idea takes then the responsibility indicating the estimated time required by the discussion and where the discussion will take place (the room, the corner, the confined area, etc.).

**6.** The participants in the meeting choose a role and the discussion groups they want to attend to, contribute with ideas, depending on the topic that interests them and their motivation to get involved subsequently in the implementation of the ideas which have been presented.
It is important to say that a principle of Open Space is that the participants can move at any time from a discussion to another if they feel that they exhausted the ideas at a particular place. There is not a limited time for spending with a discussion; the time is rather managed by everyone for themselves and their role.

**7.** At the end, each group/moderator prepares a summary of the discussion on each topic.
The summary is then presented to the group and, preferably, typed and sent via email to all the participants and organisers, so that they can have centralised outcomes, which they can refer to later and even include in formal documents, if necessary.

**8.** In conclusion, it is important to mention the steps that follow after the consultation and, especially, what will happen with the outcomes of the meeting.

**9.** Thank to the participants for their contributions and tell them how you will contact them when the implementation of the proposed ideas starts.

In choosing their roles, as indicated at point 6 above, the participants in an open space have to choose between being "bees" and/or "butterflies".

**Bees** are those participants who sit at just one table (usually they are those who suggested the topic, but not only them) and contribute or sum up the ideas as they come. When they feel they have exhausted a topic, or think they can contribute more elsewhere or they just get bored, the bees may migrate to another group that is approaching an interesting topic, similarly to the real bees moving from one flower to another.

**Butterflies** are simply flying during the open space. They move from one group to another, spend some time at a cup of coffee or outside the groups that are discussing the proposed topics. It is possible that none of the suggested topics resonates sufficiently with them, or maybe they need time for themselves or have other topics to cover thoroughly.

In the Open Space philosophy, this principle is called the "**Law of Two Feet**". The premise is that the participants are mature and responsible for their own learning process and for deciding to contribute where they feel they can and want to.

Not lastly, we should mention that the Open Space philosophy has **four basic principles**:
**1.** **Whoever comes are the right people to be there**.
**2.** **Whatever happens is the only thing that could have happened.** Any idea that comes up is welcome, any outcome the discussions may have, they are valuable. It is important that the attendees do not have an "agenda" set in stone, so that there is room left for innovation, creativity and freedom of thought and expression.
**3.** **When it starts is the right time to start**.
**4.** **When it's over it's over.** When the main goal is to gather as much ideas as possible and to identify the right ones to be put into effect, it is important not to "restrict" creativity with time limits such as "there are 5 minutes left". Pressured by time, creativity is not manifested to its full potential.

*Our advice is not to underestimate the power of a community and a group of motivated people to contribute with ideas on the topics of interest, especially if the issues are troubling them, bothering them and for which they are willing to make a change, but do not know how and where they should start. The energy of the group at the Open Space meetings is intense and comes many times with the motivation of the participants to take action against injustice and passivity.*

# ONE LAW + 4 PRINCIPLES

## OPEN SPACE

**1.**
WHOEVER COMES ARE THE RIGHT PEOPLE TO BE THERE.

**2.**
WHATEVER HAPPENS IS THE ONLY THING THAT COULD HAVE HAPPENED.

**3.**
WHEN IT STARTS IS THE RIGHT TIME TO START.

**4.**
WHEN IT'S OVER IT'S OVER.

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Hector Lanz, *How do focus groups work?* (video), https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3TwgVQIZPsw

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# H.
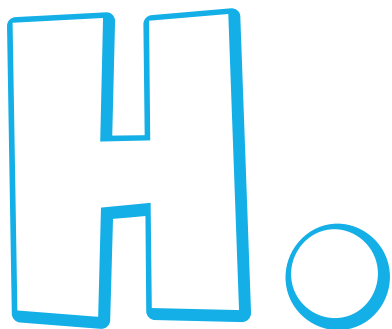
# EVALUATION OF YOUTH PARTICIPATION LEVEL

Creating the right contexts to evaluate the level of participation of the project team and the direct beneficiaries throughout the implementation of a project is crucial for ensuring the success of the intervention.

The level of participation is a very relevant criterion for observing the impact of the project in the community and the learning outcomes of young people or volunteers involved.

In brief, the level of participation of the team in the project and that of the beneficiaries also determines the quality of the project outcomes.

The higher the level and the quality of the participation, the easier the outcomes will be attained. Besides the classical methods for impact evaluation such as the interview, the questionnaire and the focus-group, which we treated under the methods for collecting information in the community, there are several interactive methods below, which can help you evaluate the level of participation in the project among the team members and/or the direct beneficiaries of the project:
- *Participation in decision-making*
- *A visual map of participation levels*
- *Traffic Lights*
- *"H" Assessment..*

# H.1.PARTICIPATION IN DECISION-MAKING

This is a chart that may be very useful to find out the level of group members' participation among in the decision-making throughout an ESC project.

**Preparing and facilitating the method:**
Explain to the members of your group that they will have an opportunity to identify how they participated in the decision-making.

Together, make a list that includes the decisions they had to make during the project. Write each of these decisions on an A4 piece of paper. Then make a list of the names of all people in the group who contributed in making those decisions.

Write the name of each person in the group on another half of a flipchart sheet.

Invite them to consider whether there were other decision-makers too in their project: beneficiaries of the project, the mayor, the police, the priest, etc.

Write down the names of the decision-makers on halves of A4 sheets and make a table like the one below.

**Duration:**
between 45 and 60 minutes.
**Supplies:**
flipchart sheets, adhesive tape, markers of different colours, stickers in three colours.

Select a number of 5-6 decisions which you think were the most relevant for evaluating the level of participation in the decision-making among team members, beneficiaries or other actors in the community.

Explain that they have the possibility to analyse each decision and explore who had:

a lot to say in the decision-making,

something to say in the decision- making,

nothing to say.

Further on, have a facilitated discussion and for each single decision decide what sticker you want to place next to each person. They should argue and explain why they chose those colours. The reasons they give shall be taken down by the coordinator or the coach (as appropriate).

## WHO WAS INVOLVED IN THE DECISION-MAKING

## DECISIONS MADE IN THE PROJECT

| WHO WAS INVOLVED IN THE DECISION-MAKING | WHEN WE DELIVER THE PRESENTATIONS AT SCHOOL | THE STRUCTURE OF NON-FORMAL WORKSHOPS | HOW THE CHILDREN DRESS UP FOR THE SHOW | THE DESIGN OF THE POSTERS DISPLAYED IN COMMUNITIES |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| MARIUS – a member of the initiative group/volunteer | 🔵 blue | 🔵 blue | ⚫ gray | 🔵 blue |
| ANCA – a member of the initiative group/volunteer | 🔵 blue | 🔵 blue | ⚫ gray | 🔵 blue |
| ANGELA – a member of the initiative group/volunteer | ⚫ gray | 🔵 blue | ⚫ gray | 🔴 red |
| DIRECT BENEFICIARIES of the project, 10 children aged 12-14 | 🔴 red | ⚫ gray | 🔵 blue | 🔵 blue |
| THE HEAD TEACHER | 🔵 blue | 🔴 red | 🔴 red | ⚫ gray |
| HE COORDINATOR OF THE HOST ORGANISATION | 🔴 red | 🔴 red | 🔴 red | ⚫ gray |
| THE MAYOR | 🔴 red | 🔴 red | ⚫ gray | 🔴 red |

At the end, **reflect together with your team** nd ask the following questions:

*What have you noticed – what kind of decisions our group members usually make?*
*In what decisions have you managed to involve the beneficiaries of the project so as to take further the dimension of horizontal solidarity? (See Part 2)*

*How other members of the local community participate in the decisions of your project?*
*What could you do in the future to involve the project beneficiaries or the local community more in your s olidarity projects?*
*If you look at the people with red dots, what solutions could you have for the future to involve these members of the local community more in your project?*

# H.2. A VISUAL MAP OF PARTICIPATION LEVELS

This activity helps you, if you are a coordinator, to analyse the participation level of you team members, or the participation level of your project beneficiaries – if you are a project coordinator or a member of your project team.

**Preparing the activity:**
Make drawings to illustrate the categories of members described next under Facilitating the method.
Ask the participants which were the big phases of the project or put forward the diagram below.

**Duration:**
between 60 and 90 minutes

**Supplies:**
flipchart paper, pens, post-its in two colours, drawings illustrating the participation levels and drawings illustrating the general phases of a project.

**Facilitating the method:**
Explore together with your team members or with your project beneficiaries what each phase of the project means and make sure they all understand the meaning of the words. Explain what each category below means:

**Members – non-involved beneficiaries:** members or beneficiaries who have not been involved in any way at a particular stage. They received no information or they were not asked about their views.

**Members – consulted beneficiaries:** t means that these members have been consulted. They were asked about their opinions, but they haven't been actively involved in planning the activities.

**Members – involved beneficiaries/ collaboration**: it means that these members have been involved in planning the activities, had opinions and influenced with decisions the activities that were to take place in the project.

**Members – beneficiaries that initiate/manage/ coordinate**: means that these members managed and directed the process even if adults were involved, too.

Find the issues in the community

Decide what issue to approach and plan the project

Disseminate the project outcomes

Monitor and evaluate the outcomes

Implement the project

Then you set out the diagram below on a flipchart. Make clear that the given participation titles/categories do not follow an order based on their quality or importance.

On some occasions, it's enough to have just a consultation in a project, while on others you need collaboration and other times you just need to let people take the initiative.

| | MEMBERS – BENEFICIARIES NON-INVOLVED | MEMBERS – BENEFICIARIES CONSULTED | MEMBERS – BENEFICIARIES INVOLVED | MEMBERS – BENEFICIARIES WHO INITIATE, COORDINATE |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Find the issues in the community | | | | |
| Decide what issue to approach and plan the project | | | | |
| Implement the project | | | | |
| Monitor and evaluate the outcomes | | | | |
| Disseminate the project outcomes | | | | |

After introducing the table, invite the participants to discuss in groups:
- **what was the situation for each phase of the project and how this helped them or not** – they should write the main ideas on a yellow post-it which they stick to the table;
- **whether it would be useful to be different in the future** – they should write the conclusions on a green post-it. Have them repeat this process for each stage of the cycle above.

At the end, have a facilitated discussion with the entire group starting with the following questions:
*In which part of the programme do the members or the beneficiaries participate in the most relevant way? What are the reasons for this? Why is the participation necessary and up to what level is it most useful and relevant for a member or a beneficiary to participate? What ideas could you come up with so as to encourage even more the participation of members/beneficiaries or of the community in the project?*

# H.3. TRAFFIC LIGHTS

This method is useful for monitoring and evaluating the perception on the changes brought by the participation in your project to the lives of your team members or beneficiaries.

**Preparing and facilitating the method:**

Draw three large circles in the traffic light colours on a piece of flipchart paper.

Explain to the team that they will be able to monitor how their level of participation progresses and how their involvement leads to changes in their lives with regard to learning and personal development.

Explain the significance of traffic lights generally and ask them to choose the colour representing to what extent their participation in the project helped them personally.

Each one is invited to place a tick on the traffic light on the representative colour and explain why they placed it there.

*If the majority chose green,* then you can use one of the reflection and evaluation methods to go further with the evaluation of outcomes.

*If the majority chose red or yellow,* then you can discuss the measures that could be taken to increase the level of participation in the project.

**Duration**:
between 45 and 60 minutes

**Supplies**:.
lipchart paper, coloured wax pencils or coloured paper, pens, paper adhesive band.

Red signifies that **the project does not progress well in terms of participation: the participation level is low and, consequently, the impact on the team or beneficiaries is low.**

Yellow means that **the participation is OK, but it could be better.**

Green means that **the project is progressing well and that there are visible outcomes for the team or the beneficiaries as a consequence of their involvement.**

## H.4. "H" ASSESSMENT

This is a very simple method which may be used with the project team or the project beneficiaries to explore the strengths and the weaknesses in connection with their participation in the project. You may use the method for the project as a whole or for different stages in the project.

**Duration:**
between 30 and 40 minutes
**Supplies:**
flipchart paper and markers

PROJECT NAME

STREGTHS, SUCCESS STORIES

WEAKNESSES, THREATS

SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT
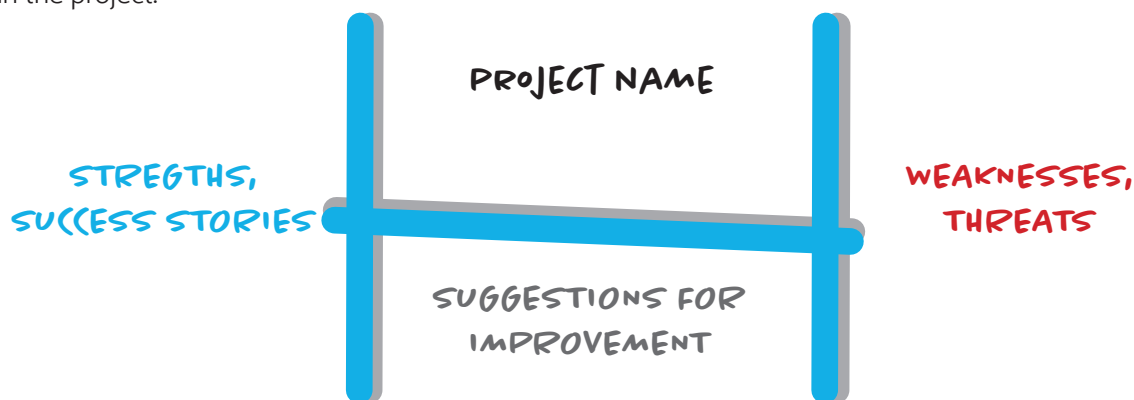
**Preparing and facilitating the method:**
Draw a big H on a flipchart and write the information as in the model above.

Divide the team in two groups and ask **each team to analyse and write** in their H:
**Strengths** related to the involvement of members or beneficiaries in the project.
They share **success stories** regarding their involvement at each stage of the project.

**Weaknesses and threats** concerning how they were involved at each stage of the project and why they see those aspects as weaknesses.
A **list of suggestions** about possible ways to improve the participation of the team and of the beneficiaries at each stage of the project.
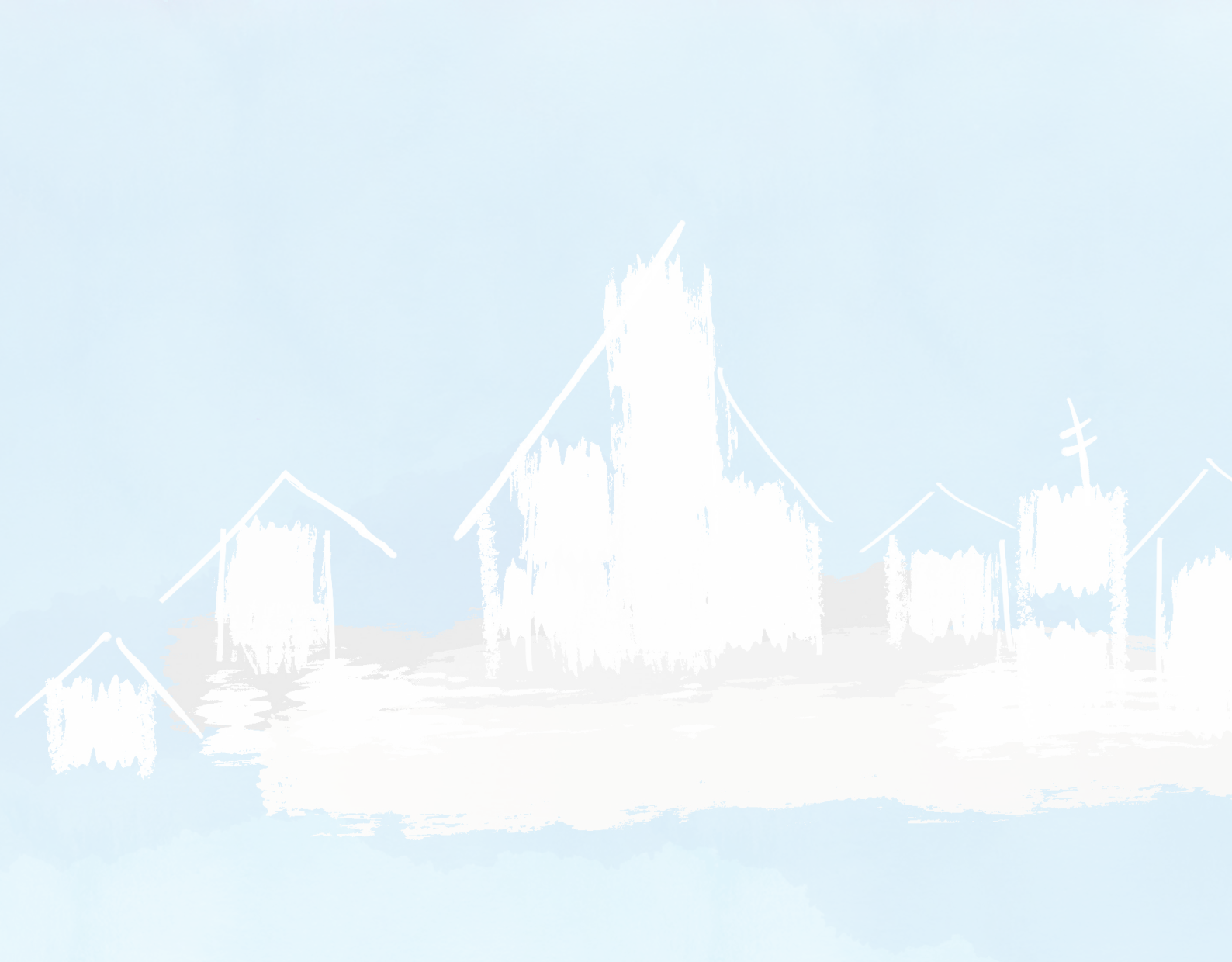
**RESOURCES:**

Gerison Lansdown, Claire O'Kane, *A Toolkit for Evaluating and Monitoring Child Participation*, 6 booklets, Save the Children, 2014,

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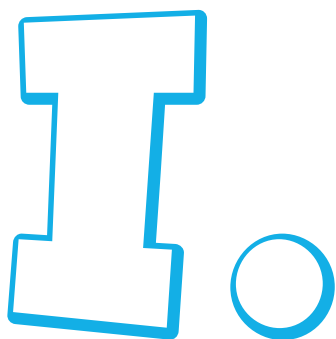
# CREATIVE SOLUTIONS TO COMMUNITY

When you plan and implement an ESC project you can easily identify multiple situations where you need to use methods which help you come up with creative solutions to specific problems of the community or even of the team project.

Creative problem solving involves a structured methodology combining a rigorous definition of the problem with the generation of ideas and planning actions that result in finding and applying new, unique and unexpected solutions, with innovation features.

The creative problem solving methods proposed in this subchapter may be used at several project stages: in the analysis of the community and the selection of the issue to be approached or during the implementation of different phases of the project, etc., that is anytime it is necessary to find solutions to specific problematic situations.

If we consider the overall creative process, we can identify 4 distinct phases in the creative problem solving methodology, which always need facilitation:

**Defining the problem** is the time when the issue is formulated, and not its symptoms, and you set the boundaries of the problem, the objectives pursued and the specific constraints; if the problem is very complex, it should be divided in sub-problems.

**"Open Mind"** and the application of creative techniques, when the purpose is to find useful solutions; in this phase there is no evaluation of ideas – sometimes a "bad" idea may be the starting point for a successful solution. The application of creativity methods in a team aims to generate as many ideas as possible.

**Identifying the solution** that is the most appropriate when you use methods for processing and evaluating the ideas.

**The phase of filtering and combining the ideas** requires the use of various techniques and methods for searching for trends and knowledge which confirm/invalidate the ideas, interviews with experts or users, idea filtering based on different criteria: applicability, feasibility, costs, impact, field, etc.

**Selecting valid ideas** starts from the point saying that for each selected idea there will be 10 times more useless or wrong ideas. In this phase, different criteria to evaluate the ideas are used, namely: the novelty of the idea, the importance of the consequences deriving from the application of the idea (radical, significant improvements, successive, progressive improvements), and the need for innovation.

**Translating the idea into practice** is the time when the application plan is drawn up and the idea is put into effect. The concern for stimulating that moment of inspiration, identified many times with the entire creative process, has led to a whole current dealing with the enrichment of methods intended to generate a large and varied number of ideas as possible.

You will find in this chapter three of the most common methods used for stimulating creative thinking:
*Brainstorming*
*Kipling Method*
*Mind Mapping.*

The creative problem solving process is a sufficiently elastic framework, applicable to any situation related to life, work, play, research, organisation, psychological-social relations. In the absence of a facilitator, who is an expert in leading creative problem solving meetings, it is also possibly to try to go through the process individually. The facilitator's role may be adopted by the coach of an ESC project or even by one of the members of the project team.

# I.1. BRAINSTORMING

Brainstorming is a method intended to stimulate your creativity and help you solve problems, being suitable for training reasoning and stimulating the imagination, so as to get good ideas leading to the goal.

The term "brainstorming" was introduced and explained by Alex Osborn in his book Your Creative Power (1948). The etymology of the word defines its meaning: a storm in the brain.

## Advantages of using the Brainstorming method

It makes it possible to analyse an issue from several perspectives and to produce many ideas.

It facilitates the capture of ideas in an incipient phase, before being altered by logical thinking (*this is impossible, it costs too much, what would the others say etc.*).

Brainstorming offers an opportunity for the participants to expand their limits. It encourages them not to stop at the first thing crossing their mind, but think deeper and further.

Participating in a brainstorming session may also be funny, but it is an effective exercise of cooperation and teamwork.

**Duration:** between 30 and 90 minutes.
**Supplies:** flipchart paper, markers, paper and pens, coloured pencils and any other necessary aid (board, projector, computers, etc.)

**Participants' number:** at least 4, at most 10, but for the session to be successful, the ideal group should be composed of 5-7 people. In an ESC context, it could include the young people of the initiative group, volunteers and the process facilitator.

The **roles** in a brainstorming session, besides the participants coming up with ideas, also include:

*the facilitator*, who guides and stimulates the group to generate as many ideas as possible and as good as possible, and

*the scribe*, who takes over and records in writing all the ideas that have been generated.

## How does a brainstorming session work?

To many people, brainstorming means just a small group of people focusing on finding quickly a solution to a particular problem. But for a brainstorming session to pay off, there are some steps and strict rules that need to be followed. Moreover, this method also has a deep personal development component, because it stimulates the participants' creativity and spontaneity, not for getting some ideas with an immediate effect, but for ideas with long-term implications.

In short, a brainstorming session will start with a clear question and will close with a list of ideas ready for application, and the whole process has four distinct stages: setting out the issue, collecting ideas, selecting ideas and translating them into reality.

The **facilitator** is the one who describes the problem and sets the objectives, presents the rules and makes sure they are observed. The facilitator must ensure the necessary framework for stimulating creativity.

The success of a brainstorming session depends very much on the facilitator's ability to "challenge" the participants to come up with ideas, within the limits of the defined topic. The facilitator has only discrete interventions, but with an effect on the creative process.

## The facilitator's role, in short

- contributes to the conversation, does not inhibit the dialogue in any way;
- does not control excessively the process, the stages, the involvement, etc.;
- encourages everyone to participate;
- does not let just one person hold the floor;
- brings back the conversation anytime it digresses from the main topic;
- takes care that the agreed rules are observed and reiterates them whenever this is necessary; if the basic rules set forth above are not observed, there is no brainstorming anymore;
- stimulates the conversation and introduces "idea generators" whenever the discussions come to a standstill;
- writes down all the ideas expressed (if there is no other person appointed to do that), but without issuing any judgments.

The **person taking over the ideas** does not participate in any way in the creative process; he or she just records the ideas like a scribe, a modern scribe.

The **participants' task** in a brainstorming is to generate ideas. Therefore, the presence of a person whose single job is to record ideas will give everyone a feeling of relief – no issued idea will be lost.

## Prepare for brainstorming

**Decide who participates**. If the group is too small, there is a risk to collect few ideas, and if the group is too large, the discussions will advance slowly. If there are more people involved, the best solution is to divide them into several groups that discuss separately. More important than the number of participants is their experience, their area of expertise and the variety of the group.

**Set the place and the date of the meeting**.

**Appoint an official facilitator**
(who will direct and coordinate the discussions).

**Appoint a jury**. The members of the jury do not have to be participants in the brainstorming. More often than not, a critical opinion from outside is even better. The most important thing is that the members of the jury are people with decision-making powers or people to whom such powers were delegated, because they will be assigned the responsibility for the application of the generated ideas.

**Make sure that everyone has the materials** they need.

**Make sure that everyone can see everything**.

**Make sure that information materials have been distributed in advance** (if informing the participants requires more research than a few minute briefing).

**Make sure that materials which are "generators of ideas" are available**: catalogues, magazines, albums, samples, examples of implemented projects, a computer with internet connection or others alike.

**Water, fruit, coffee and a few snacks** could help!!

### Introducing the issue and the topics

The first and most important thing before starting a brainstorming is to define the issue and to determine the goals. Usually, the topics and the issues to be approached are only presented before the start of the session.

As a participant, you should know exactly why you are beating your brains out. The definition of the issue will also offer important clues about those who participate: a homogenous group of experts or a group of people from several fields. The participants are not informed in advance, because it is important that they show spontaneity. Also, the method of presentation is determinative for the creative process, which may be just a speech, a slide presentation or a presentation on a flipchart. The ideas to be generated will be influenced by the manner in which the topics are presented.

**Start with introducing the purpose of the meeting**:
**Context** – what is the current situation, why do you need new ideas, what are the issues you have to consider, etc.
**Objectives** – what you intend to do.
The objectives must be specific and as clear and concise as possible, so that everybody understands exactly what is expected.
If the objectives are not clearly understood by the participants, then the answers and the generated ideas will not solve the identified issues and everybody will have wasted their time.

An objective may be mostly expressed with a question (example): "*How could we… improve the extent of selective waste collection so as to reduce/eliminate the pollution of the river in the community?*"
The objectives must be ambitious.
A brainstorming meeting with objectives like "*Let's see if we can come up with any ideas*" will not yield any remarkable outcome.

Even if this is not the first time when the attendees participate in a brainstorming activity, you should remind them **the rules of the meeting** (see below). This is important! It is recommended that these rules are written in a place where they are visible for everybody.
The experience shows us that at the beginning, especially in groups where the members do not know each other very well, you need an impetus. It is the facilitator's role to create that impetus. He or she can issue the first ideas or may establish a starting point to which new ideas will be added.
**Brainstorming warm-up**: Start the meeting with some small physical challenges, something unexpected, amusing and energizing, and throughout the brainstorming session monitor the level of energy; if it goes low, be ready to suggest another short series of exercises.

## Collecting the ideas

If the brainstorming topic is clear to your participants, now it's time they come up with some ideas – the more, the better. This is the core of the brainstorming session. The creative potential needs to be stimulated and every participant needs to have an opportunity to express their idea. It is possible that some speak slowly, others fast, some are rather shy, others very enthusiastic… but everybody must have an opportunity to contribute and they should be encouraged to do so.

After the phase dedicated to the collection of ideas has finished, you need a break to reset the participants and take them out of a creative state so they can continue with the other two phases of the brainstorming. In this phase, everybody can tell how many ideas they want, no matter how valuable or achievable they are. The more ideas, the better. The facilitator will take care that all the participants have an opportunity to present their ideas and that everybody observes the rules set at the beginning.
All the ideas will be taken down as they are expressed,

but they are not categorized and judged.
First, the participants may be given the floor in a predetermined order. After all the participants have expressed their ideas, a new round begins, and then free discussions may be launched. If necessary, you may have a short break before the free discussions, so that the participants may clarify their views.
The facilitator will see that the discussions focus on the proposed topic and not digress from it. He or she will also take care that every participant is as concise as possible in their intervention so that they can comply with a reasonable time limit.

Do not forget that everybody should feel comfortable.
Mix up – Simple things like sitting on a different place change the participants' perspective.
Draw, make sketches for the coming ideas, put them on a wall and use all the resources available in the room to capture the ideas.
Breaking the routine may change the dynamics of the team and may contribute to increasing the level of energy in the brainstorming session.
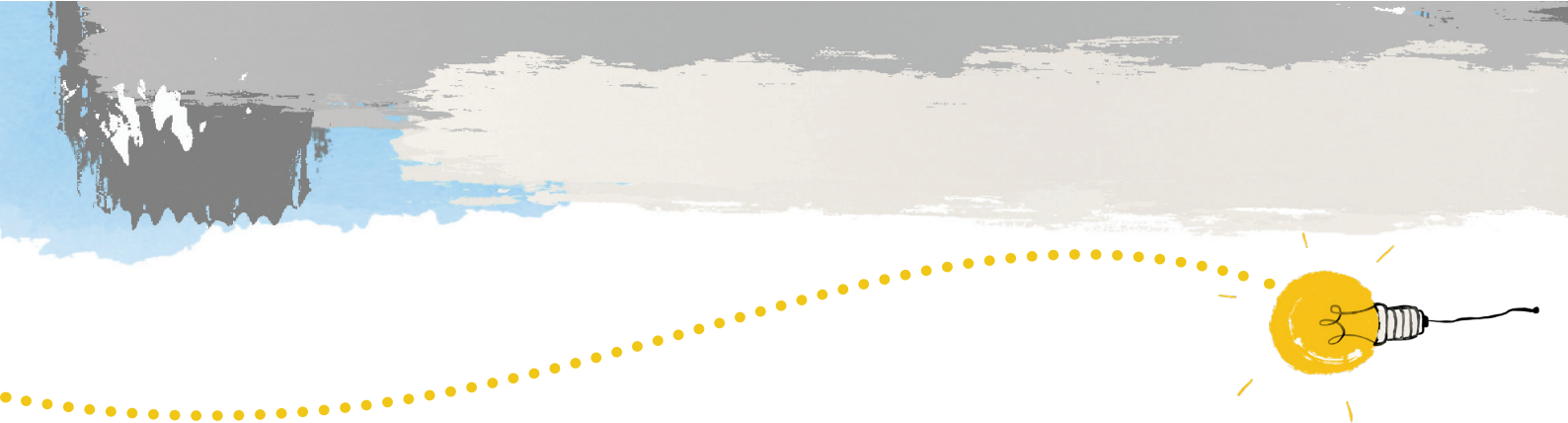
## Selecting the ideas with potential

The classification of ideas depends on the topics or the issue approached and may be done taking into account:

1. their applicability – immediate or future;
2. their usefulness: useful, useless, still to be determined,
3. realistic or fanciful, etc.

Only the appointed members of the jury will participate in this phase.

After all the ideas have been collected, you should try to group them based on specific topics (*you may use other tools for this purpose, such as affinity diagrams*) and classify them based on specific criteria (*for example: originality, realism/ feasibility, efficiency*). Choose the best ideas of those set out and, if appropriate, develop them.

After all the ideas have been evaluated, choose the best 2 or 3 to be discussed in detail and developed. One of them could be the solution you look for. If there is no jury, and the final selection is made by the participants, they should vote individually each of the listed ideas.

## Applying the ideas

Now if you have the ideas and they are classified, you need to do something with them. It is preferable to apply them immediately. They just have been discussed, they are well structured in the memory and now it's time to try them. After a while, their essence will be forgotten and they will not yield the expected outcomes anymore. Moreover, if time passes, the ideas may be misunderstood.

Send to all the participants a summary of the points discussed and the final list of synthetic ideas. There is a good chance that they come up with valuable complements. Some ideas may be valuable even if they were not chosen as a solution. Such ideas should be kept or distributed to be put into effect to those who could use them.

Generally, people care for their ideas and are experiencing a feeling of frustration when their ideas have not been considered the best. For this reason, it is worth clarifying why a particular idea has been chosen instead of another, and the importance of each contribution should be appreciated as such. Set out the plan for the next period – assign tasks (as precise and detailed as possible) to those who are responsible for translating the ideas into practice.

## Basic rules for brainstorming

Quantity is more important than quality.

The purpose is to get as much ideas as possible. You will refine them at the end. Let everyone take their time to focus specifically on the generation of ideas as a phase that is separate and independent of the editing of ideas.

Ideas should come up spontaneously.

For this purpose, you will do whatever is necessary to stimulate the participants' creativity. You challenge them, train them, have them listening to music. Whatever is necessary. Use stimulating phrases like "Yes, and…" instead of just saying "no" or "but".

No idea must be judged or evaluated.

Here, nobody makes mistakes and nobody is wrong. For ideas to come up as they should, you must avoid judging them even in your mind. Share all ideas and show your appreciation for the least conventional ones.

The expressed ideas belong to all of you.

Nobody boasts about their idea. The person articulating an idea would not have ever had it if there hadn't been for that context. Keep a positive attitude and reserve your negativity for the editing phase. Any mental process involving creativity needs a particular climate which facilitates the production of ideas. For this reason, make sure that the participants benefit from a motivating context and, if they do not know each other, encourage their interaction.

## Rules for participants

### In relation to the group

No negative attitudes!  Do not reject the ideas of others; instead, construct based on them. B rainstorming is based on collective thinking.

No criticism. Brainstorming is not a forum to discuss the superiority of an idea compared to another idea.

Any idea is welcome, no matter how eccentric it sounds.

No prejudice and no conformism. Creative thinking and spontaneity are encouraged.

Quantity generates quality. You should expect at least 50 (or even 100) new ideas.

There are no bad ideas, because they serve to generate better ones.

All those who are present should participate.

The participants take turns to speak, one by one.

The interruption of the process by external stimuli is not accepted (including mobile phones).

### In relation to themselves

Do not criticise or judge in your mind your own ideas. If you do that, you will hesitate.

Focus only on the topics discussed.

Rely on your previous experience to find new ideas. Do not assign an exaggerated importance to words; try to express your vision as naturally as you can.

## I.2. KIPLING METHOD

This method is encountered with different names: Question Method, 5W2H, 6W, Kipling, etc.

6W is the acronym of the 6 basic questions: What? Why? Where? Who? When? Which?

5W2H is an acronym for the full set of simple questions which aim to get information as complete as possible on a particular situation, issue or event, when you don't want to overlook the relevant aspects of an issue: What? Why? Where? When? Who? How? How much? How many?

The Question Method (KIPLING) is used for:
**Enhancing group creativity** – the method starts with basic questions to create a list of questions which are specific to the problem to be solved and which should then stimulate the generation of ideas through possible answers.
**Defining a problem to be solved** – during the preliminary phase of the problem solving process, when you choose and detail the issue to be solved.
**Identifying a solution** which is suitable for solving the problem. Sometimes, there is a specific order of the questions to be followed, depending on specific criteria, but most of times there is no specific order and you only need to take care not to omit any question.

"I KEEP SIX HONEST SERVING MEN,
THEY TAUGHT ME ALL I KNEW.
THEIRS NAMES ARE WHAT
AND WHY AND WHEN
AND HOW AND WHERE AND WHO."
-RUDYARD KIPLING-

**In ESC projects,** the question method may also be used to get data and specific details about the situation or the community requiring improvement or to prepare the plan for implementing a change (project).

The questions for defining a problem may be: *What is the problem? Where does it arise? When does it arise? Why does it arise? How can we eliminate the problem? Who should participate in solving the problem? How will we know that we have eliminated the problem?* A subsequent phase may be to diversify the questions, namely*: Why not...? What is not of interest to us? What is the most important aspect for making a decision? What conditions should be set?  Where are the most...? Where are the most convenient...? Where can we find similar...? When is not advantageous to...? Who has specific requests...? How many variants do we have for approaching...? How can we...? How can we change the requirements along the way? etc..*

## I.3. MIND MAPPING

Mind maps are creative tools which lay out the framework for generating, recording, assimilating and communicating a particular content. The discovery of mind maps originates in the observation of the techniques used by Leonardo da Vinci or Albert Einstein. Although visual thinking dates back to thousands of years, Tony Buzan is the one who defined the concept of Mind Map.

Recent years have showed us that our ability to think efficiently is closely connected to our imagination and the ability to create associations between pieces of information, and the mind maps – the diagrams used for the visual organisation of information help to prioritise and organise it.

A mind map is that kind of tool which helps you in the process of structuring, organising, memorising, setting and learning in an organised way to see very important aspects without going into the jungle of details. It helps you analyse and memorise better relevant things and come up with additions as you discover new things.

Mind maps encourage creativity and flexibility and help you think outside the box.

Basically, a mind map is a diagram which connects the information around a central topic.

**Duration:**
between 30 and 45 minutes.

**Spplies:**
flipchart paper or A4 white paper, a few coloured pencils – preferably markers, a topic to explore.

**In the context of ESC projects**, mind maps may serve to define a problem to be solved and to identify all the aspects characterising the problem. Moreover, they may be useful for identifying solutions to a problem. They may function easily as a collaboration tool during a meeting of a project team or in a brainstorming session.

You may use a mind map also for a creative concept for launching the project or even to sketch a map of the risks which could lead to challenges in your solidarity project, etc.

## How to draw a mind map step by step?

When you create a mind map, there are a few elements to take into account, no matter if it is an individual map or one done collectively: the central idea, branches, colours, keywords, images, structure. In short, any mind map has three main characteristics:

**1. A central image** that is used to represent the topic approached, which may be the problem to be solved depicted in a short text or a drawing illustrating it. You don't need special skills for the drawing. In a mind map, the drawing and the text become friends, and if you add some colour, underlining or various text sizes, then it will fix better into your mind, and the others will remember more easily what you have to say.

**2. Branches** adiating from the central image – these are the keywords referring to the directions for developing the topic, each branch being drawn with a different colour, then there are further ramifications going from those branches, like the branches of a tree.

**3.** On each branch there is only one **keyword.**

**Step 1** - place the piece of paper on a wall and choose at least three colours to sketch a representative image of the main topic in the centre of the page.

**Step 2** – choose one colour and draw a thick branch growing out of the central image like the branch of a tree. The branch must be normally curbed, like a real one, naturally, because such an image may visually stimulate the participants and it will be more interesting for the brain.

**Step 3** – label the branch using one single word written in large letters.

**Step 4** – draw secondary branches from the main branch. Write keywords on each branch. You can also make a small representative drawing.

**Step 5** – choose another colour and create another main branch growing also out of the central image or word. You may go in any direction you want, clockwise or counter clockwise. As in the previous steps, draw secondary and tertiary branches going from this branch and label them with a keyword or a representative image.

**Step 6** – from now on, having the main branches, you can move freely around the mind map, jumping from one branch to another, filling the gaps, adding new sub-branches, etc.

**Step 7** – if you wish, you may add curbed lines and connections between the main branches, to stimulate creativity and similar connections in the brain.

# MIND MAP

Example



**PROBLEM SOLVING**

ACTION
- IMPLEMENTATION
  - SOLUTIONS
- EVALUATION
  - RETHINKING
- NEGOTIATION
- NO
  - STOP

PLAN
- THINK
  - CREATIV
    - FURTHER
    - DREAM
    - MIND MAPING
    - BRAINSTORMING
- DISCUSS
- LISTEN

PROBLEMS
- IDENTIFYING ERRORS
  - ONE
  - SEVERAL
- WHOSE?
  - MINE
  - OF OTHERS
- CAUSES
  - ROOTS
  - CURRENT CONDITIONS

EFFECTS
- NEGATIVE
  - PRACTICAL
  - FINANCIAL
  - FEELINGS
- OPPORTUNITIES

HELP
- I
  - ACCEPT
    - CHANGES
  - BE
    - RELAX
      - SPORT
      - LEISURE
      - SLEEP
    - BRAVE
    - OPEN
    - FACE
      - CHALLENGES
- FROM
  - OTHERS
    - ADVICE
    - PERSPECTIVES
    - SUPPORT

**RESOURCES:**

Alex F. Osborn, *Applied Imagination: Principles and procedures of Creative Thinking*, Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, 1953.

J. Foster, *O idee genială – Cum să faci să ai idei bune* (A brilliant Idea – What You Can Do To Have Good Ideas), Editura Humanitas, Bucharest, 2006
*What is Brainstorming and How It Is Helpful?*, https://www.imindq.com/uses/brainstorming

*The Kipling Method*, http://creatingminds.org/tools/kipling.htm

Tony Buzan, *Arta stăpânirii hărţii mentale. Ghid complet de învăţare şi utilizare a celui mai puternic instrument de gândire din lume (Mind Map Mastery: The Complete Guide to Learning and Using the Most Powerful Thinking Tool in the Universe)*, Didactica Publishing House, 2019.

# J.
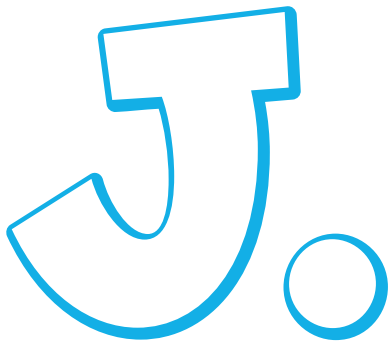
# PARTICIPATIVE EVALUATION WITHIN THE COMMUNITY

Evaluation is a regular thorough analysis of the project achievements and an important stage in the life of a project.

Given the central role of the community throughout the stages of a project, we propose six methods for participative evaluation, namely:
*Assertions*
*Analysis of the scope of influence*
*Smiling Face Scale*
*Focus Group*

*A dialogue with the community*
*Most Significant Change*

The application of evaluation methods (the proposed ones or other similar methods) may help you in the process of evaluating the project outcomes and its impact on the community, but it is important that you take into account and choose that evaluation method which is appropriate for your type of project and can give you a clear, indicative image of the impact inside the community following the intervention.

**Evaluation and monitoring** are closely connected to each other. The evaluation is not a substitute of monitoring, and similarly, monitoring does not replace evaluation.
Even if they both use the same steps, they yield and show different kinds of information.

**Monitoring** is similar to watching where are you going to when you ride a bike; it allows you to change or keep your way so as you can reach your destination. It is an ongoing activity for determining whether the activities are conducted according to the plan developed.

**Evaluation** comes to provide you with information about what is going well in the project, so as to maintain and multiply these "success factors". Evaluation helps you to understand better the environment in which you intervene, to identify the problems existing in the community (analysis of the situation), the needs of your target group (evaluation of necessities), plan the activities and measure their impact (evaluation of outcomes).

**Evaluation may answer questions like:**
*Which is the effect, the impact of the activities performed? To what extent have the activities or the project met the expectations and the needs of your beneficiaries? How efficient was the use of time and resources? How efficiently and qualitatively does the organisation or the initiative group act?*

**Evaluation may be and is advisable to be carried out:**
**- before the project begins:** to identify the needs of the target group and determine how they can be met/approached;

**- during the project:** it allows the implementation team to review the project strategies depending on the changes that intervene so that the expected outcomes may be achieved;

**- at the end of the implementation:** evaluation provides a flashback on the project activities and its outcomes and contributes to: identifying the constraints encountered during the implementation of the project; estimating the benefits, the outcomes of the project and the people benefiting from them; identifying the strengths of the project, which may be taken into consideration in other projects, too; providing a clear image of the extent to which the objectives pursued have been met.

The evaluation of project outcomes interests several groups:

**1. The community**, i.e. the people who are the target of the activities in the project. They may be children, youth, students and other categories of people benefiting indirectly from an ESC project.

**2**. The **implementation team** of the project, i.e. the people carrying out the activities planned in the project.

**3.** The **project coordinator/organization**, the person overseeing the implementation of the project, and also the organisation hosting an informal group.

**4.** The **donors and the partners**. They are the people and the institutions with a decisive role in the initiation and the realization of the project.

**5**. The **supporters and the opponents of the project and other people**, who have an opinion on the project and are interested in its outcomes: the local media, public or private institutions, etc.

The **evaluation methods** may aim to evaluate the process, its outcomes or its impact.
You have a few examples below of methods for the qualitative evaluation of the process and its impact. Alternative evaluation methods are increasingly used in everyday practice, such as participative evaluation or collaborative evaluation, etc. These alternative models emerged as a natural response to the need to identify and analyse things, phenomena and realities, which sometimes cannot be explained by the traditional, purely quantitative models relying on the application of questionnaires, surveys, etc.

**Traditional evaluation methods** pursue the objectivity, the scientific rigour; they emphasise the quantitative aspects, have more managerial control and lay stress on measuring (questionnaires, interviews, surveys, etc.).

**Participative evaluation methods**: evaluation based on these methods put more emphasis on the learning and development process, which involves reflection, increased interest in the qualitative aspects of the project, lay stress on communication and the participation of as many actors as possible in the evaluation, while the evaluator is rather a facilitator. These methods are much more appropriate and accessible for projects funded by the European Solidarity Corps.

The **main characteristics of participative evaluation** refer to the following:
- evaluation is no longer considered just a manner of control, possibly ending up with sanctions; it is rather seen as a learning process and an integral part of the whole project and not as a separate phase of it;
- it moves the stress from outcome evaluation to process evaluation (how they got there is of interest);
- it recognises that the beneficiaries and the partners are an indispensable source of knowledge and information;
- it appeals to and uses local resources, gives a lot of credit to self-evaluation (the participants analyse their results, compare them, review their strategy);
- it is a learning process that develops the skills of those involved with regard to self-evaluation, evaluating the activity and the outcomes of the project team and participating in the evaluation process;
- the evaluator plays the role of a facilitator acting like a catalyst and assisting the beneficiaries and the partners to answer key questions.

The **participative approach of evaluation** is more appropriate when: we examine difficulties encountered during the implementation of the project or when we want to measure the impact of the project on different categories of beneficiaries and partners, and we are interested in the views of different stakeholders on the achievement of project objectives and the progress that has been made.

**An evaluation is like a journey.** To get where you want, you need a guide – a clear goal, ways leading to the goal and the right people as companions. There are a few methods below which you can use at different times for evaluating the process and the outcomes of the project implemented in the community and with its members.

These methods may be used by the youth in the initiative group to evaluate the impact of the project together with the community, but some of them may be used by the coach or mentor with the members of the initiative group/ volunteers to evaluate the process.

# J.1. ASSERTIONS

**Duration:**
between 15 and 20 de minutes per person
**Materiale:**
forms with assertions, a notebook, a pen, A4 paper.

The purpose of the method is to explore the opinions of a great number of people from the community on a particular subject approached directly within the project.

This is a group or individual method, a qualitative one, which may be applied after the project has been completed with the direct or indirect beneficiaries of the intervention.

**Preparing and facilitating the method:**
This method involves completing some standardised sentences, which the participants will use in the evaluation. The community members concerned with the project may agree or not with them. First, you should determine the sentences which you will include in the form.

The forms may be filled in during an evaluation workshop by every participant, individually or in small groups. Adults and young people may work together to fill in this form or they may work separately, but they should fill in the forms simultaneously and in the presence of a facilitator.

The forms may be also completed via email, but you should make sure that the forms will be returned. They may be sent online in an online form. You will find in the below an example of a standardized form, with sentences which need to be completed by the participants in the evaluation.
*The topic of the form proposed as an example is the participation of seniors in the community life (because the concerned project intended to increase the participation of seniors in the community life).* But you can elaborate such assertions in connection with the topic you evaluate depending on what outcomes you pursue in the project.

When you make up the form, take care to leave enough space for the respondents to answer. After having collected the forms, you should have an analysis next, which will be carried out together with the members of the project team.

# ASSERTION FORM

Example

**AGE**
........................................

**GENDER**
........................................

**OCUPATION**
........................................

Please complete the following assertions with your own words.
Don't think too much, write the first words that come to your mind.
You can be sure that nobody will find out that these are your answers.

**1.** SENIORS' RIGHTS ARE
...........................................................................................

**2.** SENIORS' OBLIGATIONS ARE
...........................................................................................

**3.** SENIORS SHOULD NOT
...........................................................................................

**4.** SENIORS SHOULD
...........................................................................................

**5.** SENIORS SHOULD PARTICIPATE IN
...........................................................................................

**6.** SENIORS SHOULD NOT PARTICIPATE IN
...........................................................................................

**7.** SENIORS' OPINIONS ARE
...........................................................................................

**8.** WHEN SENIORS MAKE DECISIONS, THE RESULT IS
...........................................................................................

**9.** YOUNG PEOPLE IN RELATION WITH SENIORS CAN
...........................................................................................

**Thank you for your sincerity!**

# J.2. ANALYSIS OF THE SCOPE OF INFLUENCE

**Duration:**
1 hour and 10 minutes
**Supplies:**
large sheets of paper, coloured felt tips, adhesive tape

**Type of method:**
a qualitative, group method, a process method.
**When you can apply it**: throughout the project, with the members of the project team.

**The purpose of the method:** to analyse how the project has evolved, to analyse the positive factors and the obstacles encountered in the project, to plan new activities for bringing about the results.

**Preparing and facilitating the method:**
Help the participants (the initiative group, the volunteers involved in the project) to form small groups, then show them the scheme of the scope of influence and ask them to write in the left field the situation at the beginning of the project – *in the past, and in the right field* – the status of the project at present.

Then ask them to analyse the factors – *for example, resources* – which helped the project evolve to its current status and note them on the upward arrows.

On the downward arrows, the participants will write the obstacles that influenced this evolution.

**If it is used for planning the project,** instead of describing the situation in the past and at present, the participants describe the present and then the goals of the project for the future and also, they will identify the resources which will help them achieve those goals and the obstacles which may prevent them from doing this. For the two "fields" of the past and the present, or the present and the future, you should indicate an estimated period of time.

During the activity, the facilitator may visit each group to make sure that the participants do not digress from the key question and provide help as necessary. After filling in the scheme, each group shows the results in the larger group, followed by a discussion.

# SCHEME OF THE SCOPE OF INFLUENCE

PAST      CONTRIBUTORY FACTORS      PRESENT

OBSTACLES, DIFFICULTIES
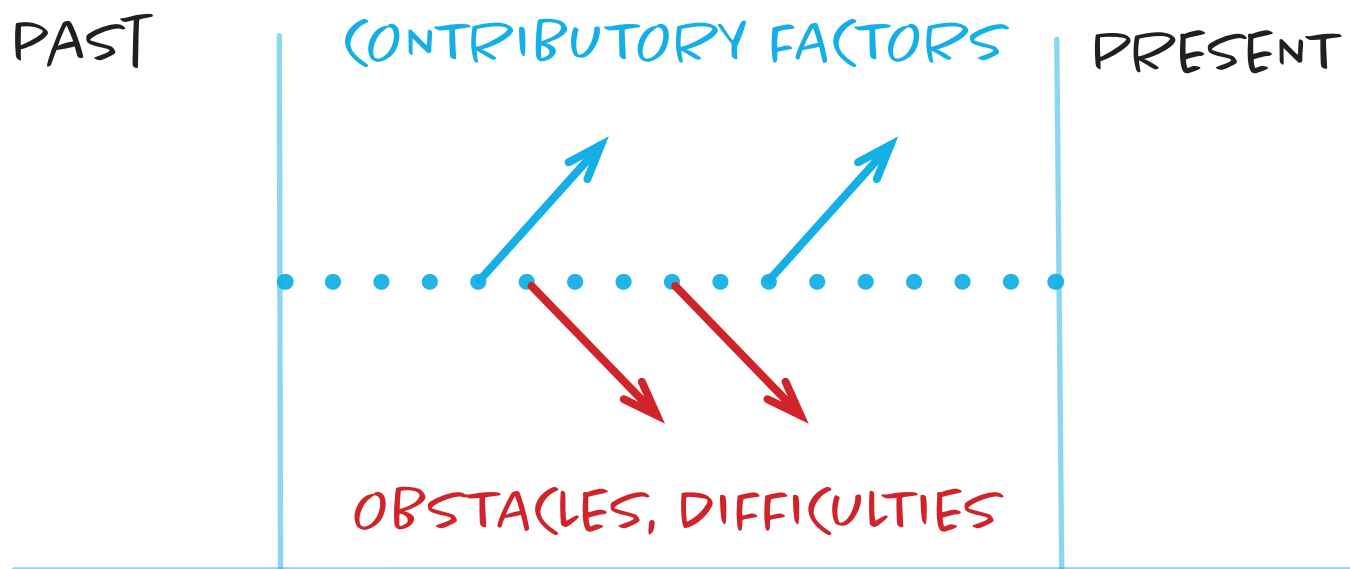
**Examples of questions for evaluation**
*(with regard to a project concerning the seniors of a community)*
*"How did the seniors change following their participation in a project?""*

**... for planning:**
*"How could our initiative group facilitate efficiently the access of seniors to volunteering programmes considering the obstacles, and also the factors that have facilitated their access so far?"*

## J.3. SMILING FACE SCALE

**Type of method:**
a quantitative, group, outcome method
**When you can apply it:** fter completing the project. It can be done only with the members of the initiative group or with the volunteers if you are a coach, but also with the other members of the community.
**Purpose:** a quantitative evaluation, in a group, based on some questions, specific research subjects, which concern the outcomes or the impact of the project.

**Duration:**
30 minutes
**Supplies:**
two large sheets of paper, felt tips, transfer pictures/ sticky dots for every participant (one for each investigated question).
**Participanţii** may be beneficiaries of the project, members of the team project or other partners and supporters.
**Preparing and facilitating the method:**
First, choose the topics/outcomes to be evaluated. Prepare in advance a set of standard questions. The questions must be worded as statements to which the participants may answer according to the following scale: **"strongly agree; agree; neutral; disagree; strongly disagree"**. For each type of answer, associate a smiling face like in the model below.
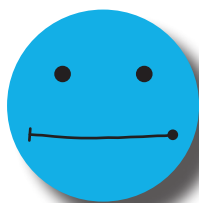
STRONGLY AGREE    AGREE    NEUTRAL    DISAGREE    STRONGLY DISAGREE

| | STATEMENT 1 | STATEMENT 2 | STATEMENT 3 | STATEMENT 4 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 😃 | 🔷 🔷 | | | |
| 🙂 | 🔷 🔷 🔷 🔷 | | | |
| 😐 | 🔷 🔷 🔷 🔷 | | | |
| 🙁 | 🔷 🔷 | | | |
| 😞 | 🔷 | | | |

**TOTAL**

TOTAL POINTS

NUMBER OF VOTES:

40/12=3,33

Adapt the questions and make sure that the group knows the topic of the evaluation and, especially, that the participants have been involved as beneficiaries, team members, project partners or supporters. Prepare an example in advance to explain the process thoroughly to the participants.
Draw a sketch of the statements which will be presented to the group, where each answer will be a smiling face (see the sketch above).

Place the sketch at the height of all the group members and read the statements, explaining any possible uncertainties the participants may have.

Give a sticky dot to every participant to use for every statement.

Ask the participants to vote one by one according to their personal opinion.

Then count the results or ask a participant or more participants to do so:
*strongly agree = 5 points; agree = 4 points; neutral = 3 points; disagree = 2 points; strongly disagree = 1 point; don't know = 0 and the vote is not counted.*
Calculate the mean for each question and interpret the results together with the group.

**To study the differences of opinion** between various groups, you may ask the participants to form small groups (for example, girls and boys, different age groups, different projects, different regions, etc.).

Offer to each subgroup sticky dots of different colours. Then calculate the means separately for every group participating in the evaluation. If you don't have sticky dots, you may distribute to every participant a pencil or a felt tip for voting. Ask them to vote only once for every question.

It is possible that some participants vote simultaneously on several columns or omit a row. In this case, the results are not valid.

To avoid this situation, you may give a personal code to each participant (*e.g. one letter A, B, C, etc.*) and ask them to write their code on the sticky dot, so everybody will know which their dot is.
In this case, if anybody makes an error, you may ask that person to vote again.

**Alternative**
The method may be applied for several groups with standard questions developed by the project team. Another possible variant is that the participants in each group propose the questions which concern them to be evaluated. In the second case, it will be more difficult to generalize some results.
**To simplify the process**, you may apply this method digitally using the application *menti.com* or in *Google Forms*.
The electronic variant is faster and may conclude the answers automatically, but the variant on paper creates more space for connection and links between the members of the community involved in the evaluation.

*Examples of statements:*

1. IN MY OPINION, SETTING-UP THE PARK WAS NECESSARY FOR OUR COMMUNITY.

2. IN MY OPINION, THE PLAYGROUND WHICH HAS BEEN BUILT BRINGS DIRECT BENEFITS FOR THE CHILDREN IN OUR COMMUNITY.

3. IN MY OPINION, CHILDREN SPEND THEIR FREE TIME IN A HEALTHIER WAY DUE TO THIS PROJECT, ETC.

## J.4. FOCUS GRUP

**The purpose of the method:** to explore deeply a specific evaluation topic together with a preselected group of people from the community, who have the same characteristics and experiences and who were impacted/touched by the project.

**Duration:**
between one and two hours

**Supplies:**
a notebook and a pen, a voice recorder.

**Type of method:** an individual, qualitative, impact method
**When you can apply it:** after completing the project with members of the community

### Preparing the method:

First, you need to clarify very well the purpose of a focus group. The purpose is not to reach a consensus, but exploring and expanding different perspectives. An efficient focus group also depends on the membership of the group. The participants must share at least a characteristic which brings the group members together and is at the same time connected to the topic of the evaluation.

*For example, if your project involves the forestation of a hill in a community to reduce gas emissions, the focus group may include members from the community: representatives of public institutions, simple citizens, the media, volunteers involved in the project, etc.*

### The ideal size of a focus group

is between 6 and 12 participants: sufficiently for good group dynamics and so that everyone can speak and express their opinion. Make all the administrative arrangements which are necessary for the discussion. For example, make sure that the venue for the meeting is convenient, there is enough intimacy for everyone to speak freely, they can see/hear each other, and feel comfortable.

Prepare a set of questions that would yield a productive discussion. Sometimes five or six well articulated questions, with regard to the content, the process and the outcomes of a project, are sufficient.

**Use only open questions**, as they encourage the participants to debate and discuss with their own words. Avoid sentences beginning with *"How much...?"*, because they tend to limit the answers. Avoid closed questions with "yes" or "no" answers.
Do not use too often the question "Why?", because it is too direct and it often makes the participants defensive.

Questions should come naturally, one after another, and the participants should not have the impression of being asked well structured questions; they should feel that the entire session is a discussion.
Assign half an hour for each question, for the actual discussion.

Examples of questions:
*What do you think about...?*
*What did you like most at...? How did ... helped you?*
*How do you think, which is the impact...?*
*How would you characterise...?.*

**The moderator's role:** guide the group throughout the process of performing the task; take a neutral stance; the participants are the experts, and not the facilitator; do more listening than talking; encourage all the participants to get involved; activate or slow down the group when necessary; review the group opinions and summarise them (after a reasonable while or when you move to another question.

Start the discussion with a greeting, introducing the topic of the discussion and the purpose of the focus group in the context of the project impact evaluation. Let the group know that they will be recorded during the discussion and ask for their assent.
Guarantee the anonymity and the confidentiality of the matters discussed. When they introduce themselves, the participants can give fictitious names if they want, to protect their privacy. It is advisable to mention this before they start.

Determine together with the participants the rules or let them know the rules for the discussion: the discussion will take at most 2 hours; they will speak clearly and concisely, so that everybody can express their opinion; value everybody's opinion and sincerity; our purpose is not to reach consensus, but to exchange ideas on the approached topic; they will speak in turns, showing respect to each other; if there is something unclear, questions are welcome;

**Techniques for stimulating the discussion:**
- repeat the questions;
- repeat the last spoken intervention;
- suggest the idea that the moderator does not know a lot on the topic and ask specific questions to find out details;
- pause and wait for an answer – a meditative position of the head and an expectative look;
- repeat the answer;
- as many questions as possible like: *When? What? Where? Which? and How?;*
- neutral comments, for example: *What else? Yet? or Why are you feeling like that?*

**Suggestions:**
When you analyse the data, try to identify the ideas and basic concepts so you can organise them in a table.
Narrative reports may be completed by quotes.

**Suggestions for transcribing the discussion of the focus group:**
- Transcribe the questions and answers such as they come up in the discussion.
- Separate clearly the interventions of different people in the group, that of the moderator and those of the respondents.
- Pay attention to the participants' behavioural aspects, which may be used in the analysis.
- Put in parentheses gestures or actions occurring during the discussion, such as: laughing, speaking too loud, screaming, mutual interruptions between the speakers, etc.
- Transcribe the comments word by word. This is not about taking down the main points of a meeting; it's faithful transcription.
- Do not change words and do not correct mistakes.
- If there are words which do not understand, use an ellipsis (...) to indicate that there are missing words in the transcription.
- You don't have to worry about punctuation. When people speak, they do not use full sentences.
- Use punctuation only when it makes sense. Use a full stop where it seems to be the end of a sentence.
- Put aside enough time for transcription. It takes longer than the discussion itself or than hearing the recording. This time may vary depending on the recording device, the quality of the recording, the duration of the discussion, the complexity of the subject matter.

## J.5. A DIALOGUE WITH A COMMUNITY

**Type of method:** n individual, qualitative method.
**When you can apply it:** after completing the project with the project beneficiaries
**Purpose of the method:** to collect relevant verbal information for evaluation.

**Duration**:
20-60 minutes for having a discussion
**Supplies:**
the interview guide, a notebook and a pen and/or an audio recording device (voice recorder) or a telephone with this function.

### Preparing and facilitating the method:

Start the preparation by putting together an interview guide with a set of questions specific to the evaluation, which will help you approach all the key points and do not let the discussion digress from the subject. Reserve sufficient time for making the interview guide. It is not recommended to have more than ten questions (the less, the better).

The interview guide may be presented to the interviewee shortly before, to offer them the possibility to organise their thoughts before the discussion.
(*See the description detailed in method A3.* Interview)

Plan in advance how you will record and analyse the information. The notes should be taken in the first person, and the ideas and descriptions should be taken down word by word, as a quote.

Start with introducing yourself and announce the purpose of the discussion. Reassure the interviewee of the confidentiality of their answers. Establish a relation of trust with the respondent.
Ask for the respondent's permission to record them.

Start with easy, open questions, and continue with more specific ones. Any question that is rather difficult or sensitive should be left for the end of the interview, when the communication between the two is at its peak. It is important to convince the respondent that you are listening to him or her actively.

**Examples of questions:**

First, use open questions (*for example: "Tell me about your collaboration as a beneficiary with the project members."*).

Then ask challenging questions (*for example: "Why do you say it was an efficient collaboration?"*).

Avoid closed questions or questions leading to the answer – they limit the discussion (*for example: "Was it a good partnership?"*).

Multiple questions are confusing (*for example, "How do the volunteers collaborate with the school, the Mayor's Office and other community actors?"*);

**After the interview** there is an analysis of the data that has been gathered. Allocate twice as much time for data analysis than for the interview.

**A few suggestions for transcribing the discussion:**

- Transcribe the questions and answers such as they come up in the discussion.
- Separate clearly the interventions of different people in the group, that of the moderator and those of the respondents.
- Pay attention to the participants' behavioural aspects, which may be used in the analysis.
- Put in parentheses gestures or actions occurring during the discussion, such as: laughing, speaking too loud, screaming, mutual interruptions between the speakers, etc.
- Transcribe the comments word by word. This is not about taking down the main points of a meeting; it's faithful transcription.
- Do not change words and do not correct mistakes.
- If there are words which do not understand, use an ellipsis (…) to indicate that there are missing words in the transcription.
- You don't have to worry about punctuation. When people speak, they do not use full sentences.
- Use punctuation only when it makes sense. Use a full stop where it seems to be the end of a sentence.
- Put aside enough time for transcription. It takes longer than the discussion itself or than hearing the recording. This time may vary depending on the recording device, the quality of the recording, the duration of the discussion, the complexity of the subject matter.

# J.6. MOST SIGNIFICANT CHANGE (MSC)

**Duration:**
may last for a few weeks depending on the level of thoroughness
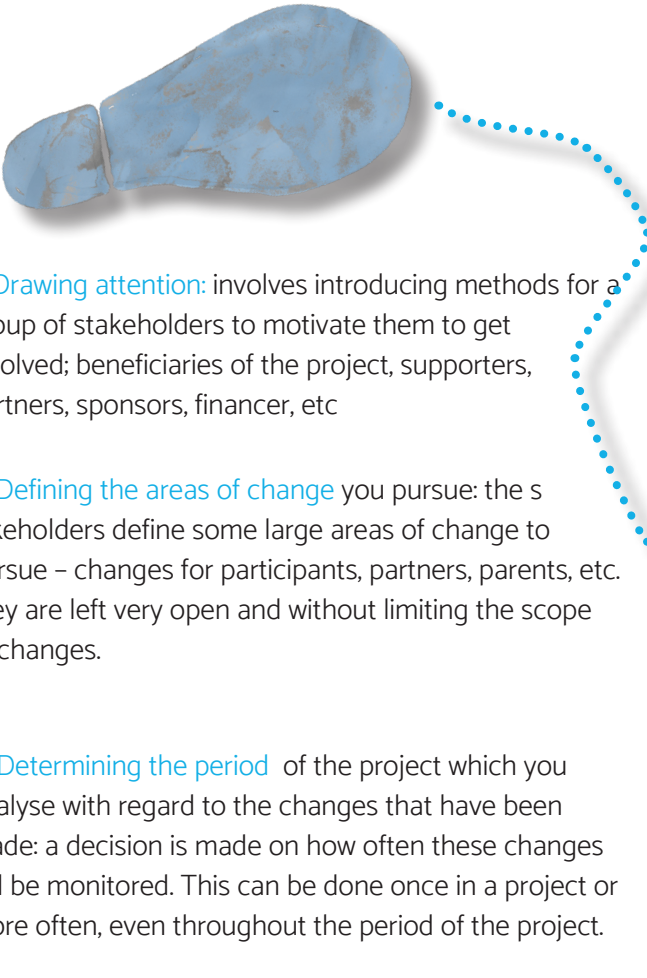**Supplies:** the interview questions (1-2), interviewers, voice recorder

The Most Significant Change implies collecting stories about the change undergone by the people who benefited from the project intervention and the interpretation of this change in a participative way through group discussions.

The method was invented by Rick Davies in an attempt to monitor and evaluate the impact of a rural development programme in Bangladesh.

**Type of method:** an individual, qualitative, impact method.
**When you can apply it:** after completing the project with the project beneficiaries.
**Purpose of the method:** to evaluate the impact of the project, which helps in determining whether the intervention/ service brought to the community had beneficial effects on the individuals involved and on the community.

**Preparing and facilitating the method:**
There are a few basic steps in the use of this method:
Decide **what types of stories you want to collect** (what change you want to focus on).
**Collecting and writing down the stories**
**Review and set the criteria** you are going to use in order to determine which of these stories are significant/ have generated a major change. The review should be carried out by a group of relevant stakeholders for the organisation, group or community..

The purpose of MSC is not just to collect and tell these stories, but also to process these stories with a view to the learning process for the organisation and the initiative group. MSC provides information about the intended impact of the project, and also about the unintended one, and clarifies at the same time the values of each stakeholder in the project. MSC may be useful in explaining HOW change takes place (processes and mechanisms) and WHERE (in what situations and contexts) change takes place.

**The steps of the method are the following:**

**1**. Drawing attention: involves introducing methods for a group of stakeholders to motivate them to get involved; beneficiaries of the project, supporters, partners, sponsors, financer, etc

**2.** Defining the areas of change you pursue: the s takeholders define some large areas of change to pursue – changes for participants, partners, parents, etc. they are left very open and without limiting the scope of changes.

**3.** Determining the period  of the project which you analyse with regard to the changes that have been made: a decision is made on how often these changes will be monitored. This can be done once in a project or more often, even throughout the period of the project.

**4.**  Collecting success stories: stories are collected by the team or other volunteers in the project from the people in the community who were the most involved in the project by asking a simple question: *During period x, or after project x..., in your opinion, which was the most important/significant change following the implementation of the project brought for...? Why do you think that change is the most significant?* The participants decide on the scope of change – whether it is in connection with them, with others, etc.

**5.** The selection of the most significant stories: stories are reviewed in teams for different areas and a few are chosen based on criteria determined by the team. Each group sends the stories they selected to the next level in the hierarchy or to another team. After a selection has been made, the selection criteria are recorded and forwarded to all those concerned so that everybody knows the criteria used by those before or after them. You can carry out a first review in the project team, the next one with the members of the organisation, the following with your project partners and the last one with your financiers, etc.

**6.** Feeding back on the results and the selection process: after several rounds of selection, you draw up a document including all the stories that have been selected, for every single area. The selected stories are presented together with the reasons for their selection. You go further with the selection to your financier, that may select those stories which best describe the expected results in their view.

**7.** Checking the stories: the final stories may be checked by visiting the place where that story was described so as to check it and also to see what has happened since it was first described.

**8.** Quantifyin: when a change is described, it is possible that it includes quantitative and qualitative information. It is possible to quantify to what extent the change identified in a community also took place in other communities over a period of time.

**9.** Monitoring the monitoring: the next step is to monitor the monitoring system, which may include checking out who else participated in the meanwhile in this process and what other changes have been noticed so as to draw conclusions.

**10.** Reviewing the system: the final step is to have a look at the process and identify what you have learned from the application of this method for you as an organisation, an informal group, a team and your way of intervening in the community.

## RESOURCES

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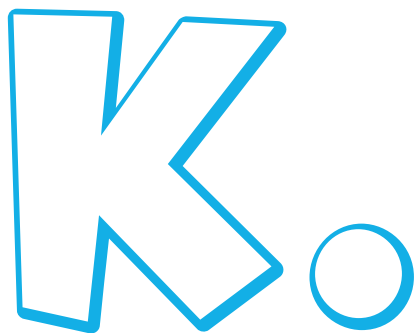
# K. REFLECTION AND EVALUATION OF LEARNING

Creating and offering to the members of the project team and direct beneficiaries an opportunity for reflection and processing in relation to the learning experience and to the project as a whole are elements which may contribute to the quality of the intervention. This is even truer if you are the coordinator, the mentor and the coach in the project.

## REFLECTION = PROCESSING = DEBRIEFING

We have chosen seven methods which help you structure the reflection process and have a relevant evaluation of the project:

- *Reflection on the wall*
- *A solidarity project – Yes or no?*
- *Finish the sentence*
- *A solidarity project in an fishbowl*
- *Sweet reflection in colours*
- *What I plant in the future*
- *FROM THE BEGINNING.*

However, you should keep in mind that reflection and evaluation may also take place during the project, especially after important, significant phases, which bring about change among the youth or in the community.

Reflection itself is also a form of awareness and recognition of the facts/events in the project, awareness and sharing the feelings experienced throughout the project, which is necessary for drawing objective conclusions and lessons learned from the implementation of the project. Reflection is a condition for following the learning progress within the team or among the beneficiaries, and also the basis for evaluating the outcomes and the impact of the solidarity project in the community.

Reflection allows the team or the project beneficiaries to become aware of: *What and how they did/implemented the project? What did they feel or experience during the project? What have they learned/discovered from the project? and How could they apply what they have learned/discovered in other contexts in the future?*

**According to David Kolb,** processing/reflection supposes that participants go through 4 successive stages: *1. The experience of the project, 2. The analysis, 3. Generalisation or Interpretation and 4. Transfer or Application.* The last 3 stages of the cycle basically involve Processing and Debriefing.

**Purpose:** The methods presented below suggest a few creative ways which you, as a coordinator or coach, can conduct a more structured reflection with your project team or with the beneficiaries of your solidarity projects.

**Duration:**
between 20 and 60 minutes
**Necessary resources**: flipchart paper, markers, coloured paper, coloured pencils

**Participants' number:** at least 5 – at most 20.
**Participants' age:** at least 18 – at most 30.
(*30 is the maximum age of the project team. If you go through an evaluation and reflection process with the beneficiaries, they also may be older than 30, if the project targeted them in the intervention*).



1. PROJECT EXPERIENCE
2. ANALYSIS
3. GENERALISATION
4. TRANSFER

PROCESSING/DEBRIEFING
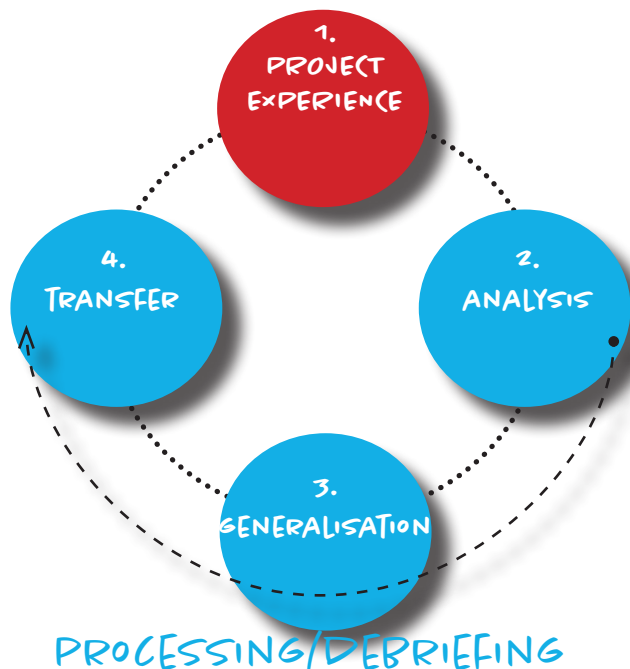
# K.1. REFLECTION ON THE WALL

**Duration**:
between 30 and 60 minutes
**Supplies**:
flipchart paper, markers, coloured pencils

**Preparing the method:**
Prepare several flipchart sheets and write the indications below on them.
Divide the space in four different areas and stick one of the categories below in each location:

*- Facts from the project (stages, situations, events in the project)*
*- Feelings/emotions experienced during the project (positive and negative)*
*- Discoveries, lessons learned, conclusions*
*- Concrete actions (What could be done better or different in the future?)*

**Facilitating the method:**
Offer to the participants a lot of coloured pencils and markers, have some music and give them some time to write or to draw, individually, answers for each section, with regard to the experience of the solidarity project which they implemented.

Invite them to visit each flipchart sheet in turns several times, because there will be other facts and events written by the others too, to which they can attach emotions, lessons learned or concrete actions to follow. Allocate sufficient time so that everybody can contribute.

When everybody has finished, gather the flipchart sheets in a circle and go together with the participants through the content of each sheet trying to order the facts and the events in the project and the types of emotions experienced by the participants in relation with every event.
Sum up – lessons learned or what the group discovered during each phase of the project and use a new flipchart paper to sum up what can be done better in the project in the future or if you implement another ESC project.

**Advantages of the method:**
It stimulates individual reflection and creativity.

# K.2. A SOLIDARITY PROJECT – YES OR NO?

**Duration:**
between 21 and 50 minutes.
**Supplies:**
A4 paper, marker.

**Preparation:** prepare the questions for processing.

**Facilitation:**
the facilitator prepares a series of statements for the group (*see next*).

For every statement, the participants may choose one of the following answers: I agree, I don't agree, I don't know.
These answers shall be written on paper and will be placed on the wall, in different corners of the room or on the floor.
The facilitator will read one statement at a time in connection with their project and each of them, individually, shall position themselves in the room next to the answer which best suits them.

After having positioned themselves, their task is to give reasons why they are in that area of the room.

*Adaptation: questions may be changed and adapted, but the recommendation is to follow the steps of the learning by experience cycle with these questions.*

**The purpose** of the activity is to gather as many opinions as possible or to offer their opinions on the project in a quite pleasant way, without creating a competition between the arguers. At the beginning of the activity, you should mention that the opinions are personal and they are respected as such.

If in the course of the argumentation of an activity, someone wants to change their opinion or position, they may move from one type of answer to another.

**Advantages of the method:** it may stimulate powerful and deep discussions. Each member will be involved at least by their positioning in an area of the room.

# QUESTIONS/STATEMENTS

- suggestions -

*Our project was a good choice – it touched a real and urgent problem of our community.*

*Our attitude to approaching the project was appropriate.*

*We have involved the community in planning the project.*

*We have involved the community in the implementation of the project empowering them to help themselves.*

*The steps we took in the project had no logic – were not properly designed.*

*We all have been equally involved in the project.*

*We all have been very responsible when we took on roles in the project.*

*I felt very comfortable with my role in the project.*

*I challenged myself in the project to step out my comfort zone and learn more.*

*Our project had a real impact in the community.*

*Our project was very visible in the community – every stakeholder found out about it.*

*We have managed to inspire others to show solidarity with problematic situations in our community.*

*I think the project was too simple for us (or too complicated for us).*

*Following this project, I think that I'm more prepared for a similar experience.*

GROWing soliDARE!

# K.3.FINISH THE SENTENCE

**Preparing the method::** prepare the beginning of a set of sentences on some cards and ask the participants to continue them saying how they perceived the planning and the implementation of the project under the European Solidarity Corps.

You should articulate sentences for each processing phase:

**Facilitation:** The team members will sit in a circle. You start the processing/debriefing by explaining that several sentences, begun but not finished, will be placed on the floor and they will have to continue them, one by one, without commenting each other's opinions.

The facilitator will make sure that most answers will also be taken down on flipchart paper.

**Advantages of the method:**
this method helps the participants to formulate answers to questions more easily.

*The steps we took in the project were...*

*My task was to...*

*I liked most...*

*The challenges we encountered were...*

*I was surprised by...*

*I was delighted by...*

*The most powerful emotion was...*

*On the way, I thought that...*

*My conclusion is...*

*My learned lesson is...*

*I discovered that...*

*In the future I want to...*

*In the future I intend to...*

*In other similar situation I'd...*

# K.4. A SOLIDARITY PROJECT IN AN FISHBOWL

**Duration:**
between 30 and 50 minutes
**Supplies**:
flipchart paper, markers, paper, pens

**Advantages of the method:** it stimulates significant involvement of each group member especially as everyone becomes in turn a representative of the group in the fishbowl.

**Preparing the method:** divide the participants in several groups depending on a particular dimension of the ESC project.
A **group** will think about the phase concerned with the identification of the issue, planning and writing the project.
A **group** will think of how they worked with the beneficiaries of the project and the impact of the project on them.
A **group** will think of how they worked with the project partners or sponsors.
A **group** will think about the communication, visibility and dissemination part of the project.
A **group** will think of how they worked as a team for the implementation of the project.
If the number of participants is too small for all these tasks, you may assign two discussion topics to a group.

**Facilitation:** The participants will sit in a circle in groups and will delegate one representative to summarise the discussions. There will be several rounds of discussions. For each round, there will be a different representative who will sum up the discussions in the group based on the questions below distributed for each round. Offer paper and pens for each group to synthesise their ideas.

Our recommendation is to write the questions below for each round on a flipchart or on pieces of paper so as to be visible for each round.

After completing the four rounds, the facilitator will sum up the discussions. You may have more groups with more specific topics depending on the reality of your project and the context..

*Adaptation: based on these discussions, the debriefing may continue only in connection with one or two topics which seemed the most challenging in the project or those that generated most of the learning for the group members..*

**Round 1** of discussions:
*What were the steps taken in the project with regard to the topic of each team? What worked well? What were the strengths? What feelings, emotions, thoughts were you experiencing when things went well?*
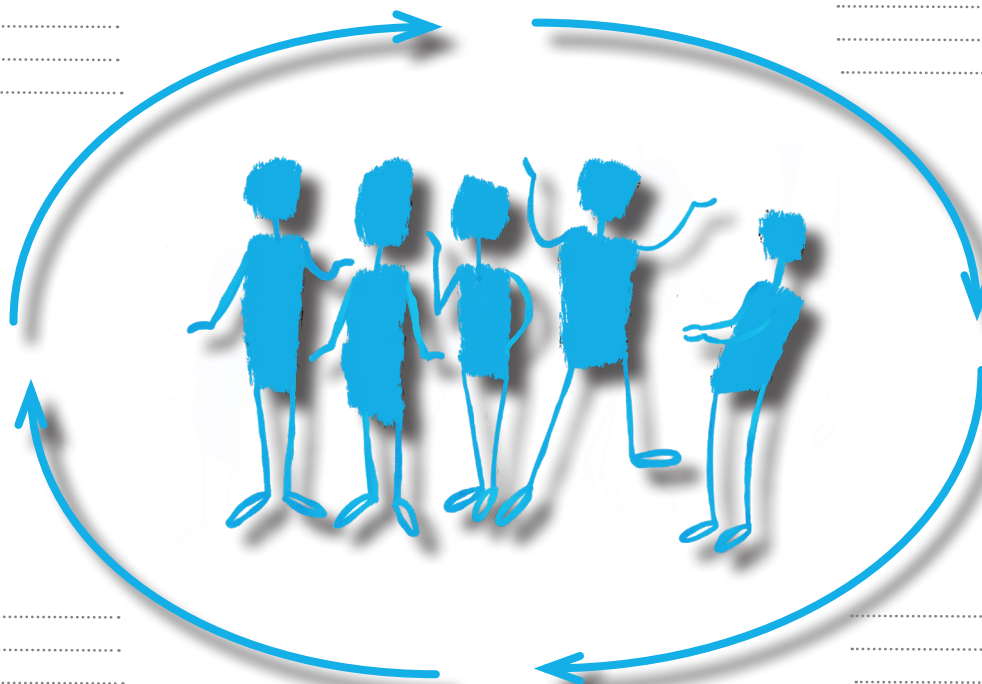
........................................................
........................................................
........................................................

**Round 2** of discussions (change the representative):
*What did not work well? Which were the challenges? What solutions have you found? What feelings, emotions and thoughts did you experience at challenging times?*

........................................................
........................................................
........................................................

**Round 4** of discussions (change the representative):
*What would you do different next time? What do you expect to be improved in the next project? What would you do better at a personal level next time?*

**Round 3** of discussions (change the representative):
*What conclusions, opinions can you draw from strengths, from what worked well? What conclusions, significances and lessons can you draw from your challenges and your reactions to your challenges?*

# K.5.SWEET REFLECTION IN COLOURS

**Advantages of the method:** ating something sweet will give them an extrinsic motivation to reflect on each question.

**Preparing the method:** Buy a large bag of M&M or Skittles. Ask the team to sit in a circle. For each candy colour assign a statement/ question.

Write on some cards or pieces of paper the colours and the association for each colour:
**Yellow** – something surprising which you have discovered during the ESC project.
**Green** – something that you had wished from this project and which happened.
**Blue** – something that you regretted that happened in the project.
**Red** – something that made you angry or put you in an uncomfortable position during the project.
**Orange** – something specific that you intend to take with you from this project

*Adaptation: You may replace/associate with more appropriate questions for your project. If the team is larger than 6-7 people, you can form 2 or 3 teams and have them share the answers within each team and present only the conclusions to the large group.*

Duration:
between 30 and 50 minutes
Supplies:
olourful candies, pieces of paper or cards
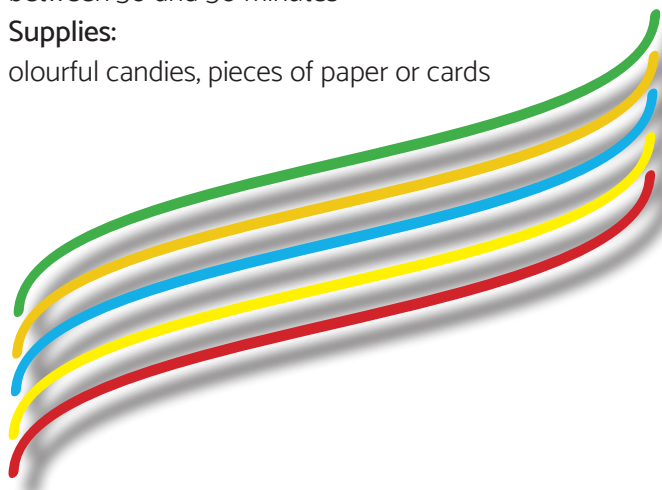
**Facilitating the method:**
Each member will pick up three candies (without seeing what he is choosing) and will have enough time to think about the answers for each of them. Guided by the facilitator, he or she will share the answers with the group members. The colours are shared in turns. First, they give the answers for yellow, then for green, for blue and so on.

Even if some members did not picked a particular colour, but have an opinion on the subject matter concerned, they can share their opinions, receiving an extra candy of that colour from the facilitator.

# K.6. WHAT I PLANT IN THE FUTURE

**Advantages of the method:** associating the learned lessons with the seed/bean creates a strong connexion in the participants' mind. Putting them in a jar and letting at sight will motivate them in their learning progress.

**Preparing the method:**
Prepare the questions to be processed and a bag with beans, as large as you can find, so as there are least 4-5 for each member of the team.

**Facilitation:** after completing the project, the team members will be invited to sit for reflection. The processing/debriefing with questions will continue until the Generalisation and Interpretation phase. For every learned lesson and discovery/conclusion, every participant will be invited to take a bean from the bag (which is placed in the middle of the circle). Give sufficient time that everyone think which lessons they learned and time for taking as many beans as they wish. They will put the beans in front of them so that they are visible to everyone. They will take a tour in circle and everyone will set out their beans and their symbolism.

Further on, each member of the team will take each bean and think how they can "plant" the seed in the project and/or in their everyday life in the future – how they can use what they have learned.

**Duration**: bettween 21 and 50 minute
**Supplies**: large beans
(minimum 4-5 for each participant).

For example: *If my lesson is that "I should be more careful with my budget", then my seed could actually become "I intend to draw up a more careful table/budget and follow regularly every expense in the project and enter it in the budget the day I incur that expense."*

At the end, the participants will be invited to take home their beans and put them in their room in a transparent jar so that they can see them often and remember the promises they made to themselves. Also, they will be challenged to add, every time they learn something new and want to make it a habit, new beans or other types of seeds in that jar. This way they will see the progress.

**Adaptation:** You can use any kind of seeds, but they shouldn't be very small, because they could be easily lost. You can also offer flower seeds, which may be planted in the school yard, in their courtyard or in a pot.

# K.7. FROM THE BEGINNING

**Duration:** between 21 and 50 minutes.
**Supplies:** not necessary.

**Advantages of the method:** this approach puts the participants in an actual situation where they can act out/perform the lessons they have learned. This method is adapted from the principles of the Forum Theatre, where the participants act out solutions until an issue finds all its solutions or as many as possible.

**Preparing the method:** this method may be used immediately after the use of another elaborate reflection method previously described.

**Facilitation:** after the completion of an ESC project, there is a classical reflection with the participants using one of the methods above and following the cycle of learning by doing. After having completed the reflection and summing up the lessons learned and the concrete action plans, tell the participants that they will have an opportunity to act out or perform the experience of the project for 5-10 minutes, so that the project incorporates the conclusions and the new lessons that have been learned following the reflection taken along the way and at the end.

Finally, they can congratulate each other and take another tour in a circle, where everyone says briefly what they did differently that time in the theatrical performance. This will consolidate the lessons learned.

**Adaptation:** the method may be adapted for different phases of a solidarity project: planning, implementation, visibility, dissemination, etc.

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# 3

# SOLIDARITY WITHIN THE COMMUNITY

# CONTENT

The role of the good practice models included in this guide is to offer to informal groups and to organisations at the beginning of their journey a grass-roots vision of how to involve the community in the change, how to bring about the change, how you can act on an identified need and how to act i n solidarity.

For a common perspective on the terms used, we chose to clarify 4 of the terms which are specific to this area, which you can encounter in your action for solving a community issue: *community development, community intervention, community organising, and community engagement*. At the same time, we considered that the 4 terms are a landmark for defining the 8 projects presented below with regard to the direction of the approach taken by the interviewed organisations to solve a community issue.

Therefore, we conducted a structured interview to find out from these organisations about their experiences. The interview aimed to highlight:
- general information about the organisation;
- a description of the project idea and the direction of the approach, i.e. community development, community intervention, community organising, or community engagement;
- the motivation of the team to  bring about change;
- the needs identified and the partners involved;
- manners, methods and tools used in the analysis, planning, implementation, evaluation and follow-up process;
- the change brought about in the community and on the implementation team, the skills that have been developed and how solidarity is manifested in the example provided;
- lessons, recommendations and useful advice for subsequent actions.

## 1. Community development

In 1955, the United Nations defined community development as "a process designed to create conditions of economic and social progress". UNICEF and WHO added a very important and necessary component like "the idea of involving people in the projects of their own development".

One of the definitions used in Romania is "community development is that process whereby a community improves its living conditions, through the voluntary, conscious and planned action of its members, based on the development of their own capacities for action, their inter- and extra-community connections, and shared values and the use of internal and external resources".

A keyword in community development programmes is sustainability, and the ways of action taken with the people in the community should observe that principle.

Successful, complete and sustainable community development should combine elements of:
- public policy (local or regional depending on the identified needs);
- urban or rural planning and development;
- regional development;
- town and country planning;
- elements of community sociology and psychology;
- management of NGOs or ways of interaction with the members of civil society;
- public administration;
- political economy;
- human geography.

## 2. Community intervention

Community intervention is a community development process structured as a plan (a community intervention plan) which involves pooling resources, community participation and volunteering for the benefit of community groups.

Elements to consider for making a community intervention plan:
- there is a community of people or organisations that identified a need to be solved;
- there is an organisation/informal group that has the capacity to solve that problem, has the resources and is willing to get involved in solving the problem, and
- the community assumed that the organisation or the informal group is the right one for providing and implementing the solution *(they should also take into account that their involvement in the initiative concerned does not affect their own activity during the intervention.*

A successful community intervention, with long-term effects should involve more the kind of changes related to the behaviour of the group concerned or the community members as a whole.

A community intervention may include elements of:
- *local development,* which works according to the principle of supporting "people to help themselves" – it lays stress on educating the population and the organic development of the community.

- *social/political planning,* which involves an objective analysis of a large quantity of data about a population and its habits, the crime rate, "mental health" and health in general, the quality of the services provided to the population by public institutions. The conclusions are turned into premises for developing an intervention plan (or several plans). In this case, there is more stress on the specific expertise than on the contribution of community members.

 - *social action,* when a disadvantaged/minority group is supported to appeal to advocacy in order to influence public policies or local decisions, so that they can benefit from equal treatment and access to the resources available to the entire community.

## 3. Community organising

This is a democratic and long-term process which identifies together with the people in a community problems and solutions. They participate in the implementation of the identified solutions, also i nvolving other actors from the community with decision-making powers.

**The participants learn in this process the 4 steps of community organising:**

1. *Connecting to the community*- listening to people permanently so as to select and set priorities with regard to the issues they have identified, and also for identifying shared visions for community development;
2. *Identifying possible solutions* and people and institutions to realize them;
3. *Participation in problem solving* involving the responsible actors in negotiations, confrontations, pressures, or awareness raising events so as to realize the visions embraced;
4. *The development of a democratic and sustainable group* of responsible citizens, consistently involved in these undertakings, takes problem solving, meeting the needs and fulfilling community wishes to the next level of development.

## Clarifying the concepts through a comparative analysis*

"In a community organising process you work with people, unlike a service provision programme which makes things for people.
Advocacy supposes people talking for others, while community organising encourages people to talk for themselves.
Community development often involves partnerships between citizens and public authorities.
Community organising intends to work with public authorities, but it admits that pressure and confrontation are often necessary for making the authorities accountable.
In a community organising process, making the authorities accountable is a purpose by itself.
Civic movements and initiatives often focus on a single problem, while with community organising we are looking to create a sustainable organisation, democratically governed, capable of dealing successfully with numerous problems."

*source https://www.ce-re.ro/upload/handbook_ro_mic.pdf

## 4. Community engagement

Community engagement is a process whereby the members of a community achieve long-term and sustainable outcomes, lasting relations, have a shared and clear vision, get permanently involved in the implementation of the solutions identified in the community and in the decision-making process.

n any undertaking implemented in a community, methods, techniques or strategies are important, but what matters most is the right of each member to be informed, consulted, involved and, especially, supported to implement. For a long-term, sustainable engagement and efficient governance, the key element in this process of community engagement is developing and continuously raising trust among the community members.

Those opting for a community "governed" like that need information from the field of sociology, psychology, anthropology, political sciences, community development and other information to provide them with the necessary tools for action, but it is necessary especially that they understand the community and take into consideration its specific elements, mentioned in Chapter 1 of this Guide, namely the community as a group of people who:
- live in a common geographic area;
- have a sense of belonging to that area and to that group;
- are animated by common needs, interests, beliefs, values and norms;
- participate in the community life and have their proper form of social and/or administrative organisation.

All these elements together with sound partnerships with public and private institutions may provide the necessary expertise to change policies, create intervention strategies, launch programmes and practices that may take the community to the next level of social and economic development – key points for ensuring sustainability.

**RESOURCES:**

Viorel Stănică, *Suport de curs - Dezvoltare Comunitară (Coursework – Community Development),* 2012, http://www.politicipublice.ro/uploads/dezvoltare_comunitara.pdf

Jack Rothman, the presentation *Approaches to community intervention* https://ctb.ku.edu/en/table-of-contents/analyze/where-to-start/design-community-interventions/main

ECON (European Community Organizing Network), ghid *Organizarea Comunitară de la teorie la practică (the guide Community Organising from Theory to Practice),* https://www.ce-re.ro/upload/handbook_ro_mic.pdf

CeRe (Public Participation Resource Centre), ghid *"Ce este organizarea comunitară?" (What is Community Organising?),* http://econnet.eu/media/Training%20and%20Curriculum%20-%20non%20english/Romanian/Prezentare%20OC%20-%20CeRe.pdf

Center for Economic and Community Development, *Basic Education Curriculum - Community Engagement, Solidarity and Citizenship, "What is community engagement?"*

Community story
**PACT Foundation**
A Community Development Model

### About the organisation

*PACT Foundation has been active in community development in rural and small urban areas in the south of Romania since 2016. With training activities, consultancy, community facilitation and small funding, we encourage social responsibility among individuals, authorities and businesses.*

*The Foundation lays stress on developing the capacity of marginalized groups and mobilizing the locals to contribute to improving the living conditions in communities.*

Mădălina Ene
Deputy director
www.fundatiapact.ro

### Project description, type of intervention, the motivation of the team to bring about change, how the need was identified and what methods have been used along the way.

*"We believe that every community should evolve to have the necessary confidence to determine its progress collectively through positive changes and, having the necessary resources, it may gain knowledge and skills to start taking action and ensure a better life for all its members. We believe in collective self-determination, in the involvement of those affected by the problems of a community in the participative processes for solving those problems."*

*Mădălina Ene*

PACT is active in rural or urban communities with social issues, marginalized groups with limited access to infrastructure and basic services.

The success of a community development intervention depends, as viewed by PACT, on the existence of:
- a reasonable level of trust between the members of a community, particularly the lack of open conflicts between them;
- local authorities and institutions that are open to change;
- locals who showed in the past personal initiatives for

the improvement of the general situation in their community;
- formal and informal leaders, held in esteem by the community members, who have the capacity to pool various resources, including human resources, to support interventions which bring about a positive change in their community.

**The PACT model**  aims to increase the capacity of community members to get involved in identifying the issue and carrying out activities for identifying the solution and implement it, with small PACT grants or other sources. With help from a community facilitator (direct support provided by PACT), a group of resource people (5-7 people), called a community initiative group, is trained to develop questionnaires and interviews, take them door-to-door, and organise meetings within the community – for example, a world café – in order to choose an urgent and priority issue and to identify possible viable solutions.

The **role of the facilitato**r throughout this process remains that of monitoring, directing, adjusting the flow, and ensuring the transparency of the process, if necessary. The facilitator is not a leader or an initiator. The **Community Initiative Group** is responsible for contacting the actors who are interested in or responsible for solving problems: representatives of local authorities, investors, small and middle

businesses that may contribute with ideas and resources or, according to their statute, may accept the responsibility for settling the issues (depending on the issue concerned). The community members get involved by answering questionnaires, participating in public meetings to analyse or evaluate the intervention or in training activities, while the representatives of public authorities are invited at meetings, analyses and feasibility studies, partnership development. Throughout the process, the aforesaid actors are invited to take part in analyses for evaluating the intervention and impact studies or to participate actively in the Community Initiative Group.

Manners, methods and/or tools used in the project in the analysis, planning, implementation, evaluation and follow-up process

**Need analysis**: methods implemented by the initiative group, guided by the community facilitator: questionnaires and structured interviews, group meetings to conduct analyses like the Community Map, the Institutional Map of the community (Venn Diagram), the Community Inventory or the Stakeholder Analysis. The community facilitator ensures the proper use of the chosen tools.
**Planning**: this phase is dedicated to the extended team and also includes community members and/or resource people, and beneficiaries of the solution.

It takes place in the form of a workshop, and uses methods like the SWOT Analysis, the Problem Tree, the Objective Tree, and the Stakeholder Analysis.

**Implementation:** at the end of the steps above, the group has outlined their first project. The facilitator's responsibility is now to monitor the implementation of the intervention, to encourage the project team to develop procedures, assume responsibilities, meet for evaluations, etc. The recommended PACT tool: the Project Log, and if the project is funded by PACT, their work requires regular financial and technical reports.

**Evaluation and follow-up:** all those involved want a sustainable process and this is why this phase includes analyses and feedback with regard to challenges, and the complexity of the working process for the community members.

"*Because the bigger goal of PACT Foundation is to create sustainable structures of civil society in disadvantaged areas, which continue to be catalysers of positive change in the community where they are active, we conduct regular analyses together with the structures established through the process described here with regard to the main challenges they are faced with, be it local or generated by societal contexts.*"

*Mădălina Ene*

PACT organises regular meetings with community organisations, workshops on topics of common interest, training courses in areas such as resource-raising, organisational communication, community mobilization methods, drafting projects and advocacy.

The change brought to the community and in the implementation team, skills developed from the project and what solidarity looks like in the story of the project. The community organizing model was implemented in the village Vizureşti (the locality Ciocăneşti, Dâmboviţa County), over 2010-2019. The village has about 1000 inhabitants, of whom 80% are Roma ethnics. The outcomes of the intervention: the number of children sent to beg in Bucharest dropped; from more than half of the children in the village, now there are only two families doing this.

In 2010, the Vizureşti Initiative Group, which is part of the Community Development Association of Ciocăneşti, Dâmboviţa, initiated the construction of a small cultural centre – Culture Cottage – finished with support from Habitat for Humanity Romania under Big Build 2013. At the Culture Cottage, the children from Vizureşti take part in non-formal activities and after-school activities, which had a primary contribution in reducing the dropout rate, improving student achievement in Vizureşti and raising the number of children in the locality who graduate from high-school.

The **success** of the projects done by the initiative group includes:
- 3 rehabilitated houses of families with social problems;
- an extended medical facility, with its own water source, as required by the regulations in force;
- advocacy activities for the rehabilitation of a bridge in the proximity of the school, fundraising activities for different urgent cases in the community.

**Skills developed**

The community members, supported by the community facilitator, have developed a range of specific skills in the framework of the project, where the most relevant in this context are:
- the wish to know their rights and assume citizenship responsibilities;
- a sense of volunteering for the benefit of the community;
- skills related to working with volunteers and mobilizing the community;
- skills related to the organisation of meetings with local decision-makers and promoting a petition;
- skills related to the identification of the resources which are necessary for solving a community problem;
- promoting the successes;

- the capacity to reflect on and analyse a mistake and identify the lessons of the experience, etc.

*"One of the values we promote as a support organization in the area of community development is the solidarity WITH those who belong to groups, families or age categories in situations of vulnerability."*

Mădălina Ene

**"Lessons" to pass on: recommendations and useful advice for successful projects in communities**
*"The community members need encouragement, skills, stimulation and guidance to participate actively in an analysis or an evaluation. Everyone should trust that their opinion will be listened to, taken into consideration and analysed without any bias! Throughout the process, you should create a climate where everyone can speak out openly, without fearing that there are citizens who are more important than others. It is important to know and especially to recognize the resources existing in the community because based on them you will choose the solution to the need you want to approach in a community project. [...]*
*Being aware of a lack of resources can lead you to innovative solutions, which create resources in the community in the long term and generate progress and change."*

Mădălina Ene

Community story
## Timiş County Foundation for Youth
A Community Development Model

**Description of project idea, type of intervention, the motivation of the team to bring about change, how the need was identified and what methods have been used along the way**

### About the organisation
Timiş County Foundation for Youth (FITT) is an umbrella organisation for youth NGOs in the west of Romania. With over 30 member NGOs and more than 29 years of activity, FITT is the most important NGO in the western part of the country.

The programmes and the activities implemented by FITT vary from social programmes for disadvantaged youth to cultural programmes, active citizenship and development of public policies (at local and national levels).

FITT is itself a model of democratic behaviour, being governed by a general assembly composed of all youth NGOs in the Timiş County (the western part of Romania).

Mihai Adrian Vilcea
President
www.fitt.ro

The project chosen as an inspiration is Youth Centres Up, implemented over 11 July – 5 September 2019 in Timişoara.

Youth Centres UP is a courageous solidarity project which brought together over 100 volunteers from 25 countries in the world and from Romania, equipped with determination and the will to do well, to develop a community.

In the short term, Youth Centres UP intended to involve 100 young people from Europe in solidarity activities (as volunteering) in five communities from Timişoara, to engage the citizens and the community in the activities linked to the setup of 5 urban youth centres, through volunteering actions or donations (*donations consisting only in objects necessary to the arrangement of the centres*), using for this purpose the principle of community solidarity and participative arts.

At the same time, the project pursued to develop the transversal skills of young volunteers, skills related to teamwork, a sense of initiative, the organisation of events and communication in a foreign language, and to have a national conference to exploit the outcomes on 12 August (International Youth Day).

In the long term, the project intended to create youth neighbourhood communities around urban youth centres, that contribute to the development of their town, participating actively in the democratic and civic life, to improve the access and participation among disadvantaged groups (young people at risk or with special needs, from disadvantaged areas), and to reduce disparities. The project also intended to create an example of good practice in the framework of the ESC Programme both for Romania and at European level.

The community need was identified also due to a need analysis questionnaire applied in the period of writing and developing the project.

The **actors involved in the project** were the Mayor's Office of Timişoara, youth NGOs and NGOs for youth (about 16), the local heating company (COLTERM), architects working on the Urban Development Plan

of the town. The actors' involvement began 4 months before the drafting of the project. We had planning meetings with architects, working meetings with the community and with public authorities, questionnaires for them. The community was also involved in street actions which announced what was going to happen and was consulted during the community meetings with regard to the type of activities which they wanted in the premises that were to be arranged. The community was also involved in the (re)arrangement process.

**Manners, methods and/or tools used in the project in the analysis, planning, implementation, evaluation and follow-up process.**
**Need analysis:** Questionnaires for need analysis and observing the community.

**Planning:** World Café and Open Space – manners used by international volunteers to discuss with the community and plan the intervention. The planning also took place during regular meetings of the team.

**Implementation**: Volunteering – with the involvement of 100 international volunteers. Besides, locals from the neighbourhood either participated as volunteers in the renovation of the premises, or donated products and objects (donations of money were not accepted).

The locals' involvement in the implementation (through volunteering or donations) came from their will to create a connexion between people and places (youth centres).

**Evaluation**: feedback forms, discussions with the community members, video interviews.
The evaluation with the volunteers was conducted as a 1 day meeting both with regard to the project and to the interaction with the organisation, members of the community, other volunteers, and also with regard to the learning process they went through.

**Follow-up**: The new premises is and will be the venue of cultural, artistic, educational and recreational events implemented by FITT and other local ONGs for young people from Timişoara. We encourage and expect activities initiated and organised precisely by young people from the neighbourhoods of Timişoara. Youth Centres UP 2019 was only the beginning, as FITT wants that, by 2021, Timişoara has 21 youth centres: a House of Youth and other 20 neighbourhood youth centres.

**The change brought to the community and in the implementation team, skills developed from the project and what solidarity looks like in the story of the project**
eamwork, determination, creativity, and solidarity were essential elements which, together, lead to a real success: 5 youth centres dressed up with colour, life and positive energy, safe areas, created by young people for young people.

The project included a solidarity component throughout its period by involving the community to carry out something together *for* the common good, without waiting for others to provide support for existing needs.

**Skills developed in the project**
communication, teamwork, effective time management, human, material and financial resources, skills related to cohabitation, handling conflict, stressful and fatigue situations, communication in a foreign language (English and others), non-discriminating attitudes based on the respect for human rights. Also, the organisation's capacity to implement projects improved and the team members' confidence was boosted.

## "Lessons" to pass on: recommendations and useful advice for successful projects in communities

FITT highlights and encourages those who want to have community interventions to develop real projects, based on the needs of their community (needs which are collected from the community, and not presumed).

Moreover, FITT encourages them to get out of their comfort zone and organise other projects, too besides those involving activities with non-formal education methods, especially when the urgent need is other than one related to learning and personal development.

A piece of advice given by FITT is for the members of the project team to have some job shadowing in organisations that implement (or implemented) projects which are similar to what they want to develop.

Community story
**World Vision Romania Foundation**
A Community Intervention Model

### About the organisation
,"World Vision Romania is a non-governmental organisation carrying out programmes for emergency humanitarian intervention, development and advocacy. We work with children, families and local communities to help them get over crisis situations caused by poverty, lack of development programmes or lack of basic services at local level."

WV, with its head office in Bucharest, has activities in the counties of Dolj, Ialomiţa, Constanţa, Braşov, Vâlcea, Cluj, Iaşi, vaslui, Bucharest – District 5.

Arnăutu Mariana
Educational Programmes Director
www.worldvision.ro

### Description of project idea, type of intervention, the motivation of the team to bring about change, how the need was identified and what methods have been used along the way
The community intervention model we chose is conducted in the locality of Coşereni, Ialomiţa County – a small rural community, with a high degree of poverty, a low standard of living, a low level of social mobilization for ensuring child wellbeing.

The identified risk factors of early school leaving are: poverty – which caused an exodus of adult family members to large towns or abroad, and this has lead to single parent families or children being left to be looked after by relatives – this deepens the lack of parental affection. In other situations, children stay at home and work to generate income for their families or do household chores.

Low income is used to support statements like *"school costs money: supplies, clothes, footwear, etc.",* but at the same time there are family expenses which do not justify the parents' decision not to encourage their children to go to school and invest in education. Early school leaving has other causes too: parents' low interest and involvement in their children's education a disordered background, where no attention is paid

to education and there is only an interest in short-term wealth, there is some forced development of children into adulthood.

The **need analysis** was conducted by the school with support from the Foundation and required a consultation and the involvement of teachers, parents, students, key actors in the local community – representatives of social services, the mayor's office, the local police, the parish and parents' association. The development of a prevention and intervention mechanism at school and community levels with regard to early school leaving was a lasting process, supported by the aforesaid actors throughout its period.

World Vision Romania considers that investing in teachers is a key element in the joint endeavour to prevent early school leaving in the communities where they work as agents of transformation and community development which are focused on education and the child's wellbeing in their family/school/community. Schools in rural areas don't have enough resources and the necessary organisational capacity to respond to the needs of all children. They need to be supported with resources and "know-how" in the institutional development process intended to ensure children's access to and participation in quality inclusive education.

**Manners, methods and/or tools used in the project in the analysis, planning, implementation, evaluation and follow-up process.**
**Need analysis**: several tools have been applied: questionnaires, interviews, a focus-group, the analysis of school documents and social documents, concerning the children and their families, so as to identify the issues, the solutions and the necessary resources for the implementation of the proposed variants, based on priorities and the responsibility of the entire community, and not only the school community.

**Planning:** the establishment of a working group – resource teachers who were responsible for the design of the intervention and planning the implementation of the solutions based on the information obtained from the need analysis. For an optimal functioning, the group includes a resource person who is not from the school and who knows the field very well and is a supporter of the group from the position of a "critical friend" who helps the initiators not to lose sight of important aspects in the process for planning and adjusting the intervention. The outcome: a plan of specific actions and activities to achieve the objectives set as development priority at school/community level in order to prevent early school leaving.

**Implementation**: the following tools have been used: a set of indicators for inclusion, a questionnaire for evaluating the risk of early school leaving – at classroom level, an action form for indicators, an action form for inclusion. All this has been done with the contribution of an external/internal network that has been developed to support the implementation of the planned activities..

**Evaluation and follow-up:** the analysis of the results collected from the questionnaire evaluating the risk of early school leaving – at school level, individual interviews with teachers and other stakeholders with regard to the experience, perceptions and evaluation of the community intervention, focus group meetings on the efficiency of the intervention mechanism and the extent of the improvement of the quality of learning and children's access to school due to the model.

**Qualitative methods** used to collect and integrate information from target schools and communities: observation, analysis of documents, school visits.

**The change brought to the community and in the implementation team, skills developed from the project and what solidarity looks like in the story of the project**

The school took on a more daring and more decisive role in the intervention mechanism at institution and community levels to prevent early leaving from the education system; it contributes to a friendly supportive environment, with a healthy and motivating attitude of students towards learning.

Teachers became more capable of assessing the dropout risk and take action; they also became a critical mass for their community and a drive for ensuring the sustainability of the intervention and the ongoing motivation of students to be part of an educated environment. Parents became more aware of the problems faced by their children and some members of the community, and social services assumed more responsibilities and provided more effective support.

This community intervention strengthened efficient, powerful partnerships, both formal, between institutions – the School, the Mayor's Office, the Social Assistance Service, the Church, the Medical Office, the Social Assistance and Child Protection Service, the Local Police and parents (Council/Association of Parents), and a closer school-student-parent cooperation.

**Skills developed** by the team members are: knowledge about the signs of early school leaving, knowledge

about the inclusion index, skills related to the identification of signs of early school leaving, skills related to the use of planning tools and methodologies to prevent early school leaving, working in community multidisciplinary teams based on cooperation, the ability to innovate, develop and maintain inclusive learning environments.

The **solidarity component** in the implemented action resides in the fact that it was and continues to be initiated by members of the community – the school and its teachers, responds to the identified needs and is for the wellbeing and the education of the community and its members, having the support of all actors involved both directly – parents, students, teachers, and indirectly – public and private local institutions. The latter accepted roles aimed at the sustainability of the intervention and the permanent support of the school with resources for the implementation of the dropout prevention mechanism.

**"Lessons" to pass on: recommendations and useful advice for successful projects in communities.**

The World Vision Romania Foundation acted as a facilitator and a lever for the school in supporting this mobilization and community intervention endeavour. Working in a partnership is very important for putting solutions into effect and finding resources for their implementation.
Co-opting and consulting external experts for aspects which the school/community does not master for the purpose of empowering them proves to be a good and effective community work model for us.

Motivation is very important; making up an implementation team and developing partnerships which may ensure the sustainability of the community intervention in the long term are some of the key elements which I encourage you to gather up at the time when you start an extensive initiative.

Community story
**Youth Voice Romania**
A Community Organising Model

**About the organisation**
Youth Voice started as a community organising programme for human rights in Bucharest high-schools and became a legally established organisation.

Andreea Buzec
Project Manager
www.facebook.com/youthvoiceromania/

**Description of project idea, type of intervention, the motivation of the team to bring about change, how the need was identified and what methods have been used along the way**

The project chosen for inspiration is Youth Voice, an initiative implemented in Bucharest by an informal group, shaped after a community organising model taken from the USA and adapted to local needs.

The project started with a desire to give an opportunity to those students who did not fit in the mainstream to make the changes they wanted. In other words, we wanted to create an inclusive community. The characteristics of the community in which the project took place were: a lack of information about students' rights and responsibilities, shortcomings related to the respect for human rights, discriminatory behaviour and a high level of bullying.

The group started from the reality that in Romania, and specifically in Bucharest where the project was implemented, many young people are alienated from the decision-making. They are used to adults deciding for them and many times they do not know or don't understand what those decisions mean and they also do not understand how they will be affected

by such decisions. The initiative group also started from a visualisation of what might happen, in the long term, if the lack of participation in the decision-making among young people continues. The youth will become passive citizens, who do not stand for their rights and won't be able to bring about positive changes in their communities.

Youth Voice offered a programme which focused on important elements in becoming a productive member of society due to the possibility of taking measures to solve the imperative problems in their communities, first of all the schools, defending the rights of their students, and not only them. The need for such a programme was identified through interviews, focus groups and questionnaires.

The actors involved in the project were student associations, representatives of the school management and teachers from the schools we collaborated with. The actors involved became part of the solution, supported the implementation and participated actively.

The initiative group tried to approach as many passive/neutral people as possible and provide them with a framework for getting involved and doing something for the community they belong to. So, the community members who became partners in the process conducted interviews, facilitated focus groups, participated in the development of materials, applied questionnaires and also participated in the analysis of the results of questionnaires, which were later included in an action plan they did together.

## Manners, methods and/or tools used in the project in the analysis, planning, implementation, evaluation and follow-up process.

**Need analysis:** the tree of the issue, a dialogue with the issue, questionnaires, focus groups, the 3C method for formulating opinions (clear, concise, complete).

**Planning:** analysis of the scope of influence, SWOT analysis.

**Implementation:** a map of actors, workshops and initiatives in high-schools, social theatre plays, community meetings, discussions with students, processes and simulation of advocacy actions.

**Evaluation and Follow-up:** individual and group evaluations, regular team meetings with the beneficiaries and the partners, feedback meetings. As a follow-up of the programme, the initiative group set up Youth Voice officially as an association.

### The change brought to the community and in the implementation team, skills developed from the project and what solidarity looks like in the story of the project

Youth Voice Romania is a network providing the youth with a context for building up their individual and collective power, composed of 5 groups of young people in 5 high-schools in Bucharest: I.L. Caragiale National College, Gheorghe Lazăr National College, Matei Basarab National College, Tudor Vianu National College of Computer Science, Viilor Economic College.

Youth Voice Romania succeeded in negotiating the re-opening of a library, a huge contribution to the respect for the right to quality education; installing a board with information about the rights and responsibilities of teachers and students, as well as information about extracurricular activities taking place in schools, together with selection criteria and a contact person, which means respecting the right to information.

Youth Voice supported the members of the initiative group to design and get training sessions on topics like communication and teamwork. Moreover, they organised events with motivational speeches, where they invited public personalities and popular leaders to share their experiences of what success means.

**Competences developed** along the way: the ability of young people to identify needs and make changes according to the identified needs (both for themselves and for their community), personal development and identity shaping skills, community organising skills for youth, critical thinking and mentorship. Youth Voice also developed skills related to the implementation of community intervention methods through campaigns and other specific activities.

Youth Organizing is a strategy which trains young people to engage with collective actions for improving the structures in their communities, those structures which affect them directly, thus bringing a change to the entire community. With this principle, solidarity is manifested throughout the entire undertaking through the active involvement of the community and working side by side with it.

### "Lessons" to pass on: recommendations and useful advice for successful projects in communities.

Youth Voice accentuates and encourages those who want to carry out interventions in communities to be patient, to demonstrate strengthened and constant capacity among the team members, to make efforts so that the members of the target group go gradually from beneficiaries to partners and then initiators of community-based actions.

Not last, Youth Voice mentions how important it is to connect to the issue and fully accept the intervention and organisation process.

Community story
**GO FREE**
**Association for Supporting Civil Society**
A Community Organising Model

### About the organisation
Go Free – the Association for Supporting Civil Society of Cluj-Napoca – constantly undertakes to promote and respect the rights of all people, aiming to develop with its activity a culture of solidarity, to facilitate the dialogue between different communities and contribute to the establishment of youth movements locally and nationally, in response to the challenges of the Romanian society with regard to the respect for fundamental human rights.

Andra Camelia Cordoş
President
www.gofree.ro

### Description of project idea, type of intervention, the motivation of the team to bring about change, how the need was identified and what methods have been used along the way
In 2017, the Go Free Association, together with LGBTQ+ young people of Cluj-Napoca (some of them organised at present under the PRIDE Association) and the Action Centre for Equality and Human Rights – ACTEDO organised the first march for the rights of LGBTQ+ in Cluj-Napoca (#SpuneDrept) in the framework of the Cluj Pride Community Festival. The organisation of the march required a complex undertaking with 22 applications to the Cluj-Napoca Mayor's Office and negotiation meetings between the organisation team and representatives of the Mayor's Office.

The Cluj Pride team intended to claim the rights of the LGBTQ+ community in Cluj through dialogue, to bring together members of different minority or majority communities and build up bridges and solidarity against hate and intolerance towards LGBTQ+. The message sent by Cluj Pride was to put forward the current problems and challenges faced by LGBTQ+ young people and not only, providing a room for expression without hate and visibility for the LGBTQ+ community in Cluj.

The collaboration between organisations and the identification of the need of the LGBTQ+ community took place under other initiatives such as "Gay Film Nights International Film Festival", the march "Human Rights Are Everybody's Rights", where their common element was to fight hate speech and promote the respect for diversity.

From 800+ participants in its first edition, the 2019 Pride had over 3500 people, the resistance to change of authorities and other groups in the civil society lowered and in its third year the march took place in the Union Plaza of Cluj-Napoca.

### Manners, methods and/or tools used in the project in the analysis, planning, implementation, evaluation and follow-up process.

**Need analysis:** working meetings and ongoing consultations with members of the LGBTQ+ community in Cluj.
**Planning:** working meetings, consulting the community with regard to the implementation of activities.
Implementation: volunteering, advocacy campaigns, public letters, a march, videos, articles, testimonials.
**Evaluation:** Discussions and meetings with the members of the LGBTQ+ community, active observation, articles in the online and offline media.
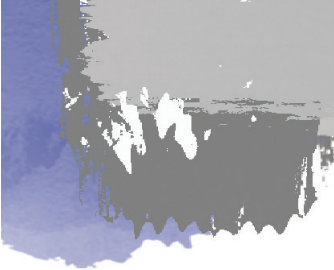
**Follow-up:** After the first Cluj Pride, the LGBTQ+ activists became more visible and got together in different organisations or support groups. The PRIDE Romania Association was officially established, being the main organiser of the Cluj Pride event.

### The change brought to the community and in the implementation team, skills developed from the project and what solidarity looks like in the story of the project

Organising Cluj Pride implied some constant pressure on the 3 delegates who represented the group publicly, at negotiations, in relation to the media. This involved online or offline threats, public counter marching from the Romanian Orthodox Church, representatives of the right wing, events inciting rather to hate than to acceptance, pressure on young volunteers and activists.

Surpassing the complex undertaking of getting the approval of public authorities meant to the organisers both a recognition by the institutions of the LGBTQ+ community, and their safety during the event due to the presence of law enforcement agents.
So the movement of LGBTQ+ youth in Cluj came into being and all those involved learned what it means doing activism for the LGBTQ+ rights in Romania, how to manage your own feelings and how to get over the fear of being visible and act for bringing about a change which is so necessary to the community.

**Skills developed:** ongoing communication with the members of the Cluj community: social media or direct discussions with representatives of the civil society, journalists, etc.; raising the capacity for constant monitoring of speeches delivered by public figures and articles in the press published before and after the organisation of the first Cluj Pride – getting knowledge about reporting to the National Council for Combating Discrimination those reactions which incited to hate and violence, taking a stand.

**"Lessons" to pass on: recommendations and useful advice for successful projects in communities.**
We encourage you to carry out, in a similar action, a clear analysis of the community, the risks and challenges which may arise and to devise thoroughly the ways in which they can be handled.

Adapting the language to the context is another learned lesson. Another challenge the team had to deal with in this undertaking was the use of the term LGBTQ+ instead of the phrase "human rights". This generated even more resistance from the local authorities as concerns the approval of the march on a central route.

Not last, a topic and an undertaking like the one set out here also brought homophobic comments and reactions and verbal assaults. This is something that needs to be taken into account and it is important for the implementation team to be always prepared to deal with it.

Community story
**CeRe**
**Resource Centre for Public Participation**
A Community Organising Model

## About the organisation

*"Together with citizens, organisations and communities, CeRe builds up every day a just, fair world, a world of solidarity, where people's voices are central in making public decisions. CeRe wishes that all citizens have the capacity of having their voices heard by the institutions of the state and for this purpose: we provide support to groups of citizens and nongovernmental organisations in their advocacy efforts, facilitate the creation of coalitions and networks, militate for transparency in making public decisions and "room" for citizens' partic-ipation, promote activism and offer informational and educational resources in this area."*
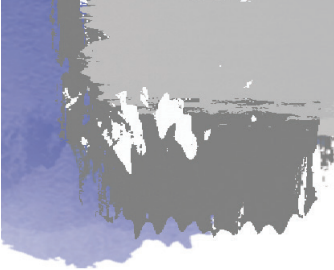
Oana Preda
Director
www.cere.ong

## Description of project idea, type of intervention, the motivation of the team to bring about change, how the need was identified and what methods have been used along the way

CeRe is an organisation working at national level, and most of its projects and initiatives were conducted in Bucharest, where the organisation is based. The motivation of the organisation and the team to bring about change came from the identification of the need to develop grass-root activism in Bucharest in the period 2009-2010, a time when neighbourhoods lack the experience of solving problems through organising and civic engagement. At the same time, an identified need was the lack of genuine communication between authorities and citizens.

For the lack of citizenship activism, the basis of the community organising programme, the needs of the community were identified through direct contact with community members and supported/confirmed by studies and research. Door-to-door visits, meetings in small or large groups in neighbourhoods, community events confirmed and extended the list of community issues.

The community organising activities involved along the component of citizens also institutional actors (mayor's office, local institutions) with a decision-making role, local partners and resource people.

The manner in which they were approached was different – direct contact, in writing (petitions), dedicated events or media pressure.

*"In our programme, the engagement of community members is crucial. The community members are those who choose the issues on the agenda; they analyse them and set priorities; they are supported to organise themselves so as to determine the relevant institutions to resolve those issues."*

Oana Preda

### Manners, methods and/or tools used in the project in the analysis, planning, implementation, evaluation and follow-up process.

The methods used in the community organising programme and their objectives:

**Need analysis**:
- to understand the issues of a neighbourhood and which topics would determine people to get out of their comfort zone: direct discussions with citizens;
- to set priorities regarding the issues to be approached: meetings and discussions;
- to understand possible ways leading to solutions: researching documents/ procedures/rules/other resources.

In this action, the main core of citizens used tools such as free discussions, questionnaires – on paper or online, to keep in touch with their neighbours and understand and identify other issues requiring a solution.

**Planning:**
- for drafting advocacy plans or actions plans (for specific activities): participative meetings for planning purposes.

**Implementation:** advocacy methods – petition, hearing, protest, conference, awareness raising, involving the media, etc.

**Evaluation:**
- for identifying the changes brought: research.

### The change brought to the community and in the implementation team, skills developed from the project and what solidarity looks like in the story of the project

The CeRe community organising programme lead to *"laying down the foundations of citizenship activism in Bucharest as a vehicle used to increase the power of citizens' voice for raising awareness among public institutions."*

With the enhanced engagement of people from the community *"actual issues have been solved: a park was saved from being turned into concrete, a building was given back to the community, an alley was paved, a park was re-arranged, etc. Moreover, people became aware of their own power and learned how to use various tools for action."*

**Skills developed** by the project team: interpersonal communication, teamwork and skills related to advocacy.

With regard to solidarity, this
*"is found behind the idea of collective action for a common goal, which solves a problem concerning the public interest affecting us all. How people were willing to give some of their time and resources for the sake of the community is also an expression of solidarity. We see solidarity also when groups of citizens from different neighbourhoods choose to support the actions of another group in connection with topics in which maybe they don't have any particular interest."*

**"Lessons" to pass on: recommendations and useful advice for successful projects in communities.**

*"We don't need to invent methods 'to motivate people'; we need to discover their interests. This is a type of intervention requiring a lot of time and resources."*

Oana Preda

Community story
**Habitat for Humanity Romania**
A Community Engagement Model

## About the organisation
Habitat for Humanity Romania is one of the most important Romanian organisations in the area of social habitation. Since 1996, we have been building, rehabilitating, providing consultancy and technical support and implementing programmes for energetic efficiency, disaster prevention and response, for vulnerable groups.

Agnes Nicolescu
Project manager - Awareness raising
www.habitat.ro

## Description of project idea, type of intervention, the motivation of the team to bring about change, how the need was identified and what methods have been used along the way
The project chosen for inspiration is Big Build – the 2019 edition. The purpose of the project for accelerated construction and volunteering in Văideeni, Vâlcea County, was to build 10 houses for families who lost their homes following the powerful flood in 2014. Before the project, five families lived in containers, and the other five families lived in unsuitable conditions.

The container houses, which were initially designed as a solution for the post-natural disaster intervention, became their homes for an indefinite term, which made the lives of the families very difficult.
These 10 families became partner families in the Big Build project and contributed to the construction of their homes. Therefore, the beneficiaries are more than a bunch of people who get something; they are involved actively in raising their standard of living, develop skills and contribute to the development of their community.

The **need** met by the project was determined based on an analysis of the target families and the habitation issues they were dealing with. The process takes into account both the current habitation conditions and the membership of the family.

Văideeni is an example of advanced phase intervention following a natural disaster. The community is vulnerable in economic and social terms, having low income levels.

An important reason of this vulnerability is that, in most cases, family members have seasonal and low-paid jobs.

Another characteristic is that the majority of families have at least a small child among their members. Local authorities and representatives of local businesses (small and medium-sized companies in the area) have also been involved in the project. They were approached with an extended, lasting vision, aiming to involve as many local actors as possible, the purpose being to support the community.

The community members were involved both in the need analysis phase – the method: social inquiry, and in the implementation of the solution – in the home construction process.

**Manners, methods and/or tools used in the project in the analysis, planning, implementation, evaluation and follow-up process.**

**Need analysis:** The analysis process regarding the habitation needs includes a social inquiry. The need is determined based on an analysis of the target families and the habitation problems they are dealing with and of the dwelling available locally. This process takes into account the current living conditions and the membership of the family.

**Planning:** The intervention planning process considers three components: the financial criterion (the partner family should fall under the home allocation scheme of the organisation), their work contribution to the construction of homes ("sweat equity") and the necessary dwelling in the community.

**Evaluation and Follow-up:** These phases consider possible risks (e.g. possible delays in the provision of public authority services to the dwellings that have been constructed).

Depending on the identified risks, a risk management plan is drawn up *(e.g. mitigation measures, construction of septic tanks, etc.).*

The follow-up component is given by the continued collaboration with the partner families for at least 20 years, considering the specificity of home construction projects

**The change brought to the community and in the implementation team, skills developed from the project and what solidarity looks like in the story of the project**

The undertaking proposed by the presented project serves the most vulnerable members in the community and engages them directly with the delivery of the solution.

Therefore, solidarity is manifested also in the participation of partner families in the construction of their homes, complying with the principle of solidarity according to which the intervention is conducted with the members of the community and not *for* the members of the community.

In this entire endeavour, the skills developed both by the team members and the community members were collaboration, teamwork, opening to the issues of the community.

**"Lessons" to pass on: recommendations and useful advice for successful projects in communities.**

Habitat for Humanity Romania accentuates and encourages those who want to have community interventions to emphasize the important role played by the beneficiaries throughout the process and how they are actively involved in the implementation of the solution.
In this story, it is about partner families.

Community story
**New Horizons Foundation**
A Community Engagement Model

### About the organisation

"For 18 years, the New Horizons Foundation has been providing the educators with tools for empowering young people to lead and bring about positive changes in their communities.

NOF believes in the transformational power of education and this is why we work with teachers, head teachers and volunteers to transform Romanian education and really help young people to become better, stronger, wiser. The New Horizons Foundation has developed educational programmes such as: IMPACT – learning through community service projects; LIFE – education with adventure; COMMUNITY SCHOOL – training courses, facilitation, financial support for schools; ARCHITECTS OF EDUCATION – courses, resources and training programmes for teachers. These help children and young people aged between 11 and 19 to become more engaged, more responsible and more confident in their own capabilities. They acquire values, attitudes and skills which can really help them in their lives."

The New Horizons Foundation has two seats: Cluj-Napoca, Cluj County and Lupeni, Hunedoara County and carries out activities nationally, in 32 counties.

Lidia Bondiuc
Manager of the IMPACT National Network
https://noi-orizonturi.ro/

### Description of project idea, type of intervention, the motivation of the team to bring about change, how the need was identified and what methods have been used along the way

The mission of the Foundation began with a desire to foster citizenship values and life skills among young people, so that they can be happy and achieve their potential, bring themselves the changes they need in their communities and create positive social capital, which may be lead to the development of an entire country.

The story of the New Horizons Foundation began in 1999, when an American and his wife, Dana & Brandi Bates, came to Romania with a dream to build an adventure camp for children and youth (which is now

the **LIFE Camp** – the first learning by doing programme) in Valea Jiului, one of the most disadvantaged areas in Romania.

*Why Valea Jiului?* The area is characterised by a precarious socio-economic situation. After the closing of mines, a lot of people were left without their jobs, becoming unemployed or leaving abroad. Communism affected trust among the members of the community, so they are characterised by civic apathy, low interest in engaging with community issues and poor skills for acting on/solving various local challenges – some elements were developed at the time when the pro-gramme was developed, others are still found.

The **IMPACT Programme** – the subject of the good practice model – is developed and implemented by volunteer teachers, who are trained and offered men-torship. It works like an out-of-school club, an area for learning, exploration, applying ideas, making decisions, practicing the adult life at small scale, identifying pas-sions through projects benefiting communities. They develop questionnaires, conduct interviews, talk with experts and institutions, come up with solutions and, together with the IMPACT leaders, make it real.

The Foundation's investment is targeted directly at teachers and indirectly, but with the greatest impact, at students, through interactive methods of classroom work, attractive projects and the developed teacher-student relation based on trust, responsibility and motivation/valuing on both sides. They provide ongoing feedback – with questionnaires, interviews, focus groups – to help improve the programme and update it so as to meet the needs of the community. **Actors involved** in the programme along the way: schools and school inspectorates, the Ministry of National Education, organisations at international level, like World Vision, Romanian American Foundation, private partners and sponsors, that support the mission of the organisation to bring about change in education.

### Manners, methods and/or tools used in the project in the analysis, planning, implementation, evaluation and follow-up process.

**Need analysis:** The programme went from the initial plan of learning by doing to ongoing feedback from teachers and students. The methods used were: observation, structured feedback, focus group, and many of the used methods and activities have been tested and adjusted so as to get the best results possible for the youth in the community and for the community as a whole.

The need analysis was initially based on official research, and subsequently we conducted our own research depending on the community.

**Implementation**: The quality of the programme depends on a few elements that also help to keep those working in the territory motivated: quality and intensive training programmes, face-to-face and online mentoring, visits to the club and feedback/support for development, the provision of educational opportunities: conferences, specialised training, grants for projects, camps, etc.

**Evaluation and follow-up**: fvaluation forms after each event/context, annual reports made by beneficiaries and the staff, evaluation meetings.
As for the follow-up component, on most occasions, we distributed to the members of the beneficiary community the conclusions/outcomes/supportive educational material.

**The change brought to the community and in the implementation team, skills developed from the project and what solidarity looks like in the story of the project**
*"It is indeed difficult to carry out impact studies when it is about developing values, socio-emotional development and [soft] skills... A study conducted with IMPACT alumni by Dr. Jennifer S. Feenstra, Northwestern College, USA, showed that the young people in our programme, compared to other young people: fitted in better at their workplace, vote more, are still involved in volunteering programmes, have more trust in people, are more preoccupied with the future generations, had a higher level of autonomy, are interested in their own development and experience a higher sense of purpose in life and self-acceptance."*

*Lidia Bondiuc*

**Skills developed**: project management, training and mentorship, communication and promotion, fundraising and drafting grants, advocacy, designing educational materials, organising educational events and conferences, designing and implementing national campaigns, exchanging roles and taking on different responsibilities, the ability to adapt and the flexibility acquired from the implemented projects.

"The solidarity component is found in several aspects:
1. Our support for teachers to carry out relevant learning processes in their community, dedicated to students.
2. The IMAPCT clubs, where young people look carefully at the problems of their community and intervene where it is most necessary. Therefore, they implemented projects in the area of: health and wellbeing, reducing poverty and famine, reducing inequalities, environment protection, quality education, etc."

Lidia Bondiuc

**"Lessons" to pass on: recommendations and useful advice for successful projects in communitie.**
The New Horizons Foundation encourages all those who want to make a change to consider the following:

"1. First of all, clarify with your team the purpose of the intervention and the expected outcomes.
2. Talk to people in your community, who are directly affected by the issue, and to experts who can offer you an overall perspective. The solutions you offer to the beneficiaries should be within their reach.
3. Check and test at small scale before investing resources and energy.
4. Try to visualise how your initiative could work in time, without you. If you really want to resolve an issue, look at its causes and look for sustainable methods of intervention.
5. The team is with you no matter what, so take care of it! There is a lot of work in an NGO, we know that, but do not forget to make sure how your colleagues are doing.
6. You can win real partners investing in your relation with them and involving them as much as possible in the process – be honest, open and kind to them. Choose especially those who share the same values as you and clearly set out your roles.
7. DREAM BIG."

Thank you for choosing, together with your team, to make a change in your community, to contribute to making the life of those less privileged better and, maybe, to take initiatives looking after the environment.

We hope that this Solidarity Guide will be useful in your journey as a team, will help you organise yourselves and inspire you to choose the methods you want to apply in your intervention.
Do not forget that this Guide may only be the beginning and that it is not the only source of inspiration and assistance. We invite you to look for inspiration also in the people around, in your community and in your contexts.

We invite you to choose carefully and realistically the type of change you want to make and remember that "Rome wasn't built in one day", but little by little.

Therefore, no matter how big the temptation is, do not put the pressure of changing the world on your shoulders. Discover together what you can do and start from that point.

At the end, we encourage you to have confidence in yourself and in your team, to believe in the power of "together" and not to give up. Sometimes it will be difficult, sometimes will be challenging, and at other times you will be full of joy and enthusiasm in front of small and big results. Always remember which is your **WHY** and what made you become an Agent of Change who takes a stand against injustice and inequity.
Ask for help when you don't know something, enjoy each victory, say "Well done!" both to your team and to yourself and think about the learning process you go through by yourself and together with others.

Have a safe journey and let's work together for a better, more just and safer world and a world of solidarity!

# www.suntsolidar.eu

**CRESC** (Certification and Introduction to the EuropeanSolidarity Corps – for those interested in volunteering projects and traineeships and jobs projects)

**ACCES** (Applied Workshop for the European Solidarity Corps – for writing projects)

**SUCCES** ((Support for Contracting under the European Solidarity Corps – for organisations and informal groups with approved projects)

**MC2B** –  Mentorship and Coaching (for project mentorsand coaches)

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