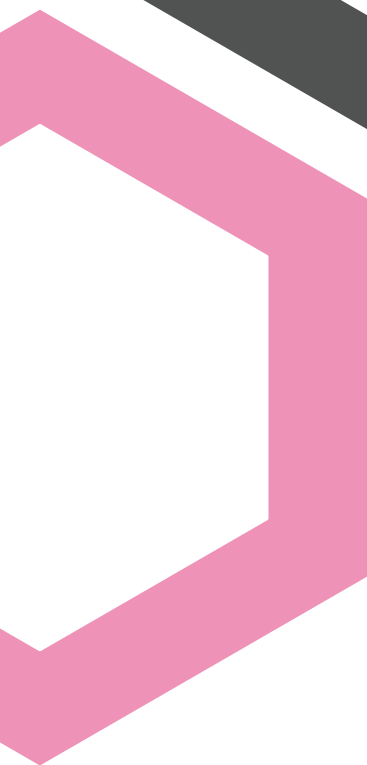


SCENARIO

BUILDING ALLIANCES AND PARTNERSHIPS FOR ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION



Co-funded by
the European Union



GREEN
INDUSTRY
FOUNDATION



Module 3: „Communication and advocacy skills“

Topic: „Building alliances and partnerships for environmental protection“

Duration: 8h (depending on the size of the group and the level of advancement, the duration of the module can be varied flexibly)

Participants: Green Leaders working in the local environment

Description: The ,Building Environmental Alliances and Partnerships‘ training explains how to effectively build partnerships and coalitions that can help drive green change. It includes an indication of best practices for using social media and other digital tools to promote green initiatives and build support for environmental goals. It also explains how to tell stories effectively and identifies ways to use personal narratives to connect with stakeholders and build support for green initiatives.

Objective of the training: The training aims to help participants understand how to build partnerships and coalitions for green initiatives. It explains how to effectively use social media and other digital tools to promote and build support for environmental causes. It demonstrates how to properly tell stories and use personal narratives in the implementation of green leadership tasks.

Learning outcomes:

Upon completion of the training:

- Participants will gain skills that will enable them to communicate their sustainability goals and values more effectively. This will result in greater motivation and commitment among team members.
- Green leaders will learn the benefits of building coalitions and partnerships and how to build partnerships and coalitions for green initiatives.
- With the skills acquired, leaders will know how to use social media effectively to promote and support environmental causes.
- Participants will also gain skills in effective storytelling. They will learn how to tell stories properly and how to use personal narratives in the implementation of green leadership tasks.
- Leaders will understand how to more effectively promote green behaviour and attitudes among colleagues.
- Participants will be prepared to take concrete action for environmental protection and sustainable development.

FRAMEWORK PROGRAMME

Part 1: Introduction

- Welcoming participants and introducing the trainer.
- Presentation of the training objectives.
- Getting to know the expectations of participants.
- Discussion of the Agenda and Training Programme.

Part 2: Building coalitions and partnerships

- Explanation of what cooperation in coalitions and partnerships is.
- Discussion of stages of formation and types of coalitions and partnerships.
- Highlighting the benefits of building coalitions and partnerships.
- Identification of possible challenges to the creation and operation of partnerships and coalitions.
- Strategies for building and maintaining coalitions and partnerships.
- Exercises to summarise the topic.

Part 4: Use of social media

- Description and explanation of the functioning of best practices in the use of social media.
- Discussion of how to track the effectiveness of your practices on social media.
- Exercises to summarise the topic.

Part 5: Effective storytelling

- Explanation of what storytelling is.
- Emphasising how important storytelling is as an aspect of a leader's work.
- Discussion of the purpose for which storytelling is used, in particular in terms of engagement in sustainable development practices.
- Identification and discussion of practices that enhance storytelling effectiveness.
- Discussion of the types of narratives commonly found in creating stakeholder engagement processes.
- Discussion of strategic frameworks for effective storytelling.
- Exercises to summarise the topic.

Part 6: Conclusion

- Participants' summary of the main issues and techniques discussed during the training course.
- Highlighting key findings and recommendations.
- Evaluation of the training and participants' comments.

Course of action:

The trainer has at his disposal:

- Multimedia presentation and various additional materials in the scenario to be used during the lecture, discussions and exercises
- A podcast that can be played to participants as an introduction or given to listen to at home as a form of summary
- 15 Worksheets - tasks/practical exercises

PART 1

Introduction — based on the points of the FRAMEWORK PROGRAMME.

Tips.

- Welcoming participants and introducing the trainer. The trainer opens the meeting by welcoming participants and introducing himself/herself.
- Presentation of the training objectives. The trainer discusses the main objectives of the training.
- Exercise to allow participants to get to know each other and to share their expectations from the training. The trainer suggests an exercise to get to know each other and to share expectations from the training. For example, it could be a short self-presentation round in which participants present their name, their profession, a short statement about their experience in environmental protection and one expectation they have of the training.
- Discussion of the training agenda and programme. The trainer provides a detailed agenda of the training, indicating the sections, their duration and the main issues to be covered. Assures participants that they will have the opportunity to ask questions and actively participate in all parts of the training.

Here are some examples of questions to ask in order to integrate the group and establish interaction between participants:

- Why do you think communication plays an important role in the work of a Green Leader?
 - What communication channels do you consider to be the most important and effective in the work of a Green Leader?
 - Do you think coalitions and partnerships help to implement green initiatives?
 - What are your main objectives for participating in this training? What would you like to achieve or learn?
 - What difficulties or challenges in communicating as a Green Leader do you see in your work or activities?
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- After the introductory part, take a short break or conduct a physical activity.

Part 2: Building coalitions and partnerships

- Working together in coalition partnerships. The presenter explains what partnerships and coalitions are. He/she identifies and discusses the stages of forming partnerships and coalitions. Highlights the benefits of building coalitions and partnerships. He/she also points out possible challenges in the creation and operation of partnerships and coalitions. Finally, he/she discusses strategies for building and maintaining coalitions and partnerships.

Collaboration has been widely recognised as an essential element in the successful implementation of a wide range of policies and programmes. It is a participatory process by which individuals, groups and organisations work together to achieve desired outcomes.

Partnerships can be broadly defined as an agreement in which parties, known as partners, agree to work together to promote their mutual interests. In partnerships, stakeholders work together to pursue their own needs and interests through an exchange of values. It is a win-win situation: each partner derives a clear benefit from the cooperation.

On the other hand, coalitions are somewhat more complex. Coalitions often consist of more than two stakeholders who, in addition to their own interests, also cooperate to achieve a higher goal. One can define coalitions as a pact (or treaty) between individuals or groups, during which they cooperate in joint action, each in their own interest, for a common cause.

The UN defines partnerships for the Sustainable Goals as multilateral initiatives voluntarily undertaken by governments, intergovernmental organizations, major groups and other stakeholders whose efforts contribute to achieving intergovernmentally agreed development goals and commitments.

The research indicates that coalitions and partnerships have been identified as some of the most effective organisational structures for driving change at the community level.

Coalitions and partnerships often influence the wider community by identifying and solving a specific local problem.

By representing the diverse people in the community they serve, coalitions and partnerships provide an avenue for sharing knowledge, ideas and strategies, and can maximise the power of individuals and organisations to bring about positive change.

Stages of coalition and partnership building:





1) Identifying potential partners and allies - the first step is to identify who you want to work with and why. You need to have a good understanding of your mission, values, goals and target audience, as well as the issue and advocacy context. You can then research and map out the landscape of other actors who are working on the same or related issues or who are affected by them. You can use criteria such as relevance, alignment, impact, diversity and potential to prioritise and select the most appropriate and strategic partners and allies for your campaign. To identify potential members, the coalition builder can draw up a list in three categories, :

- all ,natural' allies, individuals, groups, types of people who may share concerns and support a similar position;
- all types of persons, groups and social structures that may be affected, either positively or negatively, by an issue or position taken; and
- all potentially interested civic-minded groups who could gain indirectly from supporting the same issuer constituents.

2) Building trust and relationships - the second step is to build trust and relationships with potential partners and allies. You need to approach them with respect, openness and transparency and show how working together can benefit them and the common cause. You can use a variety of methods to communicate and engage with them, such as emails, phone calls, meetings, events, social media, newsletters, etc. You can also share your vision, goals, strategies and expectations for the partnership or coalition, and ask for their feedback and comments.

3) Negotiating and assigning roles and responsibilities - the third step is to negotiate roles and responsibilities with your partners and allies. You need to reach a clear and mutual agreement on what each party will contribute and expect from the partnership or coalition, and how you will coordinate and collaborate. You can use tools such as memoranda of understanding, terms of reference, action plans, budgets, timetables, etc. to formalise and document the agreement. You can also establish mechanisms for communication, decision-making, conflict resolution, monitoring and evaluation.

4) Capacity and solidarity building - a compact step is to build capacity and solidarity with partners and allies. You need to provide and seek opportunities for learning, sharing and mutual support between members of the partnership or coalition. You can organise trainings, workshops, webinars, peer exchanges, mentoring, etc. to increase the skills, knowledge and confidence of partners and allies. You can also create spaces for dialogue, feedback, recognition and celebration to foster a sense of belonging, trust and commitment.

Categories of partnerships and coalitions:

1) based on lever/exchange

2) based on connection/integration

3) transformational.

Partnerships based on 'leverage/exchange': collaboration is rooted in complementarity: one organisation recognises that another can provide the resources (knowledge, services, skills) it needs to achieve its own strategic goals. For example, the relationship between an aid agency and a university research institute may be a win-win partnership, whereby the agency gains access to the institute's research results and expertise, while providing the institute with research funding or sources of data and case studies.

"Connection/Integration", takes us into the realm of what most people would recognise as a cross-sector partnership - a collaboration between two or more organisations in which complementary resources are brought together to address a common challenge or achieve common strategic goals. The critical point - and the essence of partnership as a tool for sustainable development - is the belief that working in partnership will achieve results that no single organisation could achieve by working alone. Pooling resources in this way requires a higher degree of planning, attention to procedures, sensitivity to cultural differences and a commitment to building mutual trust.

Transformational - its ultimate goal is to more ambitiously address a development challenge in an innovative and multi-faceted way that results in systemic change. Transformational partnerships are characterised by a complex environment in which the definition of the problem may be unclear and partners bring different worldviews and perspectives to the problem. The problem and the solution path must be negotiated with different stakeholders. Partners will need to iterate and adapt in order to jointly find a solution that is feasible and politically acceptable to all.

There are many reasons why effective collaboration is challenging. Collaboration requires sufficient time, as well as compromise on the part of the stakeholders involved, to achieve a level of function related to efficiency.

Compromises necessary for collaboration often lead to noticeable delays in moving work forward and achieving goals; however, increased coordination of efforts has the potential to better achieve and sustain desired outcomes.

Partnerships and coalitions can take different forms, depending on the nature of the issues addressed and the objectives of the cooperation:

- Formal partnerships refer to legally binding agreements between organisations or agencies that involve shared responsibilities and resources.
- Informal partnerships are more flexible and based on mutual understanding and trust.
- Multi-sector partnerships bring together organisations from different sectors, such as government, non-profit and private sectors, to address complex social problems.
- Multi-agency partnerships involve multiple organisations within a single sector or system, such as the health system.
- Community coalitions are formed by community members to address issues affecting their community.
- Finally, thematic coalitions are formed around a specific social problem, such as climate change or poverty, which requires collective action by different stakeholders.

Each type of partnership and coalition has its own strengths and weaknesses and can be tailored to the specific needs of the community and the problem at hand.

Benefits of partnerships and coalitions:

Partnerships and coalitions can provide numerous benefits to the practice of community organisations. First and foremost, they increase the capacity and resources available to address complex

social problems that no single organisation can solve alone. Through partnerships and coalitions, organisations can pool their resources and knowledge to achieve common goals.

Furthermore, partnerships and coalitions increase the credibility and legitimacy of community efforts by building on the strengths and expertise of different organisations and community members. By working together, organisations can demonstrate a collective commitment to solving community problems, which can increase public trust and support for their efforts. Partnerships and coalitions also foster collaboration and coordination between stakeholders, enabling them to work together more effectively and efficiently. By aligning the efforts of different organisations with a common vision and goals, partnerships and coalitions can reduce duplication of effort and ensure more efficient use of resources.

In addition, partnerships and coalitions can increase community involvement and participation by involving community members in decision-making and action planning. By involving community members in the process, partnerships and coalitions can ensure that community needs and priorities are included in the solutions developed.


Finally, partnerships and coalitions can lead to greater efficiency and impact by aligning the efforts of different organisations and stakeholders towards a common vision and goals. By combining different perspectives and resources, partnerships and coalitions can develop more comprehensive and effective solutions to social problems.

Benefits of coalitions and partnerships:

1) Bringing together the necessary complementary resources and instruments - bringing together a set of key resources and competencies needed to deliver a complete solution; harmonising/ coordinating the activities of multiple actors to intentionally transform a particular system.

Partnerships can bring together the resources of different actors from all sectors, each of which is an essential piece of the solution to the puzzle. This may include some key resources that cannot





be bought and must be contributed voluntarily (for example, social capital or access to public systems). When applied at scale, by mapping the system, analysing root causes and identifying leverage points for change, a group of key actors can work together, each playing their unique role, to transform the system.

2) Gathering a diverse, holistic range of actors: Developing a more practical, context-appropriate, cross-cutting and implementable approach.

Drawing on the different perspectives, knowledge, experience and skills of partners should result in better designed, more contextualised solutions. Engaging wider stakeholders (including ,beneficiaries') as partners should also build support and ownership of solutions. Bringing together organisations with different mandates can help transcend interrelated sustainability goals to provide more holistic solutions.

3) Harnessing synergies - increasing the scale of impact from available input resources (or achieving desired outcomes with lower inputs)

Creating efficiencies by coordinating activities; sharing common resources; sharing common services; achieving economies of scale; avoiding duplication; creating shared financial funds.

4) Creating adequate weight of action: Combining / matching / coordinating resources to create the solution needed to achieve results.

When the desired outcome is too large and requires more partners to align their resources, networks, activities and voices to collectively achieve the desired outcome.

5) Collaborative learning and capacity building: Improving knowledge, expertise and capacity.

The exchange of knowledge and experience enables partners to learn from each other and jointly develop good/best practices for wide dissemination.

6) Possible innovations resulting from the pooling of diverse resources: Creation of new, more efficient approaches, technologies, services and/or products.

Using and combining the diversity of partners' knowledge, ideas, experience and resources to develop new ways of tackling persistent or complex challenges.

7) Legitimacy and knowledge to create norms, standards and policies: Development and dissemination of standards to raise standards / create a level playing field across the sector.

By combining both the collective knowledge and combined legitimacy of key players, partners can jointly develop norms and standards that can be adopted and raise standards across the sector.


8) Scalability by combining delivery options in different locations: Scaling up successful programmes.

By combining the potential and power of multiple implementing partners, effective programmes or innovative solutions can be implemented quickly.

9) Networking, connecting, building relationships and catalysing action: Bringing multiple organisations together, building trust and social capital and catalysing joint action to deliver all of the above values.

Using centre/platform partnerships to coordinate and catalyse joint activities and build system coherence.

Challenges of partnerships and coalitions:



One of the main challenges is power imbalances and conflicts of interest that can arise from differences in organisational structure, size and resources. These differences can result in unequal distribution of decision-making power, resources and benefits, which can undermine the trust and cooperation necessary for effective partnerships and coalitions.

Another challenge is the lack of trust and communication between partners. Building trust between different organisations and stakeholders can take time and requires open and honest communication. Lack of communication can also lead to misunderstandings, duplication of efforts and wasted resources.

Moreover, differences in values and goals can create challenges in partnerships and coalitions. Partners may have different missions, goals and priorities, which can create tensions and disagreements about the best way to proceed. Finding common ground and shared values can be a long process that requires patience and compromise.

Limited resources and capacity can also present challenges for partnerships and coalitions, especially community- and issue-based coalitions. These groups may lack the resources and capacity to sustain collaboration over time, which can lead to disengagement and loss of momentum.

Finally, maintaining partnerships and coalitions over time can be difficult. Partnerships and coalitions may face changes in leadership, shifting priorities and competing demands, which can affect the effectiveness and sustainability of the collaboration. Adapting to these changes requires ongoing communication, evaluation and strategic planning.

Strategies for building and maintaining partnerships and coalitions:

One key strategy is to set clear goals and objectives that are jointly agreed upon by all partners. This can ensure that all partners are working towards a common goal and can align their efforts to achieve that goal. It is also important to establish clear roles and responsibilities for each partner, which can help minimise conflict and ensure that each partner brings their unique strengths to the collaboration.

Another strategy is to build trust among partners through open and frank communication. Partners should be encouraged to share their concerns, ideas and opinions openly and respectfully. It can also be helpful to organise regular meetings and follow-up visits to ensure that all partners are informed and involved in the collaboration.

Partnerships and coalitions can benefit from the use of shared measurement systems that enable partners to track progress towards common goals. This can help demonstrate the impact of collaboration and identify areas for improvement.

It is also important to consider issues of power and equity in partnerships and coalitions. Efforts should be made to ensure equitable distribution of decision-making power and resources among partners. Strategies such as training, capacity building and mentoring can also help build the capacity of coalitions based on communities and issues.

Finally, sustaining partnerships and coalitions requires constant evaluation, adaptation and renewal. Partnerships and coalitions should regularly assess their progress towards common goals, identify areas for improvement and adapt their strategies if necessary. Celebrating successes and valuing the contributions of all partners can also help to build momentum and sustain collaboration over time.

Exercise to conclude the topic. After the presentation and discussion of the topic, the trainer moves on to a practical exercise.

The facilitator now turns to worksheets 1 to 5 and asks participants to split into 5 teams. Each team

receives a different worksheet. The trainer then explains the exercise, explaining what they have to do in teams and what the objective of the task is.

After the exercise, participants share their observations.

Tips for the trainer:

Worksheet 1 - Possible partnerships: Municipality, Local environmental NGO, development company.

Worksheet 2 - Possible partnerships: City Council, Local Residents' Association and Local Renewable Energy Cooperative.

Worksheet 3 - Possible partnerships: Local Government, Regional Environmental Club and Local Business.

Worksheet 4 - Possible partnerships: City Transport Department at City Hall, Local Environmental Group and Local Transport Companies..

Worksheet 5 - Possible partnerships: Local Schools, Neighbourhood Association and Agricultural Cooperative.

Part 4: Use of social media

- The presenter describes and explains how social media best practices work. He also discusses how to track the effectiveness of your social media practices.

Research indicates that social media is one of the best tools that environmentalists can use today, simply because there are currently around 5 billion users on various social media platforms.

There is probably no better way to run an effective environmental campaign than an effective social media strategy.

Best practices for using social media:

1. Create meaningful content

At the heart of a social media campaign is meaningful content. But with so many environmental and social issues circulating on social media, how do you make your campaign stand out?



A study by Cone Communications found that people are more likely or more motivated to take action on an issue they learned about from social media if they:

strongly believe that they will have a significant impact if they take part (79% of respondents)

see an urgent need for immediate support (79%)

recognise that the cause or problem is important to him/her personally (74%)

Content can therefore be formulated around the above facts. For example, you could partner with a brand that sells certified natural and organic products. You could publish an advert on social media that a certain percentage of the money raised will be donated to the reef clean-up initiative for every product purchased by customers.

You can take it a step further by inviting interested parties to participate in a real reef cleaning event, allowing them to have a fun and hands-on experience while helping them feel that their purchase is making a positive difference.

2. Citation of facts and statistics

Quoting facts and statistics is generally interesting to your audience and evokes a range of emotions from nervousness and concern to motivation and inspiration. Use facts and figures to increase the visibility of your social media content.

For example, current recycling statistics can be cited to emphasise the need to apply the 3Rs principle in waste management (Reduce, Reuse, Recycle).

It is very important that the post should be a trivia question to generate interest. For example, you could prepare an e-poster with the message: „Did you know that we throw more than 2 billion tonnes of rubbish into the environment in a year?“. Such a question will encourage readers to improve their waste management practices to reduce waste generation.

Alternatively, you could publish a question in the form of a survey: How many tonnes of rubbish do you think we throw into the environment each year? Surveys encourage users to actively engage with the content in question, while also having the opportunity to teach people something they didn't know.

To make your post more effective and interesting, use infographics or animations instead of simple text.

Text images can also be a great way to attract attention.

3. Choose your social media platform carefully

It is quite tempting to set up an account on every social media site to reach as many people as possible. However, not all social media platforms are created equal. Nor are they designed for the same purpose.

Furthermore, it is almost impossible to achieve success on all social media platforms. It is time-consuming, expensive and may not suit your specific needs. The best way to decide which platform is best is to ask yourself the following basic questions:

Who is your target audience? - Here you need to identify demographics (age, race, background, social status, income/education level, etc.) and interests beyond the products/services you offer.

What are your objectives for your audience?

Social media enables creative, unique and targeted ways to achieve the goals you set for your followers

Netflix, for example, has a Twitter account set up specifically for customer service. This is a helpful and effective way to reach out to customers and meet their needs while freeing up phone lines/email boxes. You can do the same to help people find local recycling centres and explain recycling rules.

So instead of promoting green, also think of unique ways to use social media to achieve your overall goals with your audience and get them to interact with you.

Once you have identified your audience and defined your objectives, the next step is to choose the social media platform that works best for both your audience and your specific environmental action.

For example, if you want to reach a younger demographic by promoting a zero-waste lifestyle, research shows that you can better reach them via Instagram or TikTok. Younger audiences may have Facebook accounts, but offer more activity on Instagram or TikTok.

Here is a brief overview of the three most popular social media platforms and how they can help more or less:

Facebook - due to the large number of Facebook users that have been around since the platform's inception, it can be difficult to find new audiences even within your own network. So if you are trying to attract a new audience, perhaps Facebook is not the best place to start posting about your activities. However, if you want to build on your existing, dedicated observer base, Facebook is an option to consider.

The „X“ platform - „X“ is great for building awareness and tracking trends in a specific industry using hashtags. You can see what's new and popular in the „X“ community, and perhaps create posts based on that. „X“ is also a great tool for publishing real-time updates to engage with your followers.

Instagram - the perfect platform for visual storytelling. Instagram is a growing social media platform with a predominantly younger demographic participating.

Here are the results of a survey by Ipsos published by Facebook, which examined the age range of people who log on to Instagram more than once a day:

- 18-24 years: 67%
- 25-34 years: 60%
- 35-44 years: 49%
- 45-54 years: 43%
- 55+ years: 31%

4. Make use of videos

According to the Digital Marketing Institute, 97% of marketers said that videos help customers better understand their products and services. The organisation also noted that 90% of customers said that videos help them make a purchase decision.

These remarkable statistics are not surprising. Video is a medium that affects many senses. And because humans are inherently visual creatures (i.e. we understand and comprehend things better if we can see them), videos are effective and encourage users to connect.

Invest in good quality video production services and make videos showing, for example, waste management activities. Make videos of reef clean-ups, recycling technologies, tree planting initiatives or animal rescues. Edit them according to your script and then publish them on for example YouTube.

5. Be consistent in publishing posts

Hopefully, when you publish excellent quality content about your environmental initiatives, you will gain loyal watchers and subscribers. These people will look forward to reading, watching or interacting with your new content. Keep them interested by consistently publishing posts.

This can easily be done by following a routine for publishing or sharing social media posts, sticking to a specific time and day. A consistent and regular publishing schedule helps to keep your audience interested and engaged. They will look forward to seeing your new social media post.

6. Interact with your audience

One of the most common mistakes organisations make when marketing on social media is to believe that these platforms are only for promotion, marketing, advertising and sales. They forget the key word - social. Social media platforms are designed for people to socially interact with each other.

Therefore, you must take the time and effort to engage with your audience. The primary way to do this is to respond to their messages, by replying to them in posts or private messages.

You can ask them for ideas, thank them for their praise, explain your rationale to them in detail or solve a problem. Each connection makes people feel like a real person is talking to them when they use social media. This is more important than ever with the rise in popularity of chatbots and artificial intelligence.

Important success indicators and results of social media activities

The effectiveness of a social media campaign can be tracked by paying attention to several important indicators.

This data is displayed in your platform analytics. You can also use an analytics tool to help you analyse your social media and website reports. You can also consult digital marketing agencies that specialise in social media marketing to help you.

1) Reach - is the total number of people who have seen your content at least once. In theory, the higher the number, the more people have interacted with your ads, posts or other content. If your content has an impressive reach, it could mean that it has reached a lot of viewers. Your content is likely to be engaged or shared.

2) Impressions - views represent how many times your content has been viewed by viewers or displayed on their screens. If 100 viewers watch your content twice a day, you will have 200 views. Views give you an idea of how visible your content is on a particular social media platform. They are also useful when tracking your content on an ongoing basis; if you do not get any views or only get a few views, it means that something is wrong with your content or campaign.

3) Engagement - engagement refers to interaction, and engagement rate refers to the frequency of interaction between your audience and your content. Followers who interact with your content may like, react, comment or share it. A high engagement rate indicates how responsive your audience is, how many of them are your 'real' followers, how engaging your content is and how aware they are of your brand or campaign.

4) Direct messaging - people who are interested in your activities often message you with queries or show interest in your campaign. Receiving many messages about your campaigns means that people are interested in your support.

Exercise to summarise the topic.

At the end of the presentation and discussion of the topic, the trainer moves on to a practical exercise.

The facilitator now turns to worksheets 6 to 10 and asks participants to split into 5 teams. Each team receives a different worksheet. The trainer then explains the exercise, explaining what they have to do in teams and what the objective of the task is.

After the exercise, participants share their observations.

Part 5: Effective storytelling

- The leader explains what storytelling is. He/she stresses how important storytelling is as an aspect of a leader's work. He/she discusses for what purpose storytelling is used, particularly in terms of engaging in sustainable development practices. He/she also identifies and discusses practices that increase the effectiveness of storytelling. Finally, he/she discusses a strategic framework for effective storytelling.

Storytelling can be defined as. It is the activity of sharing narrative content in the form of a story; it articulates what is wrong, how it can be resolved and how to persuade or convince actors to agree, unite and engage in a process of collective action.

This definition is particularly crucial when considering sustainability storytelling, especially given that stories also provide information about the distinct temporal and spatial context in which they are located.

In any environment where actors compete, there are bound to be multiple and perhaps conflicting perspectives on reality related to the ambitions, interests and opinions of group members regarding quality and land use. In this context, storytelling is seen as a promising planning tool for making sense of and supporting collective action towards a particular direction.

Leaders must be able to connect with supporters and stakeholders and help others to connect with them. They must be able to establish relationships based on trust, influence stakeholders and initiate cooperation and action.

The story is personal and provides some context and detail to stimulate the listener's imagination and build a connection with them. It is able to move not only the minds of the listeners but also their hearts. Allows them to emotionally enter the narrator's world.


Storytelling is different from objective, explicit and fact-based communication. Stories reveal their message indirectly through an event. This allows listeners to draw their own conclusions. This implicit nature, which activates the listener, is the key to making a strong impact.

Modern organisations also use storytelling to communicate sustainability and other stories. Sharing experiences through stories is becoming, across professions, a powerful way to share and consolidate knowledge.

The research highlights that storytelling has been identified as a tool for:

- 1) Sharing norms and values
- 2) Developing trust and commitment
- 3) Sharing tacit knowledge
- 4) Facilitating unlearning
- 5) Generating emotional connection.

All of these potential outcomes of effective storytelling offer the opportunity to ground the knowledge and message of sustainability for the organisation's stakeholders.



Strategic storytelling is the art of using narrative to convey complex information in a way that engages and resonates with audiences.

It involves identifying and creating a compelling story that communicates the organisation's mission, values and impact. Strategic storytelling can inspire action, foster engagement and build a sense of community by emotionally connecting with stakeholders.

how to use strategic storytelling in your communication activities:

- 1) Identify your core message: Omitting your core message is a mistake that many organisations make when telling their stories. Why are you telling the story? What do you want to achieve? It's simple; your core message is the main idea or purpose that defines its mission and values. Before you start crafting a story, selecting references for publication or formulating questions for a documentary or media interview, it is important to identify and clarify your core message. This message should be concise, compelling and focus on your impact.
- 2) Know your audience: to create a story that speaks to your audience, you need to understand their needs, interests and values. Research your audience to identify their pain points, motivations and goals, then integrate stakeholder mapping into your communication strategy. This will help you tailor the story to the person's interests and create a deeper connection.
- 3) Focus on impact: stakeholders want to see the impact of their investments. Therefore, it is important to highlight the tangible results of your work in your story. This is not a pointless conversation; you need the right combination of emotion, data, references and anecdotes to illustrate your impact.
- 4) Use visuals: Visuals are an effective way to connect with your audience. Always use images, videos and infographics to complement your story and convey complex information in a more accessible way.
- 5) Be authentic: authenticity is key to effective storytelling. Avoid exaggerating or oversimplifying your impact, as this can damage your credibility. Also avoid sounding 'perfect', because if we all were, the world would be perfect. Instead, be honest, transparent and authentic in your actions.

The human brain better absorbs and retains scientific knowledge and messages when it is introduced in the form of a coherent narrative. Narratives appear to offer intrinsic benefits at each of the four main stages of information processing; motivation and interest, allocation of cognitive resources, elaboration and transfer to long-term memory. Some studies even claim that narrative is the most effective way of instilling new ideas in the human brain.

Research shows that stories and storytelling are a potentially important tool for helping people from different disciplines and domains to better understand the world and each other when working on applied environmental problems, including by using the world of stories to move beyond normal constraints.

In the case of storytelling, the focus is on the representation and evocation and construction of a story or narrative in situ, rather than on the story as an object. Why is a story told in a particular context and how? From this perspective, it becomes clearer that stories are created, not pre-existing things, and that this creation (including the decision to tell or write) depends on the context, including audience, purpose, location, etc. 'The same' story can be told quite differently depending on the case, even by the same narrator, which undermines the concept of stories as stable data points.

There seems to be no concrete and agreed definition of storytelling in the context of sustainable development.

The researchers suggest that combining the general characteristics of good storytelling and scien-

tific discourse on effective communication and education about sustainability is a useful starting point. The researchers add that sustainability is a normative idea and „for storytelling to be sustainable“, it must lead to outcomes that favour sustainability.

The educational environment adds a second layer to this. In the humanist tradition, education is about helping students to relate better to the world they live in, to address the challenges they face, and to empower them to change that world for the greater good of all. Thus, according to the researchers, storytelling for sustainability must contribute to change towards sustainability and build students' capacity to take action in a competent and autonomous way, empowering awareness, challenging assumptions, clarifying values and ideas about what kind of sustainability we want, and enabling individuals and groups to act accordingly.

Types of narratives commonly found in the creation of stakeholder engagement processes:

1) Form of conversation:

- Storytelling - provides perspectives, persuades others or prompts people to imagine policy and planning outcomes. Includes descriptions of feelings, experiences or preferences relevant to the issue. Frames value judgements, definitions or domains of possibilities related to the problem(s) and solution(s). Stories about the potential future effects of policy or planning choices.

2) Forms of performance

- Core narratives - refer to a recognised pattern of action and thus help to structure the expectations, interpretations and actions that make up the engagement process. Presenting an evaluation based on a mix of events and expectations of what should happen, such as: „This is [or is not] an authentic participatory process“.
- Narrative logic - provides a dynamic or sequence of steps linking different aspects of the engagement process. Explains what will (or will not) or should (or should not) happen next. Sets out how to proceed when the public engagement process gets stuck or takes an unexpected turn.



The researchers developed a framework consisting of four strategic elements for effective sustainability storytelling. They proposed best practices in the form of authenticity, emotion, use of co-creation and multi-sensory experiences, explaining that the framework is not a collection of separate elements, but rather an interrelated framework that maximises the effectiveness.

1) They suggest starting with the ,Why' (Purpose) - in this case, the ,why' refers to the purpose of the organisation or initiative, and the researchers identify three strategic objectives for sustainability storytelling, as follows:

- Emphasising existing sustainability values
- Repositioning towards sustainability values
- Transforming ecosystems or society around sustainability values.

2) Active stakeholder engagement and collaboration with partners (Actors). Stakeholders are an important consideration when considering communication and are most often divided into internal and external stakeholder groups. Employees are a key group of internal stakeholders in an organisation who should be involved in storytelling, as they are often tasked with learning and repeating sustainability stories to external stakeholders.

3) Using an aspirational (aspirational) context - sustainability is not usually classified as an entertaining topic, given at least the current state of the environment and the scale of the challenges involved. Using an aspirational context means that sustainability messages will be more accessible, with a less serious tone which can result in greater reach.

4) Using the right media to bring your story to life (Action) for an effective message the medium is as important as the message. Depending on the message, you can use social media, speeches at meetings, conventions, symposia, conferences.

Exercises to summarise the topic. After the presentation and discussion of the topic under discussion, the trainer moves on to practical exercises.

The trainer now turns to Worksheet 11. The trainer then discusses the exercise, explaining what needs to be done.

After the exercise, participants present their solution. The exercise must be discussed, participants should present their ideas, opinions, doubts and be able to ask questions. The trainer should summarise the exercise accordingly.

After the exercise, participants share their observations.

The facilitator now turns to Worksheets 12 to 15 and asks participants to split into 4 teams. Each team receives a different Work Sheet. The trainer then explains the exercise, explaining what they have to do in teams and what the objective of the task is.

After the exercise, participants share their observations.

A summary of the exercise by the trainer is the closing element of this part of the programme.

Part 6: Summary and conclusions

- Summary of the main issues and communication methods by participants.
- Highlighting of key lessons and recommendations for green struggling leaders.
- Evaluation of the training and participants' comments.

At this point, the most important thing for green leaders is to summarise the workshop conducted. The key points discussed should be highlighted as a tie-in to all the content discussed during the training.

There is also time here for:

1. Questions for the group
2. Conclusions
3. Evaluation questionnaire
4. Diplomas for participants





