Agro4SDGs

SELF-LEARNING DIGITAL FLIPBOOK

FOR RURAL WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS IN AGROECOLOGY

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OVERVIEW

The "Agro4SDGs Self-learning Digital Flipbook for Rural Women Entrepreneurs in Agroecology" serves as a vital educational tool aimed at empowering rural women by equipping them with essential knowledge and skills in agroecology, within the context of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The flipbook delves into the principles of agroecology, highlighting its importance in transforming traditional agricultural systems into more resilient and sustainable ones. It emphasizes the role of women in leading this transition, fostering their leadership skills, and encouraging innovative business models that align with ecological principles. By providing a digital and interactive learning resource, the flipbook allows learners to progress at their own pace, accommodating their schedules and learning preferences.

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SUMMARY

The “Agro4SDGs Self-learning digital flipbook for rural women entrepreneurs in agroecology” serves as a comprehensive educational resource for adult learners, focusing on the integration of agroecological principles within the framework of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Agroecology is an integrative approach to agriculture that applies ecological concepts and principles to optimize the interactions between plants, animals, humans, and the environment.

It aims to equip rural women entrepreneurs and other stakeholders in the agricultural sector with the knowledge, skills, and attitudes necessary for adopting sustainable practices. By covering topics such as green competencies, innovative entrepreneurship, and personal leadership within agroecological contexts, the flipbook provides a pathway for learners to contribute effectively to ecological sustainability, food security, and rural development.

Through a blend of theoretical knowledge and practical tools, it encourages adult learners to engage in sustainable agriculture practices that are environmentally sound, economically viable, and socially just, thereby playing a crucial role in achieving the SDGs.

To use the digital flipbook, simply click or tap on the screen to flip through the pages and use interactive elements like links or videos for an enhanced learning experience. Adjust the view by zooming in or out as needed for comfortable reading.

ABBREVIATIONS, ACRONYMS

FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
FFS	Farmer Field School
FSN	Food Security and Nutrition
HLPE	High Level Panel of Experts on Food Security and Nutrition
IAASTD	International Assessment of Agricultural Knowledge, Science and Technology for Development
IPBES	Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services
IPCC	Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
IPM	Integrated Pest Management
PELUM	Participatory Ecological Land Use Management
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
GenAI	Generative Artificial Intelligence
UAA	Utilised Agricultural Area
CAP	Common Agricultural Policy
CSR	Corporate Social Responsibility
IDGs	Inner Development Goals
KPI	Key Performance Indicators
AMAP	Associations for the Maintenance of Peasant Farming
CSA	Community Supported Agriculture
EAFRD	European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development

1. GREEN COMPETENCES IN THE AGROECOLOGY SECTOR

Introduction

The ecological transition is necessary to provide an adequate response to climate change. This implies the transformation of all productive sectors, including the agricultural industry.

Agroecology applies ecological principles to the design and sustainable management of agroecosystems, improves production, promotes biodiversity, and preserves natural resources. It is a sustainable alternative that contributes to food security.

The role of women in agriculture and the development of agroecological practices has always been fundamental. In the present context, the agroecological transition requires women to take a step further by assuming leadership in agri-food production to make it more sustainable as well as making it their livelihood. In this process, the application of innovative tools in entrepreneurship as well as the development of women's leadership skills facilitates their role in this needed transformation.

In the following sections, the importance of developing green competencies is detailed in 3 units and tools for the design of innovative business models are presented. Lastly, personal leadership, the key to become an entrepreneur, is analysed in depth.

Learning objectives

KNOWLEDGE

Know and integrate green competences, define the concept of sustainability, and get to know the GreenComp framework. To know how to use innovative tools such as Canvas, Ecocanvas and a Landing Page to prototype. Identify and know the factors involved in leadership and how to train it.

SKILLS

To design and prototype innovative business models according to sustainability competencies and exercising leadership in the agroecological sector.

ATTITUDES

- Learners demonstrate key competences to act in favour of sustainability.
- Learners explain their business idea clearly and concisely using innovative tools.
- Learners led initiatives in the agroecology sector.

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Green competences

GreenComp responds to the growing need for people to improve and develop the knowledge, skills, and attitudes to live, work and act in a sustainable manner.

What are green competences? How can you learn GreenComp?

GreenComp (Ref. 1) is a framework for sustainability competences. It provides a common ground for learners and guidance for educators by providing a consensus definition of what sustainability implies as a competence. It is designed to support education and training programmes for lifelong learning. Competences for sustainability can help learners become systemic and critical thinkers, as well as develop their capacity for action, and provide a knowledge base for all those who care about the present and future state of our planet.

GreenComp consists of 12 competences (**in bold**) organized into the 4 areas (in italics) below:

- *Embodying sustainability values, including the competences:*
  - **Valuing sustainability**
  - **Supporting fairness**
  - **Promoting nature**
- *Embracing complexity in sustainability, including the competences:*
  - **Systems thinking**
  - **Critical thinking**
  - **Problem framing**
- *Envisioning sustainable futures, including the competences:*
  - **Futures literacy**
  - **Adaptability**
  - **Exploratory thinking**

- *Acting for sustainability, including the competences:*
  - **Political agency**
  - **Collective action**
  - **Individual initiative**

Aims

GreenComp can support education and training systems in shaping systemic and critical thinkers who care about our planet's present and its future. All 12 competences of the framework are applicable to all learners, regardless of age and their educational level and in any formal, non-formal and informal learning environment. The proposed model can complement and strengthen existing international, national, regional, and local efforts to develop sustainability competences.

Methodology

The European sustainability competency framework is the result of a consensus process based on a mixed-methods research process. This process has led to the gradual and progressive refinement of GreenComp and ultimately to the consolidated framework presented in this document.

Limitations

Although widely endorsed by experts in the field and representative of different stakeholder groups, the framework has not yet been tested in a real environment. Putting GreenComp into practice, through its deployment and evaluation in a concrete context, could and should lead to its modification and refinement based on feedback from practitioners and end-users. Thus, the framework should be treated as a living document.

Another challenge is the broad scope of this framework, targeting everyone from young children to adults, thus affecting different educational settings. Furthermore, due to the broad and rapidly evolving nature of the concept of sustainability, this framework describes the competences needed for sustainability as a global issue. Therefore, subfields are not directly addressed

in this context. Examples of these competences are, among others, responsible production and consumption, competences for the circular economy or competences for specific educational levels. Based on GreenComp future developments in these directions can very well be envisaged.

Learning about environmental sustainability is essential to achieve a sustainability mindset and trigger the will to act for a sustainable future. However, education and training, including this competency framework, are only part of the puzzle. Systemic change towards sustainability is a global need and a shared responsibility. Investments in research and innovation, laws and regulations, technological eco-innovations, transparency, and accountability on the part of companies and global value chains are needed to achieve global change. Individual behaviour must be supported by enabling measures and contexts designed by, with and for people and the planet.

Defining sustainability

Sustainability means prioritizing the needs of all life forms and of the planet by ensuring that human activity does not exceed planetary boundaries.

GreenComp defines sustainability as a relevant competency for all ages. The sustainability competency defined by GreenComp is deployed in a set of sub-elements referred as competencies for sustainability.

GreenComp has adopted the following statement to define a sustainability competency:

A sustainability competence empowers learners to embody sustainability values and embrace complex systems, in order to take or request action that restores and maintains ecosystem health and enhances justice, generating visions for sustainable futures.

Sustainability competences

Learning about environmental sustainability aims to foster a sustainable mindset from childhood to adulthood, understanding that human beings are part of nature and depend on it. Learners acquire knowledge, skills and attitudes that help them become agents of change and contribute individually and collectively to shaping a future within the planet's limits.

Learning about environmental sustainability has the potential to be a catalyst for change among younger and older generations through the acquisition of sustainability competences.

The European sustainability competence framework

GreenComp consists of 4 competency areas that correspond to the definition of sustainability; and the 12 competencies that together constitute the building blocks of the sustainability competency for all people.

The two dimensions are listed in the table below. Each competency is accompanied by the descriptor that best represents its main aspects.

1. EMBODYING SUSTAINABILITY VALUES	**1.1 Valuing sustainability**	To reflect on personal values; identify and explain how values vary among people and over time, while critically evaluating how they align with sustainability values.
	1.2 Supporting fairness	To support equity and justice for current and future generations and learn from previous generations for sustainability.

	1.3 Promoting nature	To acknowledge that humans are part of nature; and to respect the needs and rights of other species and of nature itself to restore and regenerate healthy and resilient ecosystems.

2. EMBRACING COMPLEXITY IN SUSTAINABILITY	**2.1 Systems thinking**	To approach a sustainability problem from all sides; to consider time, space and context in order to understand how elements interact within and between systems.
	2.2 Critical thinking	To assess information and arguments, identify assumptions, challenge the status quo, and reflect on how personal, social, and cultural backgrounds influence thinking and conclusions.
	2.3 Problem framing	To formulate current or potential challenges as a sustainability problem in terms of difficulty, people involved, time and geographic scope, to identify appropriate approaches to anticipate and prevent problems, and to mitigate and adapt to existing problems with healthy and resilient ecosystems.

3. ENVISIONING SUSTAINABLE FUTURES	**3.1 Futures literacy**	To envision alternative sustainable futures by imagining and developing alternative scenarios and identifying the steps needed to achieve a preferred sustainable future.
	3.2 Adaptability	To manage transitions and challenges in complex sustainability situations and make future-related decisions in the face of uncertainty, ambiguity, and risk.
	3.3 Exploratory thinking	To adopt a relational way of thinking by exploring and linking different disciplines, using creativity and experimentation with novel ideas or methods of nature itself to restore and regenerate healthy and resilient ecosystems.

4. ACTING FOR SUSTAINABILITY	**4.1 Political agency**	To navigate the political system, identify political responsibility and accountability for unsustainable behaviour, and demand effective policies for sustainability.
	4.2 Collective action	To act for change in collaboration with others.

	4.3 Individual initiative	To identify own potential for sustainability and to actively contribute to improve prospects for the community and the planet.

An example of an action you can think about is your carbon footprint:

Exercise: carbon footprint traffic light

Let's talk about the concept of carbon footprint to understand that our actions influence the environment.

Please circle your answers in the questionnaire. After doing it, set a personal commitment to improve the colour of the footprint.

	Car	Public transport	Walking or by bike
What means of transport do you usually use for short distances?	2 or more	1	0
How many cars are in your family?	2 or more	1	0
Have you travelled by plane in the last year?	2 or more	1	0
Do you turn off the lights in empty rooms?	No	Sometimes	Yes, always
Where do you usually shop?	Shopping center	Market	Nearby stores
Do you recycle at home?	Never	Sometimes	Every day

Innovative entrepreneurship tools

Nowadays, thousands of people around the world, like you, are dedicating their illusions, time, and money to develop new business ideas that make a difference on the market and in society.

Most entrepreneurs believe they are working on a winning product or service, but it is known this is not always true. A very high percentage of new ideas fail because they lack the most important thing: **customers willing to pay for what they offer.** Only a few of these new projects will succeed. And an even smaller number of new products and services will be relevant to their target market.

Entrepreneurial success is sometimes written about as an almost magical process: high doses of passion for what you do, believe in yourself and success is assured. But the reality is that behind every product and service that succeeds in the marketplace is a complex story of cycles and change.

Therefore, when starting a business project, **it is very important not to fall in love with the first idea or ideas you have, but to explore new alternatives.** New projects always benefit from a strong critical judgment, and it is through trial and error that ideas are iterated and strengthened.

A key step in designing innovative business models is prototyping. This action allows ideas to be made tangible, moving from the abstract to the physical plane, cost-effectively and quickly, to learn about the suitability and feasibility of the new products and services being designed.

The objective of prototyping is to help validate ideas before launching them to the market, thus saving time and resources, to avoid mistakes, or at least to avoid making them at a very late stage in the development of the business model.
Later in the flipbook you will take a closer look at 2 agile tools that will allow us to design and prototype innovative business models.

Business model design with Ecocanvas

A business model is the way a company creates, captures, and delivers value to its customers. This is how Alex Osterwalder, creator in 2004 of the visual tool Business Model Canvas, the result of his doctoral thesis (Ref. 2), defines it.

Business Model Canvas is a visual tool that allows you to describe, analyse and design the different elements that make up a business model quickly and easily.

The tool shown here is an improved version of the Business Model Canvas, as it includes an analysis of the environmental and social impact of the business idea, considering circular economy concepts.

Ecocanvas, originally developed by Nicola Cerantola, Ecologing (Ref. 3) is an improved combination of the Business Model Canvas by A. Osterwalder (Ref. 4) and the Lean Canvas (Ref. 5).

This tool is agile and modular, it has the following features:

- Easy to use visual and intuitive, it is a self-explanatory tool.
- Modular: it is composed of blocks.
- Multiperspective: it adapts to various types of users and has an inclusive approach.
- Agile: based on lean startup methodology, it allows rapid prototyping and validation.
- Iterative: several iterations are needed; it is not a linear process but a circular one.

Ecocanvas is divided into 15 blocks that allow to deepen the main areas of a business, such as customers, value proposition, necessary infrastructure, and economic structure.

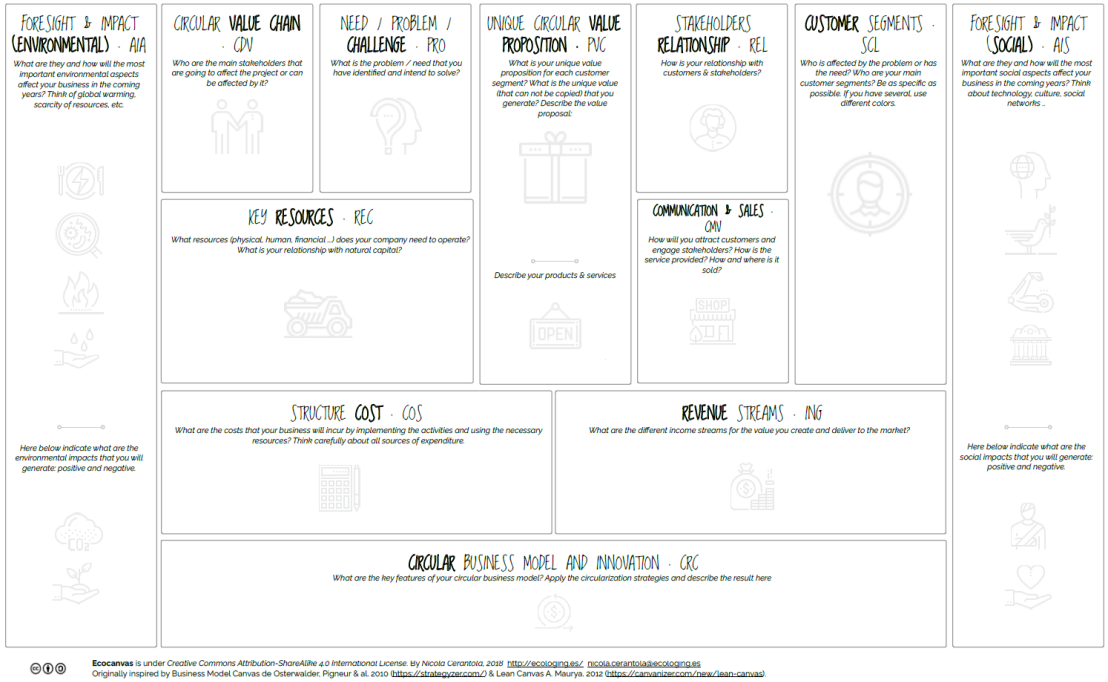


Figure 1: Ecocanvas template; by Nicola Cerantola, 2018. Source: https://www.ecologing.es/home-eng.

What will you achieve by filling out this tool?

- To develop a broader understanding of the basic components of the proposed business model.
- To gain awareness, quickly detect weaknesses and strengths.
- To support the validation of the hypothesis.
- To rapidly elaborate versions of the business idea.

How to use the tool?

At the end of this flipbook, you will find a template to make your own Ecocanvas. You can print it out and write in each of the blocks, or you can also complete it digitally.

It is recommended to start completing all the blocks in the suggested order, although there is no totally obligatory order, as to develop creativity it is sometimes better to do it in different ways to come up with surprising answers.

1. Need, problem, or challenge:

- What is the need, problem, or challenge that you have identified and intend to solve?

2. Customer segments:

- Who is affected by the problem or has the need?
- Who are your main customer segments? Be as specific as possible. If you have several, use different colours for each customer segment.

3. Key resources:

- What resources (physical, human, financial ...) does your company need to operate?
- What is your relationship with natural capital (the world's stocks of natural assets which include geology, soil, air, water, and all living things)?

4. Circular value chain:

- Who are the main stakeholders that will or may be affected by the project or business?

5. Environmental forecast and impact:

- What are and how will the most important environmental issues affect your business in the coming years? Think about the Sustainable Development Goals (see Chapter 4.3 What are the SDGs?), global warming, resource scarcity, etc.

6. Structure cost:

- What are the costs your company will incur in carrying out the activities and using the necessary resources? Think carefully about all sources of expenditure.

7. Forecasting and social impact:

- What are and how will the most important social issues affect your company in the coming years? Think about the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), technology, culture, social networks, etc.

8. Relationship with stakeholders:

- How is your relationship with customers and stakeholders?

9. Communication and sales:

- How will you attract customers and involve stakeholders?
- How is the product or service provided?
- How and where is it sold?

10. Unique circular value preposition:

- Describe your products and services.

11. Unique circular value preposition:

- What is your unique value proposition for each customer segment?
- What is the unique value (that cannot be copied) that you generate? Describe the value proposition.

12. Revenue streams:

- What are the different revenue streams for the value you create and deliver to the market?

13. Circular Business Model and innovation:

- What are the key features of your circular business model? Apply the circularization strategies and describe the result.

14. Environmental impact and forecast:

- Indicate what environmental impacts your business will generate: positive and negative.

15. Social impact and forecast:

- Indicate what social impacts it will generate: positive and negative.

Prototyping technique recommended: Landing Page

After designing the business model with the *Ecocanvas* tool, it is advisable to continue experimenting with another website prototyping technique that allows to communicate the business idea to our potential audience, for example the tools Canva and Mixo.

With the *landing page,* a home page layout, prototyping technique future customers can be captured, saving time and resources. Using a landing page as an experiment allows to "sell before we build" and consists of starting with just a landing page, describing the product or service to be developed and a link to request more information.

To increase the impact of this experiment, advertising in social networks and other media can be used to generate traffic to this page and thus offer the product or service, checking how much real interest there is in it.

If a low percentage of the people who visit the website click on the purchase offer, then you can draw conclusions that allow us to redirect the solution, since you are seeing that there is low interest in it. If, on the contrary, many of the people who access the website are interested in buying the product/service or request more information, it is a good indicator that there is interest, and you will be closer to the start of your project.

If your service has a local focus, you can use this same concept with brochures and a phone number. This will let you know the real interest in the service or product you are designing.

To design a landing page, it is not necessary to have knowledge of computers or web development, there are free technological solutions that allow you to design customised landing pages in a simple way.

For example, the online graphic design tool Canva (Ref. 6) has a landing page designer with pre-designed mock-ups, where you only have to upload the graphic resources of the project, decorate them with other graphic elements available in the tool and publish them.

The most important thing is to keep these tips in mind:

- Prepare an outline of what you want to include and what you have in mind for the page.
- Add content and calls to action that are interesting and engaging.
- Think about the most important design elements, such as the title, text blocks, call-to-action buttons, images, and testimonials.

Another tool for landing page design is Mixo (Ref. 7). It is based on generative artificial intelligence (GenAI) to create the structure of a website through the text summary of a business idea. In a few seconds it can create a customisable landing page with the titles, descriptions, contact form and images of the project.

Personal leadership to become an entrepreneur.

Entrepreneurship is not an easy path, sometimes it is lonely, and each person has her or his own time and moment. Entrepreneurship does not only require a good idea, financing, or the necessary resources. The most important thing to overcome the difficulties of the entrepreneurial process is to develop personal skills.
Following, you will look at the most important competences to become your own leader, responsible for the entrepreneurial path.

Self-knowledge and self-esteem

The "idea of me" is constructed in the first years of life through the eyes of our families. But this self-concept may not conform to reality. Gender stereotypes, which are often rooted in education, have a significant impact on self-perception from an early age, as socialization and educational processes strongly influence beliefs about oneself.

Exercise: Recognizing my strengths and limits

MY TALENTS	MY LIMITS
Look at what your strengths and talents are: - Make a list of the talents and things you do well. - First make a list yourself. - Ask 3 people close to you who know you and add in another colour the qualities that your environment tells you. - Compare them with each other.	Reflect on your own limits. - Write down the things you would like to do but cannot. - See if you can change the limits: Is there a time limit? Is there a resource or capacity limit? Is it in your power to change it? - How could you move forward recognizing these limits?

Shine a light on your weak points. The first thing is to know what you want to improve in yourself. On many occasions we waste enormous amounts of energy in pushing where there is no entrance door or changing issues that cannot be modified.

Neuroplasticity. Genetically we come with abilities, but our capacities will develop according to the influence of the environment in which we find ourselves.

Exercise: Power your talents

In what areas do you consider yourself knowledgeable?

1. Are there any talents you need to develop further? How could you do this?

2. Let's focus on those limits that you can influence. How can you do it?

3. You are invited to cultivate patience. What time frame do you need to reach your goal?

To maintain persistence in the challenges, it is important to support and integrate our strengths and weaknesses, each person has potentialities that come "from series". Sometimes we put pressure on ourselves to want to be something else instead of enhancing what we have. Our greatest talents have a positive and a negative side.

Comparisons are odious. Comparing yourself badly detracts from your energy.

The recipe for not becoming negative:

- INGREDIENT 1: Surround yourself with good examples. Seek out mentors, references, guides, experienced professionals. Listen, learn, and ask questions to develop your talents.
- INGREDIENT 2: Focus on the positive. Congratulations, realizing this is already very important! Focus on the positive and find the motivation you need to create the best version of yourself.

Exercise: Who are your role models?
Write down 3 role models in your life. What qualities do they have? Would you like to incorporate some of their attributes in yourself? What do you think you could do to achieve this?

Excessive self-demand can lead to blockage and paralysis. To foster self-motivation, it is useful to try to pay attention to what you want to achieve and focus on what you do well daily.

When you must make difficult decisions and face new missions, our potential comes into play. Fears arise and with them self-questions like "will I be able to do it?", "will I do it well?", "am I good for it?" will arise. These fears are "turned on". When they are ignited, a complex experience of thoughts, emotions and actions is activated. All these elements tell you how you manage

the fears that are activated. To manage this complex experience, you must recognize the fear and generate self-supportive responses.

Sometimes that management is torpedoed by unhelpful patterns, thoughts and actions that do not help you to face and sustain our mission, but quite the opposite.

Exercise: Upgrade the coach in you!

What do you say to yourself? What do you do when you are afraid? Do you identify any of these patterns of thought and action?	SELF-CRITICAL Automatic pattern of critical thinking: "You're not up to it." "You're not going to make it." "You shouldn't have done it this way." "You're not worth enough"	SELF-EXIGENCE Pattern of critical appraisal: "You didn't do it right." "You should have said or done..." "You can do much better"
	AVOIDANCE Behavioural pattern for emotional management of anxiety in the face of a challenge, running away: "To do it this bad, it's better not to do it at all." "I'm going out for a few beers«. "I'm going to watch Netflix"	ANGER Behavioural pattern for emotional management, getting angry and not taking responsibility: "If you had helped me, I would have made it." "It's your fault for not helping me." "It's the government's fault"

Self-support and support networks.

It is essential to achieve a good balance between our internal capacity to offer self-support and our capacity to request, ask for and receive support from the outside. The self-support mechanism is configured with several ingredients. Beliefs about oneself, beliefs about the world, the unconscious response to adversity and fear, self-knowledge, and healthy living habits.

Support, care, and co-regulation.

The co-regulation mechanism is configured with several ingredients:

- The ability to relate healthily to others.
- The ability to maintain meaningful relationships over time.
- The ability to show vulnerability and ask for help.
- The ability to be able to receive, collect affection and external support.

Self-regulation and co-regulation

It is important to rely on our own resources to cope with situations, but sometimes our glass of vulnerability overflows, i.e. we cannot cope with what life throws at us and we need help. On these occasions we have two mechanisms that it is important to make sure are well-oiled: self-regulation and co-regulation.

Self-regulation refers to the ability to manage ourselves emotionally and help us, that is, to be able to accept the emotions of nervousness, fear, uncertainty that appear in us and sustain them.

Co-regulation and the support of other people are fundamental to achieve our goals. It gives us autonomy. Let's imagine a well-charged cell phone. The support of other people offers us the possibility to "charge the battery" when we feel we cannot do it anymore.

What are the enemies of co-regulation? "I can do it alone" or "I don't need help".

To do this, you are invited to deepen your self-knowledge, exercising self-awareness about what calms you and what helps you to maintain the defensive response of fear and discomfort.

Two factors that are equally important for balance are needed:

1. Knowing how to take care of and support ourselves.
2. Knowing how to seek external support networks.

Set realistic goals.

To meet the objectives you set for yourself, it is important that you try to set realistic goals. Determine which options are realistically feasible or not, considering the resources you have available.

Holding decisions / holding fear.

Sometimes the anxiety and fear of knowing if we have made the right choice becomes unbearable. But it is essential to stay the course and move forward.

To avoid this, set deadlines to evaluate milestones achieved and real risks, with objectives and goals that you can monitor with measurable indicators.

To value good decisions.

It is essential to value what works. It will help to share your reflections in a group and let others see your journey and achievements.

Turn criticism into a tailwind.

Criticism and judgments only underline the insecurity and lack of self-esteem of the people who express them. The best option is to try to put on the raincoat and even turn the situation around and realize how brave you are being by exposing yourself and taking the course of your decisions.

Celebrate your successes.

You are highly encouraged to celebrate every step forward. This will help you see yourself for what you really are: a person who achieves their goals! Congratulations!

The impostor syndrome

If you tend not to recognize your own achievements, or to underestimate the effort you have put into them under the belief that you do not deserve them and attribute them to luck, it is very likely that you are suffering from this psychological phenomenon. If as an entrepreneur you suffer from this syndrome, this will keep you in a vicious circle of not feeling deserving of your own achievements, damaging your self-esteem and confidence, two key values for those who promote their own business ideas.

How to overcome it? Some guidelines:

- Take some time to reflect on how you feel and on the facts.
- Acknowledge that you feel bad, validate that it is normal to feel that way and then forget those feelings if they are not based.
- Share those feelings with someone else.
- Try to improve your skills with a mentor.

Leadership

If you do a quick search on the Internet, you will see that there are many definitions of leadership.

This is because there is no single type of leadership. It can be said that there are almost as many leadership styles as there are people, although throughout this flipbook several typologies or categorizations with their corresponding definitions will be displayed.

Is there only one leadership style? Again, if you do an Internet search on "leadership styles", different categorizations and theories of leadership will appear.

Any one of them is valid, although if you analyse them, you will surely be able to observe similarities.

"Great leaders find ways to connect with their people and

help them reach their full potential," Steven J. Stowell.

- **Autocratic leadership.** The word "autocratic" means that a person rules without submitting to any limits from others. The term "authoritarian" is also often used to refer to this style of leadership.

- **Participative leadership**. It is one in which the person who plays the role of leader, for example, Maria, relies on the opinions of the people in her team. This does not mean that Maria decides what the people in her team indicate or propose. It will be Maria who makes the decision. But it is true that she will listen carefully to her team and gather the valuable information they can provide, so that her decision is as well-grounded as possible.
- **Servant leadership**. This is one in which the person in the leadership role is dedicated to conduct the following actions:
  - helping the team to set its objectives.
  - helping the team agree on who does what and how to do it.
  - helping the team make the best decisions.
  - helping the team to grow and develop.
  - encourage team collaboration.
  - intervene in the event of conflicts in a mediating role.
  - solve those things that may be blocking the work of the team, so that the team can continue working.
  - others, if they have this support function.
- **Distributed leadership**. It is so called because:
  - either it is distributed among several people, where each person leads a part of the work, depending on what she or he is best at, or on her or his availability or energy or other criteria.
  - because each time this leadership role is played by a different person in the team.
  - or both.

*"**How can I help?** Max Goodwin has a phrase that he repeats in most of the New Amsterdam chapters (Netflix/Amazon Prime)"*

Therefore, decisions are made as a team. These people are the ones who agree on who does what and how. A very high level of transparency is practiced.

There are no better or worse leadership styles. Any of the above leadership styles is perfectly valid, if it is done with respect for the people in the team or company, and you make sure that they feel comfortable with the leadership style from which you are going to work.

While it is true that each of the leadership styles generates a series of effects on the team, knowing them can help you choose the most appropriate style.

Does leadership have gender?

As you know, women throughout history have had little access to leadership positions, because the social system in which we live has prevented it.

It is also known that people are raised differently, depending on their gender. People socialized as men are told to be assertive and decisive and to hide their emotions. People socialized as women are instructed to be caring, empathetic, good listeners and openly show their emotions.

This means that the leadership style implemented by men tends to be more related to autocratic and participative leadership, and women to servant and distributed leadership. And if one or the other decides to adopt leadership styles that go beyond this, they are criticized.

TIP: Don't let them judge you. Choose the leadership style that you and the people you will be working with are most comfortable with and forget about the rest.

*"What was **Amelia Earhart**'s legacy in aviation? Amelia Earhart's legacy in aviation lies in being the first woman to fly solo over the Atlantic Ocean, breaking gender barriers and motivating women to pursue careers in aviation".*

*"What are **Oprah Winfrey**'s main contributions to the media? Oprah Winfrey has made significant contributions to the media through her influential talk show, "The Oprah Winfrey Show," and founding her own channel, OWN, focused on empowerment and diversity".*

Exercise: What is your leadership style?

- Reflection 1: Now that you know the four leadership styles listed, which one do you identify with the most? Which one do you feel most comfortable with?
- Reflection 2: Have you ever been asked which leadership style comes most naturally to you?
- Reflection 3: Would you like to try any of the other leadership styles? If so, which one(s) and why?

Decision making and leadership.

There are multiple ways to make decisions. The best known are:

- Autocracy, where the person exercising leadership decides and orders.
- Democracy, where a group of people decide through a majority voting system.
- Consensus, where a group of people discuss until they reach a unanimous agreement.

This does not mean that when there is a leadership style, there is always the pattern of decision making shown below, but there is usually a tendency:

	Autocratic Leadership	Participative Leadership	Servant Leadership	Distributed Leadership
Decision-making model	Autocracy	Autocracy	Democracy or Consensus	Consultative or Consent

Digital decision-making tools. Here you can find links to some of the many digital tools you can use to make group decisions virtually: Loomio (Ref. 8), Murmur (Ref. 9) or Consider.it. (Ref. 10)

Self-assessment questions

1. The European sustainability competence framework is the result of consensus building based on:

   a. Group method.
   b. Individual method.
   c. Mixed method.

2. What areas of competences does GreenComp cover?

   a. Climate change awareness, responsible use of natural resources and cooperative society.
   b. Sustainability values, complexity in sustainability, sustainable futures, acting for sustainability.
   c. Acting for fair trade, complexity in sustainability, cooperative society and climate change awareness.

3. Envisioning sustainable futures, need:

   a. Adaptability.
   b. Political agency.
   c. Collective action.

4. Among other, GreenComp consist of:

   a. Cheering on policy makers, supporting individualism, having fun, …
   b. Creating climate awareness posters, adapting to the system, supporting fairness, …
   c. Supporting fairness, systems thinking, adaptability, individual initiative, …

5. What are the benefits of prototyping?

   a. It allows to validate ideas before launching them to the market.
   b. It allows to save time and resources.
   c. Both options are correct.

6. What is a Business Model Canvas?

a. It is the way a company creates, captures, and delivers value to its customers.
b. <u>It is a visual tool that allows you to design the different elements that make up a business model.</u>
c. It is a prototyping technique for designing websites.

7. What is needed to build a landing page?

a. High skills in computer programming and online marketing.
b. <u>A service or product to "sell before we build".</u>
c. It is necessary to develop a big stock of product to sell first.

8. When is the “idea of me” constructed?

a. <u>We create the idea of ourselves at any time.</u>
b. Our parents tell it to us when we are of age.
c. In the first years of life through the eyes of our families.

9. What pattern of behaviour reflects self-exigence?

a. You are not up to it.
b. <u>You can do much better.</u>
c. If you had helped me, I would have made it.

10. What type of leadership does a person have who is one of the team and helps the team make the decisions?

a. Distributed leadership.
b. <u>Participative leadership.</u>
c. Servant leadership.

2. AGROECOLOGY

Introduction

Agroecology is concurrently a science, a set of practices, and a social movement. It is based on bottom-up and territorial processes to transform food and agricultural systems to become more sustainable and to achieve Zero Hunger along with other 16 global Sustainable Development Goals established by the United Nations (see Chapter 4.3 What are the SDGs?). By addressing all actors in the food and agricultural systems to be transformed by agroecology, the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) emanated 10 elements that are interlinked and interdependent (diversity, synergies, efficiency, resilience…). The 2019 HLPE report launched 13 principles well aligned with the 10 elements, locally applied, generating diverse, and locally adapted agroecological practice through the cocreation of knowledge with stakeholders.

Learning objectives

KNOWLEDGE
Define and describe agroecology, its 10 elements launched by the FAO, and its 13 principles edited by the 2019 HLPE report. Differentiate and compare current food processing and agricultural practices and agroecological principles and practices.

SKILLS
Establish the meaning and importance of transition pathways toward agroecological practices and sustainable food systems by illustrating, organizing, and using agroecological principles.

ATTITUDES
Accept agroecology as a component of your moral principles and practices.

What is Agroecology?

How does the food industry affect the real world? What are the environmental impacts of agriculture? Can agriculture reduce climate change? Is the increase in poverty justifiable?

Unfortunately, 90 per cent of the world's 1.5 billion hectares under agriculture is dominated by industrial monocultures that are highly dependent on external inputs and energy. The world is largely dependent on only 12 types of grains and 23 species of vegetables. Yet, these monocultures are extremely vulnerable to pests, diseases and climate change and have contributed to the great famines in history, for example, in Ireland and India, where genetically homogeneous agriculture failed. (Ref. 6)

Figure 2: Starving Irish people raiding a government potato store; drawing from the Illustrated London News, June 1842. Source: https://www.britannica.com/summary/Great-Famine-Irish-history.

Why do we need a new approach?

There is consensus that the global food system is not delivering as needed on several key metrics, including rates of hunger and malnutrition, decent agricultural livelihoods, and the environmental impact of agriculture (HLPE 2019). A profound transformation is needed at multiple scales to meet the interacting challenges of increased pressure and competition over renewable resources, persistent malnutrition, rural poverty, increased power, and concentration of agricultural and food industries, growing consequences of climatic change and alarming losses of biodiversity (FAO 2018a; IPBES 2019; IPCC 2019). While there is strong evidence that a major transformation in what food is consumed and how it is produced, processed, transported, and distributed, is needed to meet Sustainable Development Goal 2 (SDG2) to 'end hunger and all forms of malnutrition' by 2030, there has been less agreement on how to achieve this change (HLPE 2019). (Ref. 17)

Definition of Agroecology

Agroecology is a holistic and integrated approach that simultaneously applies ecological and social concepts and principles to the design and management **of sustainable agriculture and food systems.**

It seeks **to optimize the interactions between plants, animals, humans, and the environment** while also addressing the need for **socially equitable food systems** within which people can exercise choice over what they eat and how and where it is produced.

While all three concepts: agroecological, sustainable and organic farming, aim to improve and sustain agriculture for future generations, agroecology encompasses a broader, more integrated approach focusing on the relationship between ecological, social, and economic systems. Sustainable agriculture focuses on the long-term viability and environmental stewardship of farming practices, and organic farming specifically targets the use of natural inputs and processes to produce food in harmony with nature.

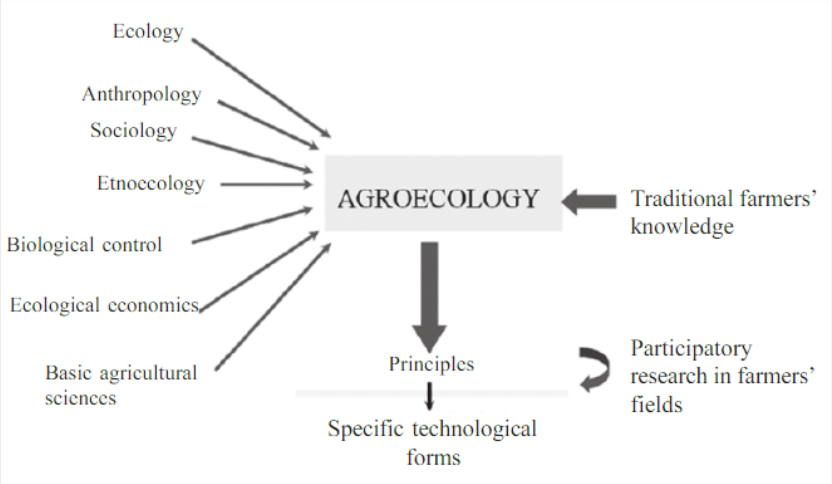


Figure 3: Agroecology combines elements of traditional farmers' knowledge with elements of modern ecological, social, and agronomic science, creating a dialogue of wisdom from which principles for designing and managing biodiverse and resilient farms are derived . Source: https://www.researchgate.net/publication/284158848_Agroecology_key_concepts_principles_and_practices#pf13

Agroecology is **concurrently a science**, a **set of practices** and a **social movement**, and has evolved as a concept over recent decades to expand in scope from a **focus on fields and farms** to encompass the entirety of agriculture and food systems. It now represents a transdisciplinary field that includes the **ecological**, **socio-cultural**, **technological**, **economic,** and **political dimensions of food systems**, from production to consumption.

As a result, **agroecological transitions** can support the simultaneous achievement of multiple sustainability objectives – economic, environmental, social, nutritional, health and cultural – holistically and in an integrated manner at different levels and on different scales while being adapted for different environmental and cultural contexts. (Ref.5)

Integral to FAO's Common Vision for Sustainable Food and Agriculture, agroecology is a key part of the global response to this climate of instability, offering a unique approach to meeting significant increases in our food needs of the future while ensuring no one is left behind.

Agroecology is not an invention. It can be identified in scientific literature since the 1920s, and has found expression in **family farmers' practices**, in **grassroots social movements for sustainability** and the **public policies of various countries around the world**. More recently, agroecology has entered the discourse of international and UN institutions.

Figure 4: The interconnectedness of plants, animals, people and nature. Source: soilassociation.org/causes-campaigns/a-ten-year-transition-to-agroecology/what-is-agroecology

Figure 5: The interconnectedness of plants, animals, people and nature. Source: soilassociation.org/causes-campaigns/a-ten-year-transition-to-agroecology/what-is-agroecology

Agroecology is based on bottom-up and territorial processes,

helping to deliver contextualised solutions to local problems. Agroecological innovations are based on the co-creation of knowledge, combining science with the traditional, practical, and local knowledge of producers. By enhancing their autonomy and adaptive capacity, agroecology empowers producers and communities as key agents of change. Rather than tweaking the practices of unsustainable agricultural systems, agroecology seeks to transform food and agricultural systems, addressing the root causes of problems in an integrated way and providing holistic and long-term solutions. This includes an explicit focus on social and economic dimensions of food systems. Agroecology places a strong focus on the rights of women, youth, and indigenous peoples. (Ref. 15)

Ten Elements of Agroecology

What is the role of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)? What agricultural systems do you know? How should they be reshaped to achieve the SDGs and resilience to climate change?

Watch the short video titled "**Agroecology for Sustainable Food Systems"** at:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OgJInRNyEDY

Development process

Elements of FAO are designed to structure and operationalise the assistance that FAO provides to Member Countries on agroecology, from practice to policy. The **10 elements of agroecology,** on the other hand, resulted from a multi-stakeholder consultation process intended to build a framework to be optimised and adapted to local contexts. (Ref. 17)

It was developed between 2015 and 2019 through a process involving three main phases:

- **Information gathering**: An analysis was undertaken to combine the fundamental scientific literature on agroecology that includes the five principles of agroecology (Altieri 1995) and the five levels of agroecological transition enriched by articulation of elements in the presentations within the First International Symposium on Agroecology for Food Security and Nutrition (FAO 2015a) and the seven FAO multistakeholder regional and international meetings on agroecology conducted between 2015 and 2017 (see FAO 2018b for a summary of these meetings).
- **Synthesis:** Led by FAO experts from diverse disciplinary backgrounds with contributions from invited external agroecologists, a synthesis exercise was carried out that identified common elements from the information gathering phase and clustered them.
- **Approval by FAO**: The 10 Elements of Agroecology framework (FAO 2018d) was launched at the Second FAO International Symposium on Agroecology held in April 2018 (FAO 2018c). In December 2019, following a review, revision, and clearance process through FAO's governing bodies, the 10 Elements of Agroecology were approved by the 197 Members of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations to guide FAO's vision on Agroecology (FAO 2019). (Ref. 17)

What are the Ten Elements of Agroecology?

Agroecology is based on bottom-up and territorial processes, helping to deliver contextualized solutions to local problems **with people at the centre**. There is no single way to apply agroecological approaches – it depends on local contexts, constraints and opportunities but there are **common principles** that have been articulated in the framework of the 10 Elements of Agroecology (Watch the video: https://youtu.be/6Reh7c2-ewI).

To transform food and agricultural systems, to mainstream sustainable agriculture on a large scale, and to achieve Zero Hunger and multiple other SDGs, the following 10 Elements emanated from the FAO Regional Seminars on Agroecology:

- **Diversity; synergies; efficiency; resilience; recycling; co-creation and sharing of knowledge** (describing common characteristics of agroecological systems, foundational practices, and innovation approaches)
- **Human and social values**; **culture and food traditions** (context features)
- **Responsible governance; circular and solidarity economy** (enabling environment)

The 10 Elements of Agroecology are interlinked and interdependent.

	Diversity: diversification is key to agroecological transitions to ensure food security and nutrition while conserving, protecting and enhancing natural resources. At the global level, three cereal crops provide close to 50 percent of all calories consumed, while the genetic diversity of crops, livestock, aquatic animals and trees continues to be rapidly lost.		Synergies: building synergies enhances key functions across food systems, supporting production and multiple ecosystem services. In Asia, integrated rice systems combine rice cultivation with the generation of other products such as fish, ducks and trees. By maximising synergies, integrated rice systems significantly improve yields, dietary diversity, weed control, soil structure and fertility, as well as providing biodiversity habitat and pest control.
	Co-creation and sharing of knowledge: agricultural innovations respond better to local challenges when they are co-created through participatory processes. Through the co-creation process, agroecology blends traditional and indigenous knowledge, producers' and traders' practical knowledge, and global scientific knowledge.		Efficiency: innovative agroecological practices produce more using fewer external resources. For example, a key efficiency challenge is that less than 50 percent of nitrogen fertilizer added globally to cropland is converted into harvested products and the rest is lost to the environment causing major environmental problems.
	Recycling: more recycling means agricultural production with lower economic and environmental costs. By imitating natural ecosystems, agroecological practices support biological processes that drive the recycling of nutrients, biomass and water within production systems, thereby increasing resource-use efficiency and minimizing waste and pollution.		Human and social values: protecting and improving rural livelihoods, equity and social well-being is essential for sustainable food and agricultural systems. Agroecology seeks to address gender inequalities by creating opportunities for women. Globally, women make up almost half of the agricultural workforce. They also play a vital role in household food security, dietary diversity and health, as well as in the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity.

	Resilience: enhanced resilience of people, communities and ecosystems is key to sustainable food and agricultural systems. Following Hurricane Mitch in Central America in 1998, biodiverse farms including agroforestry, contour farming and cover cropping retained 20–40 percent more topsoil, suffered less erosion and experienced lower economic losses than neighbouring farms practicing conventional monocultures.		Culture and food traditions: by supporting healthy, diversified and culturally appropriate diets, agroecology contributes to food security and nutrition while maintaining the health of ecosystems. Almost 800 million people worldwide are chronically hungry and 2 billion suffer micronutrient deficiencies. Meanwhile, there has been a rampant rise in obesity and diet-related diseases; 1.9 billion people are overweight or obese and non-communicable diseases (cancer, cardiovascular disease, diabetes) are the number one cause of global mortality.
	Responsible governance: sustainable food and agriculture requires responsible and effective governance mechanisms at different scales – from local to national to global. Successful examples include school feeding and public procurement programmes, market regulations allowing for branding of differentiated agroecological produce, and subsidies and incentives for ecosystem services.		Circular and solidarity economy: circular and solidarity economies that reconnect producers and consumers provide innovative solutions for living within our planetary boundaries while ensuring the social foundation for inclusive and sustainable development. Strengthening short food circuits can increase the incomes of food producers while maintaining a fair price for consumers. These include new innovative markets, alongside more traditional territorial markets, where most smallholders market their products (Ref. 15).

Interaction of the 10 Elements of Agroecology

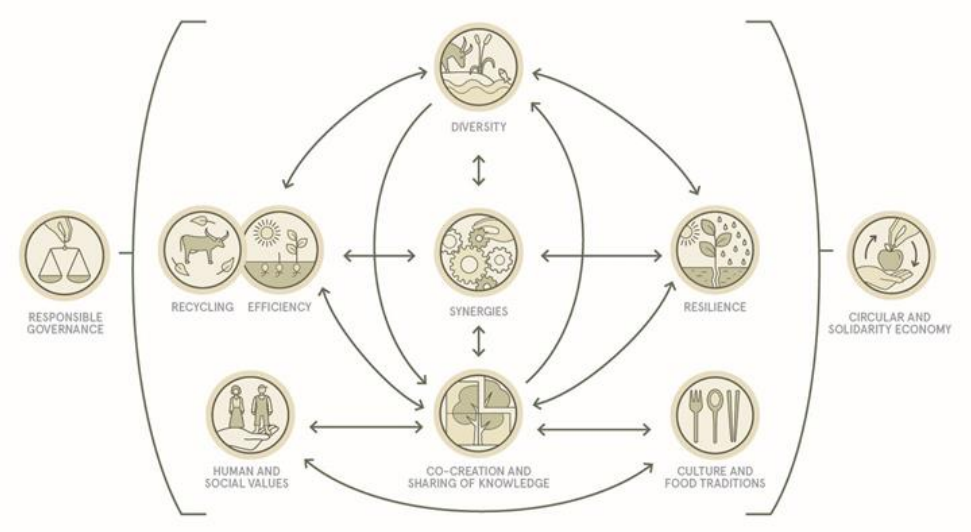


Figure 4: Interaction of the 10 Elements of Agroecology. Source: fao.org/agroecology/overview/overview10elements/en/

As an **analytical tool,** the 10 Elements can help countries to operationalise agroecology. By identifying important properties of agroecological systems and approaches, as well as key considerations in developing an enabling environment for agroecology, **the 10 Elements are a guide for policymakers, practitioners, and stakeholders in planning, managing, and evaluating agroecological transitions**. (Ref. 15)

Agroecological principles (HLPE 2019)

Why are local and traditional foods important for food processing? What are some innovative agricultural approaches? What is biodiversity and why is it important?

Figure 5: What is Gender and Biodiversity?
Source: cbd.int/gender/biodiversity/

It is argued by many that so-called **industrial agricultural systems require systemic change to become sustainable and to address food security and nutrition (FSN)**, and that simply implementing some practices and changing some technologies are not sufficient, rather the application of agroecological principles and a redesign of farming systems is required (IPES-Food 2016; Nicholls et al. 2016). Some of these principles refer more specifically to the promotion of ecological processes and services including soil, water, air, and biodiversity aspects.

In interest of bringing these many perspectives on agroecology principles to a confluence, the HLPE (2019) report synthesised the wide range of different publications that articulate an increasing number of principles, existing statements of principles and elements, and consolidated them into a list of 13 principles which comprise both normative and causative statements.

Agroecological principles have evolved in recent years to encompass social and cultural aspects of whole food systems in addition to those related to agricultural practice at field, farm, and landscape scales. **A consolidated set of 13 principles constructed from the literature on agroecology as manifest as a science, a set of practices and a social movement (HLPE 2019) were found to be well aligned and complementary to the 10 elements of agroecology developed by FAO.** The principles, while generically formulated are locally applied, generating diverse, locally adapted agroecological practice through co-creation of knowledge with stakeholders. The principles are relevant both to transitioning agricultural and food systems to achieving global food and nutrition security and to building resilience of agriculture by adapting to climate change. (Ref. 17)

Agroecological principles:

1. **Recycling.** Preferentially use local renewable resources and close as far as possible resource cycles of nutrients and biomass.
2. **Input reduction.** Reduce or eliminate dependency on purchased inputs.
3. **Soil health.** Secure and enhance soil health and functioning for improved plant growth, particularly by managing organic matter and by enhancing soil biological activity.
4. **Animal health.** Ensure animal health and welfare.
5. **Biodiversity.** Maintain and enhance diversity of species, functional diversity and genetic resources and maintain biodiversity in the agroecosystem over time and space at field, farm, and landscape scales.
6. **Synergy.** Enhance positive ecological interaction, synergy, integration, and complementarity amongst the elements of agroecosystems (plants, animals, trees, soil, water).
7. **Economic diversification**. Diversify on-farm incomes by ensuring small-scale farmers have greater financial independence and value addition opportunities while enabling them to respond to demand from consumers.
8. **Co-creation of knowledge.** Enhance co-creation and horizontal sharing of knowledge including local and scientific innovation, especially through farmer-to-farmer exchange.
9. **Social values and diets.** Build food systems based on the culture, identity, tradition, social and gender equity of local communities that provide healthy, diversified, seasonally and culturally appropriate diets.
10. **Fairness.** Support dignified and robust livelihoods for all actors engaged in food systems, especially small-scale food producers, based on fair trade, fair employment and fair treatment of intellectual property rights.
11. **Connectivity.** Ensure proximity and confidence between producers and consumers through the promotion of fair and short distribution networks and by re-embedding food systems into local economies.
12. **Land and natural resource governance.** Recognize and support the needs and interests of family farmers, smallholders and peasant food producers as sustainable managers and guardians of natural and genetic resources.
13. **Participation.** Encourage social organization and greater participation in decision-making by food producers and consumers to support decentralized governance and local adaptive management of agricultural and food systems. (Ref 10)

Watch videos on https://www.agroecology-europe.org/the-13-principles-of-agroecology/.

List of videos on this page:

- **Soil Health**. Interview with Marc-André Selosse, botanist and mycologist, professor at the National Museum of Natural History in Paris.
- **Animal Health and Welfare**. Interview with Caroline Roose, Member of the European Parliament, and member of the Animal Welfare Committee of Inquiry.
- **Biodiversity.** Video takes stock of biodiversity in Europe and explores possible transition pathways with Alexander Wezel, director of research at Isara, Lyon, and vice-president of Agroecology Europe.
- **Economic Diversification**. Interview with Olivier Lefebvre, economist, and co-founder of Perma-projects.

Agroecology: transition pathways towards sustainable food systems

How can current agronomic approaches and food systems be made more socially, environmentally, and economically acceptable worldwide? What changes are needed and on what level?

A Report by the High-Level Panel of Experts (HLPE) on Food Security and Nutrition (FSN, July 2019) warns that **food systems are at a crossroads**. Profound transformation is needed to address Agenda 2030 and to achieve food security and nutrition (FSN) in its four dimensions of availability, access, utilization, and stability, and to face multidimensional and complex challenges, including a growing world population, urbanization, and climate change, which drive increased pressure on natural resources, impacting land, water, and biodiversity. **This transformation will profoundly affect what people eat, as well as how food is produced, processed, transported, and sold.**

Recommendations

The following recommendations aim to help decision-makers develop concrete actions that will encourage and support the innovation required at local, territorial, national, regional, and global scales to follow appropriate transition pathways towards sustainable food systems (SFSs) that enhance FSN.

a. **AGROECOLOGICAL and other innovative approaches in an integrated way to foster transformation of food systems.**
b. **support transitions TO DIVERSIFIED AND RESILIENT FOOD SYSTEMS**:

Support diversified and resilient production systems, including mixed livestock, fish, cropping and agroforestry, that preserve and enhance biodiversity, as well as the natural resource base, exploring:

- **redirecting subsidies and incentives** that at present benefit unsustainable practices, to support the transition towards SFSs;
- **supporting the use of participatory and inclusive territorial management planning to identify and foster locally sustainable practices** and to protect common natural resources at different levels (landscape and community, national, regional and global);

- **building adaptation of international agreements and national regulations on genetic resources** and intellectual property to better take into account farmers' access to diverse, traditional and locally adapted genetic resources, as well as farmer-to-farmer seed exchange;
- **strengthening the regulations on the use of chemicals harmful to human health and the environment** in agriculture and food systems, promoting alternatives to their use and rewarding practices that produce without them;
- **building social capital and inclusive public bodies at the territorial landscape scale** (10 – 1 000 km²) so that policy processes can be implemented at a scale where the provision of, and the trade-offs among, key ecosystem services (provisioning, regulating, supporting and cultural) can be managed.

Promote healthy and diversified diets as an avenue to support transitions towards more sustainable, diversified, and resilient food systems through (**education and awareness; appropriate food labelling and certification**; **support for low-income consumers** and **the use of public procurement policies**, including school feeding programmes)

Support food value chain innovation platforms, incubators, and aggregation mechanisms in which private sector actors, as well as public bodies, invest in and reward sustainable food producers and the production of public goods.

c. **STRENGTHEN SUPPORT FOR RESEARCH and reconfigure knowledge generation and sharing to foster co-learning.**
d. **STRENGTHEN AGENCY AND STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT, empower vulnerable and marginalized groups and address power inequalities in food systems.**
e. **Establish and use comprehensive PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT AND MONITORING frameworks for food systems.** (Ref. 8)

Agroecological practices

Agroecology promotes farming practices that:

- **Mitigate climate change** - reducing emissions, recycling resources and prioritising local supply chains.
- **Work with wildlife** - managing the impact of farming on wildlife and harnessing nature to do the hard work for us, such as pollinating crops and controlling pests.
- **Put farmers and communities in the driving seat** - they give power to approaches led by local people and adapt agricultural techniques to suit the local area and its specific social, environmental, and economic conditions. (Ref. 14)

The most common agroecological forms of farming that contribute to higher levels of biodiversity are:

Figure 6: Example of a four-year crop rotation (taken from Borec, A., 2021 – Ref. 7).

- **CROP ROTATION:** The annual movement of agricultural plants in a bed or field in a fixed time sequence, resulting in less soil depletion and enabling the plants to make optimum use of the soil conditions created by the previous sowing of other plants. This measure also has an impact on the spread of pests and diseases that can increase when plants are grown in the same place for a long time.

Figure 7: Combining sowing in the field (taken from Borec, A., 2021- Ref 7).

- **COMPANION PLANTING:** This is a form of plant cultivation in which two or more species are planted at the same time and in close spatial proximity. This technique improves nutrient use efficiency and pest management, thereby increasing yield and yield stability.

Figure 8: Agroforestry system (taken from Borec, A., 2021 – Ref. 7).

- **AGROFORESTRY:** This is the simultaneous cultivation of arboreal species and mainly annual plants. Tree species, because of their characteristics, make it possible to improve the microclimate, and preserve and improve soil fertility.

Figure 9: Example of Incarnate grass as a ground cover to protect the soil from erosion in winter (taken from Borec, A., 2021 – Ref. 7).

- **COVER CROPS AND MULCHING:** This is the use of pure or mixed grass stands species as they can reduce erosion, provide soil nutrients, contribute to biological pest control, reduce fluctuations in soil moisture and temperature and help to control weeds.

Figure 10: ˝Dehesa˝ the forest-grazing system in Spain (taken from Borec, A., 2021 – Ref.7).

- **THE FOREST GRAZING SYSTEM:** High biomass yield and optimal nutrient recycling are achievable by integrating both crop production and livestock production. Animal rearing that combines forage shrubs planted at high densities, interspersed with improved, highly productive pastures and timber trees, combined in a system that can be directly grazed by livestock, increases overall productivity without the need for external inputs (Ref.7).

Co-funded by
the European Union

It is only in the past 100 years that the development and **use of fossil energy sources** allowed one part of the world's population **to replace** existing practices, which involved careful interaction with nature, **with the use of machinery and modern chemicals**. Over the past 60 years, this has led to an unprecedented global transformation and exploitation of natural habitats, along with regional agricultural and food systems. Today the consequences of this transformation have become a central problem of humanity. **It may seem absurd to millions of farmers in developing countries that agroecology - the adaptation of agriculture to natural conditions and cycles, as well as to local needs - is treated like a new science, a social movement or even as a "romantic niche"**. These farmers' daily bread depends on whether they use the locally available resources optimally to be able to make a living. They measure the efficiency and sustainability of their cultivation systems in terms of the edible yield of their plots of land, as well as the ability to cope with natural disasters and crop failure. Since the 1980s, agroecology as a scientific discipline, practical skill and economic concept for success has received growing support worldwide. The IAASTD attributes a crucial role to agroecology in shaping the future of sustainable agriculture, demonstrating that it has now arrived at the heart of scientific and political debates (Ref. 1).

PELUM Kanya, 12 Best Agroecological Practices

Soil Health

Farm Waste Manure Unlike synthetic fertilisers which are costly and harmful to the soil in the long-term, you can make your own compost manure using raw materials readily available on the farm. You can make the manure by composting waste from weeds, pruned plant materials, tree leaves, flower cuttings and the kitchen like vegetable peels and eggshells.	*The Vermi Compost* This involves rearing Red Wigglers worms which break down manure by feeding on the green materials. In addition to quality manure, you also end up with vermicompost tea that you can use as foliar or a top-dressing agent.	*Bokashi Manure* This is made from either rice or coffee husks as the main ingredients. Other ingredients are quarry dust, charcoal dust, bran, baking yeast and water. If rice husks are not available, chop sorghum or maize stalks in small pieces or even grass clippings. However, rice husks are a better raw material because they decompose faster and better (Ref. 16).

Read more on: https://www.pelumkenya.net/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/12-Best-Agroecological-Practices.pdf.

Agroecology Knowledge Hub. Agroecology in Action: Profiles

The experience of Bio-districts in **Italy**

A bio-district is a geographical area where farmers, citizens, tourist operators, associations and public authorities enter into an agreement for the sustainable management of local resources, based on organic principles and practices, aiming at the fulfilment of the economic and sociocultural potential of the territory. They act according to the principles and methods of the organic production and agroecology. Each Bio-district is marked by lifestyle, nutrition, human relations, and nature. It results that agricultural productions are more valuable and typically characterized, hence more appreciated by the market. (Page 6, Ref. 3)

Read more about agroecology practices on:
https://www.fao.org/agroecology/knowledge/practices/en/?page=1&ipp=5&tx_dynalist_pi1[par]=YToxOntzOjE6IkwiO3M6MToiMCI7fQ==

Farmer Field School

Farmer Field School (FFS) is an approach based on **people-centred learning**. **Participatory methods** to create an environment conducive to learning: the participants can exchange knowledge and experience in a risk-free setting. Practical field exercises using direct observation, discussion and decision making encourage learning--by--doing. The field is the space where local knowledge and outside scientific insights are tested, validated, and integrated, in the context of local ecosystem and socio-economic alert settings. (Ref. 13)

Read more about FFS: https://www.fao.org/farmer-field-schools/home/en/

Watch the video about FFS: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IzZ-1-uofyA&t=45s.

Read the Success Stories - Stories from the Field at: https://www.fao.org/farmer-field-schools/ffs-overview/success-stories/en/.

Chedlia is an amazing smiley and strong lady with a deep look and life experience written on her face. She lives with her family composed of her two little daughters, her sister, and their grandmother in Cherahil in the governorate of Monastir, a little less than 300 km from the capital Tunis. Their farm is a bit isolated, without much contact with their neighbours. Their income comes exclusively from agriculture, cultivation and partially from processing. Currently, they grow mainly tomatoes, chilli peppers, eggplants, potatoes, leafy vegetables, carrots and some other vegetables for home consumption. They also have some olive trees. It was the eggplant that made a big difference; it wasn't typical at all in their area and Chedlia decided to take the risk and start growing it. Now she has four greenhouses and occasionally employs two or three other women. Chedlia is actively using IPM on her farm. She practices alternative methods to control pests and is delighted to have halved the need for pesticides thus having cut associated costs (Success Stories, Ref. 13).

Figure 11: Chedlia from Tunis. Source: https://www.fao.org/farmer-field-schools/ffs-overview/success-stories/en/.

Agroecological farm visit

Figure 12: Etienne Allard Farm, Ferme de Warelles, Source: https://www.lecho.be/entreprises/matieres-premieres/ces-agriculteurs-qui-luttent-contre-l-appauvrissement-des-sols/10292551.html

On Etienne Allard's Farm, Ferme de Warelles, 120 ha of arable land with 14 different crops including wheat, oilseed rape, potatoes, sugar beet, mustard, and legumes such as fava bean, Etienne explained that in his journey to restore soil life and reduce the use of synthetic inputs, it was necessary to implement longer rotations. Etienne said: "I am not afraid of the ban on neonicotinoids because I have not used them for 6 years thanks to the implementation of intercropping of faba bean in sugar beet. Faba bean attracts aphids and consequently their natural enemies. When aphids are ready to shift to sugar beet and could potentially transmit beet yellows virus their natural enemies control them." (Ref. 3).

Read more here: https://www.agroecology-europe.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/05/AEEU-Event-Report-Agroecological-Farm-Visit-21.03.2023.pdf.

Agroecology in Europe

Figure 13: Luuk's farm: a hotspot of culture and biodiversity, Maartensdijk, the Netherlands.

In 2007 Luuk Schouten started the vegetable farm Eyckenstein as he "wanted to do something real". On 0.7 hectares Luuk cultivates a large variety of vegetables including carrots, beans, zucchini, pumpkins, lettuce, and parsnip. One can buy the vegetables at the farm or by subscribing to a vegetable box. Luuk says: "For me, it is important that sustainably produced food is affordable. I can realise this through direct sales." (Ref. 11).

Read more on the link: https://www.agroecology-europe.org/stories-from-the-field/.

Conclusions

Agriculture and food processing remain on two of the most important activities in today's world. Their importance is shown in their intertwining with many other branches and sciences. Agroecology has great potential, as the world is increasingly focusing on the quality of food production, the environment and water, and is increasingly striving to promote and raise awareness of healthy forms of production, processing, and use.

Agroecology elements and principles help to achieve SDG goals and zero Hunger by connecting traditional practices, local associations, modern technologies, and knowledge. New agroecological practices should be environmentally, economically, and socially acceptable. To encourage transition pathways toward sustainable food systems all the participants should promote them and establish educational systems based on the principles of Farmer Field School.

Self-assessment questions

1. What kind of approach does agroecology utilize? Describe it.
2. What processes is agroecology based on?
3. Who designed the 10 elements of agroecology? Explain why.
4. Describe the image and analyse the ten elements of agroecology.
5. Apply the 10 elements of agroecology and map out the steps needed to translate local food production, processing, and marketing into agroecology.
6. Why did HLPE launch the "13 Agroecological Principles"?
7. Construct a fictitious industrial farm and transform it by applying the thirteen principles of agroecology.

3. ORGANIC FARMING

Introduction

This chapter encapsulates the essence of organic farming as a cornerstone for sustainable agriculture, underscoring its multifaceted benefits and essential role in developing a resilient food system. Through the integration of ecological principles and the avoidance of synthetic inputs, organic farming not only enhances soil health and biodiversity but also prioritizes environmental stewardship and the well-being of both consumers and producers. It contrasts with conventional methods by fostering a deep-seated harmony with nature, offering a more nutritious and ethical choice of produce, and supporting socio-economic development in rural areas. Highlighted within this narrative is the crucial impact of organic practices in promoting sustainability, resilience, and long-term viability in farming, thus making a compelling case for its adoption and growth within the agricultural sector.

Learning objectives

KNOWLEDGE
Providing students with a comprehensive understanding of how ecological principles can be integrated into agricultural systems to promote sustainability, resilience, and long-term viability in farming practices.

SKILLS
Gain knowledge and practical skills in implementing agroecological farming methods such as polyculture, agroforestry, cover cropping, integrated pest management, and soil conservation techniques.

ATTITUDES
Accept agroecology as a component of your moral principles and practices.

Principles of organic farming

What are the fundamental principles of organic farming, and how do they differ from conventional farming methods? What standards and regulations govern organic farming practices? What are the strengths and weaknesses of organic farming?

Organic farming is a holistic approach to agriculture that emphasizes the utilization of natural systems and processes to produce food and fibre. It is a time-honoured practice that aligns with the principles of sustainability, biodiversity, and environmental stewardship. In contrast to conventional farming methods, which heavily rely on synthetic fertilizers, pesticides, and genetically modified organisms, organic farming prioritizes the preservation of soil health, promotes ecological balance, and protects the well-being of both consumers and farmers. This essay explores the key principles, benefits, and challenges of organic farming, highlighting its crucial role in fostering a more sustainable and harmonious relationship with nature. (Ref. 9)

Role and definition of organic farming

Organic farming and sustainable farming, though related, differ significantly. Organic farming strictly adheres to the use of natural inputs and the avoidance of synthetic pesticides and fertilisers, aiming to preserve environmental health and promote ecological balance. In contrast, sustainable farming focuses on a broader goal of maintaining agricultural productivity indefinitely, incorporating various practices, including organic, to safeguard future resources.

The meaning of organic farming extends far beyond the mere cultivation of crops and raising of livestock. At its core, organic farming represents a profound shift in our approach to food production—one that embraces the fundamental interconnectedness between human beings, the environment, and the broader ecosystem. Organic farming recognizes that the health and well-being of our planet and its inhabitants are intricately linked, and that our actions as farmers and consumers have a significant impact on the world around us. (Ref. 5)

Organic farming plays a crucial role in promoting environmental sustainability. By prioritizing soil health, organic farmers nurture the very foundation of agriculture. They employ practices such as composting, crop rotation, and the use of natural fertilizers to enhance soil fertility and structure, enabling it to retain moisture and nutrients more effectively (Ref. 3). This

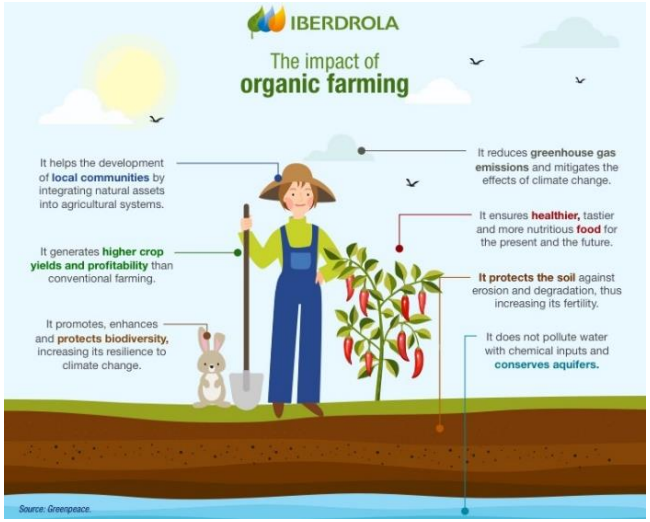


Figure 14: The impact of organic farming. Source: https://www.iberdrola.com/sustainability/organic-farming

approach helps to mitigate soil erosion, improve water infiltration, and reduce the risk of nutrient runoff, thereby safeguarding the health of our waterways and minimizing pollution. Organic farming also embraces biodiversity, creating habitats that support a wide range of plant and animal species. By avoiding synthetic pesticides and genetically modified organisms, organic farmers encourage the presence of beneficial insects, birds, and soil microorganisms, fostering a more resilient and balanced ecosystem. (Ref. 3)

Furthermore, organic farming holds significant meaning for the health and well-being of consumers. Organic crops are grown without the use of synthetic fertilizers, pesticides, or genetically modified seeds. This means that organic produce is free from potentially harmful residues, providing consumers with a healthier and more nutritious food choice. Organic farming also emphasizes the use of sustainable and humane practices in livestock production. Organic livestock is raised in conditions that prioritize animal welfare, providing them with access to pasture and a natural diet free from growth hormones or routine antibiotic use. As a result, organic meat, dairy, and eggs offer consumers a higher level of confidence in the quality and ethical standards of the products they consume. (Ref. 2)

Beyond environmental and health considerations, the significance of organic farming extends to the socio-economic realm. By supporting small-scale farmers, organic agriculture promotes rural development and helps to preserve traditional farming knowledge and cultural heritage. It encourages the establishment of local food systems, reducing dependence on distant supply chains and fostering community resilience. Organic farming also promotes fair trade practices and provides economic opportunities for farmers, contributing to the vitality of rural economies. (Ref. 3)

In essence, the role and meaning of organic farming lie in its ability to offer a sustainable and harmonious alternative to conventional agriculture. It embodies a holistic and ethical approach to food production that respects the delicate balance of nature, prioritizes human health, and fosters the long-term well-being of both present and future generations. Organic farming

represents a tangible and transformative step towards cultivating a more regenerative and resilient food system—one that is in harmony with nature and supports the interconnectedness of all life on Earth. (Ref. 10)

EU statistics

By producing high quality food with low environmental impact, organic farming will play an essential role in developing a sustainable food system for the EU. In 2021, the European Commission adopted action plan in support of the target of at least 25% of the EU's agricultural land under organic farming and a significant increase in organic aquaculture by 2030 set out in the Farm to Fork strategy and the biodiversity strategy. In that context, Member States were asked to set national target values for organic farming (in % of total UAA in 2030) and to be generally ambitious on organic production in their CAP strategic plans and in their national organic action plans. (Ref. 6)

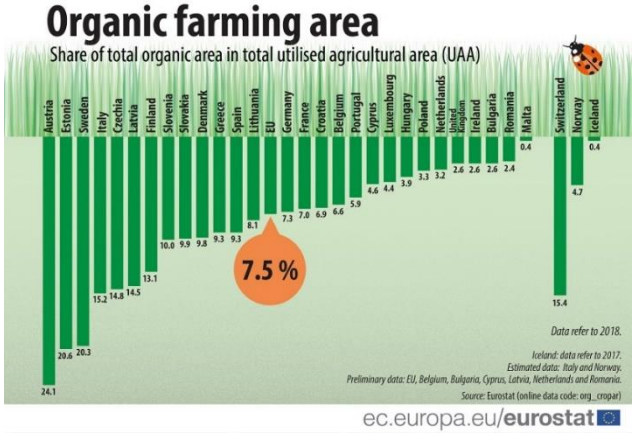


Figure 15: EU organic farming area. Source: ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/products-eurostat-news/product/-/asset_publisher/VWJkHuaYvLIN/content/DDN-20200129-2/pop_up

The total organic area in the European Union (EU) was 13.4 million hectares in 2018, corresponding to 7.5% of the total utilised agricultural area. This represents an increase of 34% between 2012 and 2018. (Ref. 7)

The area used for organic agricultural production in the EU continues to increase. It covered 14.7 million hectares in 2020, up from 9.5 million hectares in 2012, equivalent to a rise of 56%. In 2020, the total organic area in the EU corresponded to 9.1% of the total utilised agricultural area (UAA). The total organic area is the sum of the "area under conversion" and the "certified area". Before an area can be certified as "organic", it must undergo a conversion process, which may take 2-3 years depending on the crop. (Ref. 8)

Organic farming has gained significant traction both in Europe and globally, as consumers and farmers recognize its environmental, health, and socio-economic benefits. Available data on organic farming in the global and European market shows that, in an international context, the European organic sector is well developed. Relatively high shares of agricultural land, continual growth in the area and number of operators and a fast-growing market, show the exceptional dynamics that the European organic market and sector has. (Ref. 3)

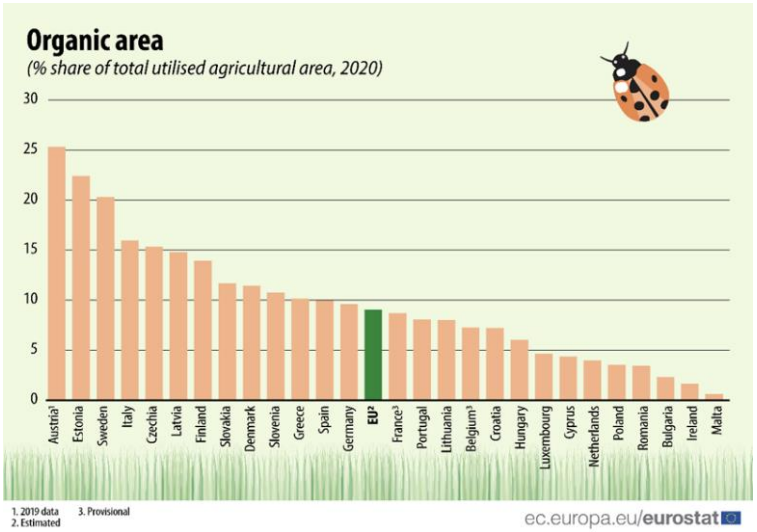


Figure 16: EU organic area. Source: ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/products-eurostat-news/-/ddn-20220222-1

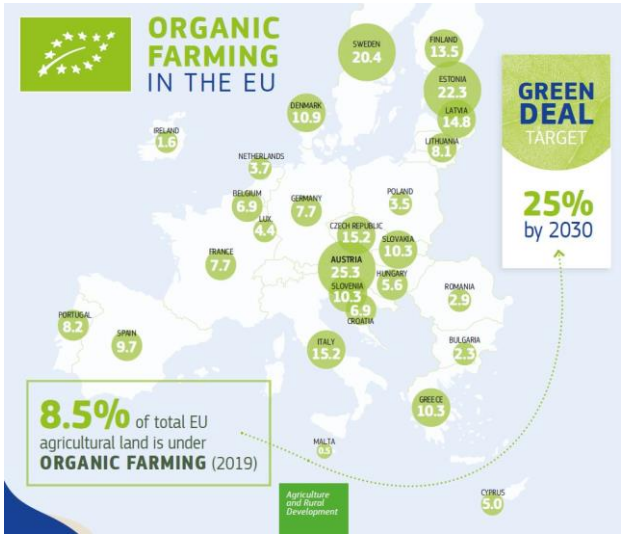


Figure 17: Organic farming in the EU. Source: facebook.com/EUAgri/photos/a.151827158207562/3979137838809789/?type=3

In the past years, in many countries, the organic market was growing faster than production, and domestic supply can still not meet demand. Therefore, many organic organisations or market actors are calling for more farmers to convert to organic – and the effects of these efforts are now visible, with production growing at the same pace as the market. Now more processing, storing and distribution facilities are needed to process larger amounts of raw products. (Ref. 6)

A sustainable food system is at the heart of the European Green Deal. Under the Green Deal's Farm to Fork strategy, the European Commission has set a target of 'at least 25% of the EU's agricultural land under organic farming and a significant increase in organic aquaculture by 2030'. (Ref. 3) The Commission has set out a comprehensive organic action plan for the European Union. Through it, the Commission will aim to achieve the European Green Deal target of 25% of agricultural land under organic farming by 2030. (Ref. 3)

Strengths and weaknesses

Organic farming is not a new form of farming since it has been practiced before the introduction of mineral fertilisers, several years back. It is simply a form of farming whereby biological materials alongside beneficial microbes are used to provide nutrients to crops. Doing this increases sustainability. It also ensures that the soil remains alive and healthy since organic wastes are used. (Ref. 11)

Compared with conventional agriculture, organic farming uses fewer pesticides, reduces soil erosion, decreases nitrate leaching into groundwater and surface water, and recycles animal wastes back into the farm. These benefits are counterbalanced by higher food costs for consumers and generally lower yields. Indeed, yields of organic crops have been found to be about 25% lower overall than conventionally grown crops, although this can vary considerably depending upon the type of crop. The challenge for future organic agriculture will be to maintain its environmental benefits, increase yields, and reduce prices while meeting the challenges of climate change and an increasing world population. (Ref. 1)

Organic farming offers numerous benefits that extend beyond individual farms to encompass environmental, health, and socio-economic aspects. (Ref. 3) Some of the key advantages include:

Environmental Sustainability	Organic farming practices promote soil conservation, reduce water pollution, and conserve biodiversity. By avoiding the use of synthetic inputs, organic farmers prevent the contamination of soil, waterways, and the atmosphere, contributing to the preservation of natural resources and ecosystems.
Improved Nutritional Quality	Organic crops have been found to contain higher levels of essential nutrients, such as vitamins, minerals, and antioxidants. Additionally, they are free from pesticide residues, making them a healthier choice for consumers.
Enhanced Animal Welfare	Organic livestock farming prioritizes the well-being of animals, providing them with access to pasture, space to roam, and a natural diet. This approach ensures healthier, happier animals, free from routine antibiotic use or growth hormones.
Sustainable Rural Development	Organic farming can revitalize rural communities by providing economic opportunities, preserving traditional farming knowledge, and fostering local food systems. It supports small-scale farmers, promotes fair trade practices, and strengthens local economies.

While organic farming offers numerous benefits, it is not without its challenges. Some of the key obstacles include the higher cost of organic products, limited access to organic markets, and the need for technical expertise in organic farming methods. To address these challenges and foster the growth of organic agriculture, governments, organizations, and consumers can take several actions:

Support for Transition

- Governments can provide financial incentives, technical assistance, and educational programs to help farmers transition from conventional to organic farming practices

Market Development

- Expanding access to organic markets, establishing fair trade policies, and promoting consumer awareness can create a more favorable environment for organic farmers

Collaboration and Knowledge Sharing

- Encouraging collaboration among farmers, researchers, and policymakers can facilitate the exchange of knowledge, best practices, and lessons learned in organic farming

Research and Innovation

- Continued research into organic farming techniques, crop varieties, and pest management strategies can enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of organic systems

While organic farming offers numerous benefits, it also faces certain weaknesses and challenges. It is important to acknowledge these weaknesses to have a comprehensive understanding of the agricultural system. Some of the common weaknesses of organic farming include:

- **Lower Yields**

Organic farming generally tends to have lower yields compared to conventional farming methods. This can be attributed to limitations in the use of synthetic fertilizers and pesticides, which can lead to decreased pest and weed control and lower nutrient availability for crops. As a result, organic farmers may face challenges in meeting the growing global demand for food.

- **Higher Production Costs**

Organic farming often requires more labour-intensive practices, such as manual weed control and the use of organic fertilizers and pest management strategies. These practices can increase production costs for organic farmers compared to their conventional counterparts. The higher costs can impact the affordability and accessibility of organic products for consumers.

- **Limited Nutrient Management**

Organic farming relies on natural sources of nutrients, such as compost and manure, for soil fertility. While these inputs provide long-term benefits to soil health, they can be less precise in nutrient composition and release rates compared to synthetic fertilizers. This can lead to challenges in efficiently managing nutrient availability and balance, potentially impacting crop growth and quality.

- **Vulnerability to Pest and Disease Pressure**

Organic farming prioritizes the use of natural pest control methods, such as beneficial insects and crop rotation. However, these methods may not always provide the same level of pest and disease control as synthetic pesticides. Organic crops can be more vulnerable to pest and disease pressures, which can result in lower yields and quality if effective organic pest management strategies are not implemented.

- **Certification and Regulatory Burdens**

Organic farming requires compliance with specific standards and certification processes to ensure the integrity of organic products. These regulations can involve paperwork, inspections, and additional costs for farmers seeking organic certification. Compliance with these standards can be challenging, particularly for small-scale farmers or those transitioning from conventional to organic farming.

- **Limited Access to Organic Markets**

Organic farmers may face challenges in accessing organic markets and securing fair prices for their products. The demand for organic products is growing, but it can still be limited in certain regions or niche markets. Lack of infrastructure, distribution channels, and consumer awareness can pose obstacles for organic farmers to effectively market and sell their produce.

It is important to note that while organic farming has these weaknesses, ongoing research, innovation, and knowledge sharing in the organic agriculture sector are addressing many of these challenges. Efforts are being made to improve crop varieties, pest management strategies, nutrient management techniques, and market access for organic farmers. As the organic farming sector continues to evolve, it has the potential to overcome these weaknesses and contribute to a more sustainable and resilient food system. (Ref. 2)

Principles of organic farming

Organic farming is guided by a set of principles that underpin its philosophy and practices. These principles include:

- **Soil Health:** Organic farmers prioritize the preservation and enhancement of soil fertility using natural methods such as composting, crop rotation, and cover cropping. By nurturing the soil's organic matter content and microbial diversity, organic farming promotes long-term soil health and sustainability.
- **Biodiversity:** Organic farming encourages biodiversity by creating a habitat that supports a variety of plant and animal species. This approach reduces the reliance on synthetic inputs and fosters a more resilient and self-regulating ecosystem.

- **Ecological Balance:** Organic farmers seek to maintain ecological balance by minimizing the use of synthetic pesticides and fertilizers, which can disrupt natural ecosystems. Instead, they rely on methods such as integrated pest management (IPM), crop diversification, and natural predators to control pests and diseases.
- **Prohibition of Synthetic Inputs:** One of the fundamental principles of organic farming is the exclusion of synthetic chemicals, genetically modified organisms (GMOs), and irradiation techniques. Organic farmers use natural alternatives such as organic fertilizers, compost, and biological pest control methods to nurture crops and manage pests.

Examples of good practice

While the European Union (EU) has indeed introduced several initiatives to foster organic farming, the broader Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) may not wholly support or effectively promote organic and sustainable practices across the board. Despite the EU's commitment through policy support, research funding, and efforts to enhance market development and consumer confidence in organic products, challenges persist. The CAP, with its substantial influence on the agricultural sector, has been critiqued for prioritising large-scale, intensive agricultural operations that often rely on practices at odds with the ethos of organic and sustainable farming. This discrepancy can dilute the impact of the initiatives aimed specifically at organic agriculture, potentially limiting the sector's growth and the transition towards more sustainable agricultural practices. Moreover, the complexity and administrative burden of CAP subsidies can disproportionately affect smaller, organic farmers, hindering their ability to compete on an equal footing with conventional agriculture. Acknowledging these challenges is crucial for refining EU policies to ensure they more effectively support the transition to organic and sustainable farming practices, aligning with broader environmental and social objectives. (Ref. 3) Here are some key EU initiatives towards organic farming:

- **Common Agricultural Policy (CAP):**

Figure 18: Common Agricultural Policy logo.

The CAP includes specific measures and funding programs to support organic farming. Through the CAP's Rural Development Policy, farmers can access financial support for converting to organic farming, maintaining organic practices, and participating in agri-environmental schemes that promote sustainable practices. The CAP also provides funding for research and innovation in organic farming.

- **Organic Farming Regulation:**

The EU Organic Farming Regulation sets the standards and requirements for organic farming practices and the certification of organic products within the EU. It establishes rules on organic production, labelling, control systems, and imports of organic products. The regulation ensures a consistent and transparent approach to organic farming across member states.

Figure 19: Organic Farming Regulation logo.

- **European Innovation Partnership for Agricultural Productivity and Sustainability (EIP-AGRI):**

EIP-AGRI promotes knowledge exchange and innovation in agriculture, including organic farming. It brings together farmers, researchers, and other stakeholders to address specific challenges and develop innovative solutions in organic agriculture. EIP-AGRI facilitates the sharing of best practices, research findings, and successful case studies to support the continuous improvement of organic farming practices.

Figure 20:European Innovation Partnership for Agricultural Productivity and Sustainability logo.

- **Horizon 2020:**

The EU's Horizon 2020 program provides funding for research and innovation in various sectors, including organic farming. It supports projects aimed at advancing organic farming techniques, improving crop varieties, developing sustainable pest management strategies, and enhancing soil fertility management. Horizon 2020 encourages collaboration between researchers, farmers, and industry stakeholders to drive innovation in organic agriculture.

Figure 21: Horizon 2020 logo.

- **Organic Action Plan:**

Figure 22: Organic Action Plan logo.

The EU's Organic Action Plan sets out strategic objectives and actions to promote organic production and consumption. It focuses on increasing the share of agricultural land under organic farming, improving market access for organic products, and enhancing consumer trust in organic labelling. The plan includes measures to strengthen research and innovation, support farmer training, facilitate access to finance, and promote the use of organic products in public procurement.

- **Promotion Campaigns:**

Figure 23: EU Organic Farming Campaign.

The EU runs promotional campaigns to raise awareness and stimulate demand for organic products. These campaigns aim to inform consumers about the benefits of organic farming, increase recognition of organic logos, and support the growth of the organic market. They highlight the environmental, health, and social advantages of organic products, encouraging consumers to choose organic options.

These EU initiatives demonstrate a commitment to supporting organic farming and its principles of sustainability, biodiversity, and consumer confidence. They provide financial support, regulatory frameworks, research funding, and knowledge-sharing platforms to facilitate the growth and development of organic agriculture across Europe. (Ref. 5)

Conclusion

Organic agriculture promotes environmental sustainability by preserving soil health, water quality, and biodiversity. Its methods avoid synthetic chemicals, reducing chemical exposure for farmers, consumers, and the environment. Organic produce often contains higher levels of nutrients and is produced with a focus on animal welfare. Additionally, it supports rural communities, fosters direct connections between farmers and consumers, and has the potential to mitigate climate change. (Ref. 10)

Organic farming also represents a vital pathway towards sustainable agriculture, promoting harmony between human activities and the natural world. Its principles and practices prioritize soil health, biodiversity, and ecological balance, resulting in numerous benefits for the environment, human health, and rural communities. While challenges exist, concerted efforts from various stakeholders can pave the way for the widespread adoption and growth of organic farming, ultimately contributing to a more sustainable and resilient food system for future generations. (Ref. 10)

Self-assessment questions

1. Can you define agroecology and explain its core principles?
2. How does agroecology differ from conventional agriculture in terms of its approach to farming and resource management?
3. What are the main environmental benefits of practicing agroecology?
4. How does agroecology address issues of food security and resilience in the face of climate change?
5. Can you discuss the potential challenges or barriers to implementing agroecological practices on a large scale?
6. Have you personally engaged in any agroecological activities or projects? If so, what were your experiences and observations?

4. SOCIAL AND SDG-BASED ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Introduction

Social and SDG-based entrepreneurship is a dynamic approach to business that centres around addressing social and environmental challenges. Social entrepreneurship, at its core, utilizes entrepreneurial principles to develop, fund, and implement solutions to societal, cultural, or environmental issues. Unlike traditional business models focused solely on profit maximization, social entrepreneurship aims to create positive change and impact.

A crucial framework guiding social and environmental initiatives is the set of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) established by the United Nations. Comprising 17 global goals, the SDGs address a spectrum of interconnected issues, including inequality, climate change, environmental degradation, and justice. These goals provide a universal call to action to end poverty, protect the planet, and ensure prosperity for all by 2030.

Learning objectives

KNOWLEDGE

Broadening knowledge concerning the SDGs, their individual targets, and indicators as well as social and SDG-based entrepreneurship.

SKILLS

Acquiring and enhancing skills in the development of entrepreneurial ideas and business concepts.

ATTITUDES

Develop a positive and conscious mindset and seeing opportunities instead of risks.

What is Social Entrepreneurship?

Social entrepreneurship refers to the use of entrepreneurial principles to create social or environmental value, rather than solely focusing on financial profit. Social entrepreneurship can drive social innovation and transformation by identifying and addressing social problems in innovative ways. (Ref. 5, p.20)

The subsequent aspects show how social entrepreneurship contributes to social innovation and transformation within the entrepreneurial landscape.

Identification of social problems

Social entrepreneurship drives social innovation and transformation primarily by discerning and identifying prevalent social problems. Motivated by a commitment to addressing unmet social or environmental challenges, social entrepreneurs often recognize gaps left unattended by current institutions or organizations. Their drive stems from a proactive desire to fill these voids and create positive change in areas where conventional approaches have proven insufficient.

Innovative solutions to social problems

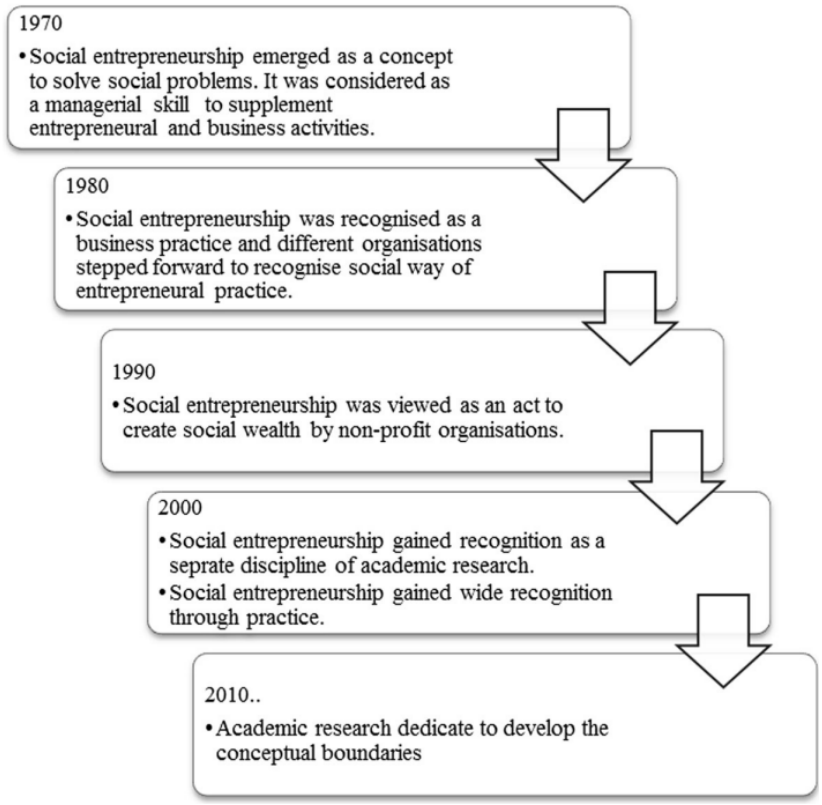
Social entrepreneurs frequently devise inventive solutions to address social problems, contributing to the drive for social innovation and transformation. These solutions manifest in diverse forms, encompassing the introduction of novel products and services, as well as the establishment of innovative organizational models.

Collaboration with stakeholders

Social entrepreneurship fosters social innovation and transformation through collaborative efforts with stakeholders to tackle social issues. Social entrepreneurs frequently engage with a diverse array of partners, including government agencies, nonprofits, and local communities, to create meaningful and sustainable impact. This collaborative approach enhances the effectiveness of social initiatives, leveraging the strengths and resources of multiple entities to address complex challenges and promote positive change.

Areas of social innovations

Social entrepreneurship can drive social innovation and transformation in different fields as education, health, environment, business development by identifying and addressing gaps in prevailing systems. (Ref. 5, p.20)



The Origin

Social entrepreneurship has roots in various historical and cultural contexts, but its modern conceptualization gained momentum in the latter half of the 20th century. One of the early precursors was Muhammad Yunus, who founded the Grameen Bank in Bangladesh in 1983, pioneering microfinance to empower impoverished communities.

Figure 24: Muhammad Yunus. Source: Global Yunus Social Business (yunussb.com)

The term "social entrepreneurship" gained prominence in the 1990s, with scholars and practitioners like Bill Drayton, the founder of Ashoka, helping define and popularize the concept. Drayton envisioned social entrepreneurs as individuals who drive social change through innovative and sustainable solutions. The field has since evolved, with numerous organizations and initiatives worldwide dedicated to fostering social entrepreneurship and addressing societal challenges through entrepreneurial approaches. (Ref. 11)

Watch this short clip to learn, how different people define Social Entrepreneurship: What Is Social Entrepreneurship? - YouTube

Business approaches

Sustainable business approaches encompass a diverse set of strategies that integrate environmental, social, and economic considerations to foster long-term value creation. In response to growing concerns about the impact of business operations on the planet and society, organizations are increasingly adopting practices that prioritize ethical sourcing, resource efficiency, and social responsibility. These approaches aim to balance economic success with a commitment to environmental stewardship and social well-being, reflecting a paradigm shift towards more holistic and responsible business practices also called impact business models.

Fair trade as a business approach emphasizes equitable trading partnerships, ensuring that producers, especially in developing countries, receive fair compensation for their goods. Companies following this approach commit to transparent and ethical practices, addressing issues such as child labour, gender inequality, and poverty in the supply chain. By supporting fair trade, all businesses, social enterprises as well as profit-oriented companies, contribute to social responsibility, empower marginalized communities, and foster sustainable development in the global marketplace. (Ref. 6)

Corporate social responsibility (CSR) is a business approach that involves companies taking responsibility for their impact on society and the environment. It encompasses ethical business practices, philanthropy, and efforts to contribute positively to communities. CSR not only enhances a company's reputation but also aligns its values with broader societal concerns, fostering long-term sustainability and stakeholder trust. Although, it does not focus on critically reflect on the impacts of a company's core business. (Ref. 4)

Employee-owned companies, also known as worker cooperatives, prioritize a business structure where employees have ownership stakes and participate in decision-making processes. This approach fosters a sense of shared responsibility, encourages collaboration, and aligns the interests of employees with the success of the company. Employee-owned models often lead to increased job satisfaction, loyalty, and a more equitable distribution of profits among the workforces. (Ref. 19)

A circular economy is an economic system designed to minimize waste and make the most of resources. In a circular economy, products are designed to be reused, repaired, remanufactured, and recycled, creating a closed-loop system that reduces the need for new raw materials. This approach contrasts with the traditional linear economy, where products are produced, used, and then discarded as waste. Circular economy principles aim to extend the lifespan of products, reduce environmental impact,

and promote sustainability. It involves a shift from a "take, make, dispose" model to one that emphasizes the cyclical and sustainable use of resources to create a regenerative and restorative economic system. (Ref. 3)

Carbon footprint as a strategic tool that involves quantifying and managing the total greenhouse gas emissions associated with a company's activities, products, and services. Businesses assess their carbon footprint to identify areas of high emissions, implement strategies to reduce them, and often invest in carbon offset projects to neutralize the remaining impact. By actively addressing their carbon footprint, companies contribute to environmental sustainability, enhance their corporate social responsibility, and align with global efforts to combat climate change. (Ref. 14)

Green supply chain management focuses on integrating environmentally sustainable practices throughout the entire supply chain process. Companies adopting this approach prioritize suppliers who adhere to eco-friendly standards, promoting sustainable sourcing and ethical business practices. Through green supply chain management, organizations aim to reduce their environmental impact, enhance brand reputation, meet the growing demand for environmentally responsible products and services and fulfil recent regulatory requirements. (Ref. 18)

Figure 25: Sustainable Development Goals.
Source: en.unesco.org/sustainabledevelopmentgoals

What are the SDGs?

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are a set of 17 global goals established by the United Nations in 2015 as part of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The SDGs are designed to address a wide range of social, economic, and environmental challenges, aiming to create a more sustainable and equitable world by the year 2030. Each goal is accompanied by specific targets and indicators to measure progress. (Ref. 7)

Origin and Background

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) originated from the Rio+20 Conference on Sustainable Development held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, in 2012. Member states of the United Nations recognized the need for a universal and transformative agenda to address global challenges comprehensively. The SDGs were formally adopted in September 2015 as part of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, succeeding the Millennium Development Goals.

The SDGs apply to all countries, regardless of their level of development, and are designed to be universally applicable. They recognize the interconnectedness of global challenges and emphasize a collective responsibility to work towards a more sustainable, inclusive, and equitable world. The SDGs are intended for governments, businesses, civil society, and individuals, encouraging collaborative efforts to achieve the outlined goals by the year 2030. (Ref. 7)

SDGs – Goals and Targets

The Sustainable Development Goals comprise of 17 Goals, 169 Targets and 232 Indicators. The lists of targets and indicators for each of the 17 SDGs was published in a UN resolution in July 2017. Each goal typically has 8–12 targets, and each target has between one and four indicators used to measure progress toward reaching the targets. The targets are either outcome targets (circumstances to be attained) or means of implementation targets.

Under the following link the SDGs with all targets and indicators can be found: SDGs list (un.org)

Agro4SDGs has selected six core SDGs, where the project intends to create a specific impact, even though all SDGs are interrelated and play into the project aims and activities.

In the following these six core SDGs are presented with the targets most relevant for the project.

Goal 1: End poverty in all its forms everywhere

1.4 By 2030, ensure that all men and women, especially the poor and the vulnerable, have equal rights to economic resources, as well as access to basic services, ownership and control over land and other forms of property, inheritance, natural resources, appropriate new technology and financial services, including microfinance.

1.5 By 2030, build the resilience of the poor and those in vulnerable situations and reduce their exposure and vulnerability to climate-related extreme events and other economic, social, and environmental shocks and disasters.

1.b Create sound policy frameworks at the national, regional, and international levels, based on pro-poor and gender-sensitive development strategies, to support accelerated investment in poverty eradication actions.

Goal 2: End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture

2.3 By 2030, double the agricultural productivity and incomes of small-scale food producers, in particular women, indigenous peoples, family farmers, pastoralists, and fishers, including through secure and equal access to land, other productive resources and inputs, knowledge, financial services, markets and opportunities for value addition and non-farm employment.

2.4 By 2030, ensure sustainable food production systems and implement resilient agricultural practices that increase productivity and production, that help maintain ecosystems, that strengthen capacity for adaptation to climate change, extreme weather, drought, flooding and other disasters and that progressively improve land and soil quality.

2.5 By 2020, maintain the genetic diversity of seeds, cultivated plants, and farmed and domesticated animals and their related wild species, including through soundly managed and diversified seed and plant banks at the national, regional and international levels, and promote access to and fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from the utilization of genetic resources and associated traditional knowledge, as internationally agreed.

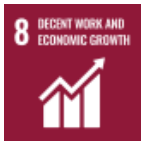
Goal 5: Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls

5.1 End all forms of discrimination against all women and girls everywhere.

5.4 Recognize and value unpaid care and domestic work through the provision of public services, infrastructure and social protection policies and the promotion of shared responsibility within the household and the family as nationally appropriate.

5.5 Ensure women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making in political, economic, and public life.

5.a Undertake reforms to give women equal rights to economic resources, as well as access to ownership and control over land and other forms of property, financial services, inheritance, and natural resources, in accordance with national laws.



Goal 8: Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all

8.2 Achieve higher levels of economic productivity through diversification, technological upgrading, and innovation, including through a focus on high value added and labour-intensive sectors.

8.3 Promote development-oriented policies that support productive activities, decent job creation, entrepreneurship, creativity, and innovation, and encourage the formalization and growth of micro-, small- and medium-sized enterprises, including through access to financial services.

8.4 Improve progressively, through 2030, global resource efficiency in consumption and production and endeavour to decouple economic growth from environmental degradation, in accordance with the 10-Year Framework of Programmes on Sustainable Consumption and Production, with developed countries taking the lead.

8.5 By 2030, achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all women and men, including for young people and persons with disabilities, and equal pay for work of equal value.

8.9 By 2030, devise and implement policies to promote sustainable tourism that creates jobs and promotes local culture and products.

Goal 12: Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns

12.2 By 2030, achieve the sustainable management and efficient use of natural resources.

12.3 By 2030, halve per capita global food waste at the retail and consumer levels and reduce food losses along production and supply chains, including post-harvest losses.

12.8 By 2030, ensure that people everywhere have the relevant information and awareness for sustainable development and lifestyles in harmony with nature.

12.b Develop and implement tools to monitor sustainable development impacts for sustainable tourism that creates jobs and promotes local culture and products.

Goal 13: Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts

13.1 Strengthen resilience and adaptive capacity to climate-related hazards and natural disasters in all countries.

13.3 Improve education, awareness-raising and human and institutional capacity on climate change mitigation, adaptation, impact reduction and early warning.

Find all SDGs, targets, and indicators under https://sdgs.un.org/goals.

SDGs and Agribusiness

Agribusiness and food production are linked to a particularly large number of SDGs. (Ref. 16, 20)

Goal 1 - ending poverty - can only be achieved if incomes in rural areas increase. This is where most of the poor still live, even though for the first time in history more people live in cities than in rural areas. Goal 2 calls for the promotion of sustainable agriculture to end hunger. The sub-goals establish a direct link to poverty reduction: productivity and income of small producers, especially women and other disadvantaged groups, are to be doubled. There are also major synergies here with gender equality (Goal 5), as most small farmers worldwide are women. (Ref. 17, 22)

Goal 6 deals with the subject of water: Water use should become more efficient in all sectors - including agriculture - and the number of people suffering from water shortages should be greatly reduced. Water quality is to be improved by preventing pollution and the introduction of hazardous chemicals and substances. Goal 12 aims at creating sustainable consumption and production patterns. The planet's natural resources should not be overused and less polluted, such as chemicals in the air, water, and soil. It also addresses the problem that one third of all food does not reach the plates: By 2030, the global per capita waste of food in retail and households should be halved and food losses along the production and supply chain, including post-harvest losses, reduced.

Goal 15 is particularly closely linked to agriculture, because it is about preserving the foundations of our nutrition. The loss of fertile soil and biological diversity is to be halted. Land ecosystems are to be protected, restored and their sustainable use promoted. The aim is also to combat desertification, restore damaged areas and soils and strive for a world in which natural habitats and endangered species are protected. (Ref. 17)

Coining the slogan “How food connects all the SDGs” Rockström and Sukhdev presented a graphic in 2016 that illustrates the interconnectedness of all SDGs to the topic of healthy and sustainable food (Rockström & Sukhdev, 2016; on the need to connect the SDGs cp. as well Stafford-Smith et al., 2017).

Figure 26: Azote Images for Stockholm Resilience Centre 2016. Source: Contributions to Agenda 2030 - Stockholm Resilience Centre

Rockström and Sukhedev underline that all economic and social activities need to "occur within the safe operating space of a stable and resilient planet". The biosphere represents the basis in the graphic and its good condition is a requirement for all other societal and economic activities (SDGs 6, 13, 14, 15). (Ref. 9, 20)

SDGs primarily linked to the social dimension of sustainability are placed on the next level, including good health, quality education etc. They are an additional precondition for the economic dimension placed at the top of this "weeding cake" graph to function.

Accordingly, food and agriculture are linked directly or indirectly to all the SDGs. This underlines the importance of the agriculture and food production sector in reaching the SDGs. Rockström emphasises the need to not look at the SDGs separately but to consider the linkages.

Weigelt et al. (2015) add to this perspective the relevance of land and soil governance for reaching the SDGs. Following their analysis, "soils and their governance are immediately relevant for at least nine of the proposed SDGs": Goals 1, 2, 5, 7, 12, 13 (as part of provisioning services), goals 6 and 14 (as part of regulating services) and (apart from ecosystem services offered to mankind) goal 15 (biodiversity loss and land degradation). They conclude, "this overview emphasises that soils and their sustainable use are pivotal to successfully implementing the new global sustainable Development Agenda". (Ref. 23)

Companies in the agribusiness and food production sector also bear responsibility for sustainable development in general. The OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises also apply to them. The OECD-FAO Guidelines for Responsible Agricultural Supply Chains (Ref. 10) provide guidance for the implementation of this task. The social dimension of sustainability includes respect for human rights. Since 2011, the OECD Guidelines (ibid.) have included a new chapter on this subject. The human rights guidelines listed therein are in line with the Guiding Principles for Business and Human Rights (Ref. 8) adopted by the United Nations in the same year. Many companies follow sustainable business practices as part of their corporate social responsibility. (CSR)

In agriculture (Ref. 16, 20), this means that all processing steps – from field to the plate at local, regional, and international levels - must be checked for their sustainability. (Ref. 22)

In concrete terms, sustainable agriculture means economic activity in harmony with people and the environment that conserves resources and protects the climate. Sustainable agriculture is the living diversity of seeds, wildlife, and farms, with which people can feed themselves safely and healthily today and tomorrow.

An overview of the SDGs and sub-goals relevant to the agribusiness and food production sector shows that an agricultural model is needed that focuses on sustainability, global justice, and access to sustainable food systems for all people. This can only be achieved through a reorientation of European policy (ibid.). Reforms are needed in areas such as agricultural, trade and development policy. In particular, the trend towards agribusiness at the expense of farming and the environment must be stopped and reversed. The examples of milk and meat production illustrate the consequences of a policy led by industrialisation and intensification for farmers in the EU as well as in developing countries. (Ref. 8, 10, 17, 21, 22)

What is SDG-based Entrepreneurship?

SDG-based entrepreneurship refers to entrepreneurial activities and business practices that align with and contribute to the achievement of the SDGs through developing and running businesses with a focus on creating positive social and environmental impacts while generating economic value. Entrepreneurs who embrace this approach aim to address societal challenges through innovative and sustainable business models.

The 17 Sustainable Development Goals can be categorized into the five Ps to better assess the 17 goals. Furthermore, it provides a clear set of guidelines which can be used to achieve a better future for the planet, the people, while attaining prosperity, peace, and partnership. (Ref. 15)

Figure 27: The 5 P's of Sustainable Development, UN Source: Achieving Sustainable Development Goals With Business: An Insight in the Opportunities & Challenges (u-impact.com).

Some examples of SDG-centered entrepreneurship from the project *SDGs Lab* can be found here: https://sdgs-academies.eu/training-academies-programme/inspiration

SDGs in a business context

The SDGs provide businesses with a chance to play a role in creating a more sustainable world. The initial and crucial step for companies involves delving into each goal, understanding the associated targets, and identifying KPIs to comprehend the direct and indirect connections with their business activities.

Businesses can contribute to the SDGs in many ways, including:

Improving their products and services to make them more sustainable

Reducing their carbon emissions

Supporting the concepts of equality, diversity, and inclusion (EDI)

Engaging with suppliers to improve their sustainability performance

Working with governments and NGOs to tackle social and environmental issues

Financing sustainable development projects

It is essential for companies to prioritize specific SDG targets based on their actual and potential impact in terms of risk or opportunity over the short, medium to long term, and the goals that the company can actively contribute to achieving. When allocating resources and setting up a timeline, businesses should prioritize goals that have the most significant impact.

Once the key SDGs are identified, it becomes crucial to align these objectives with tangible business targets and KPIs to effectively monitor and communicate progress.

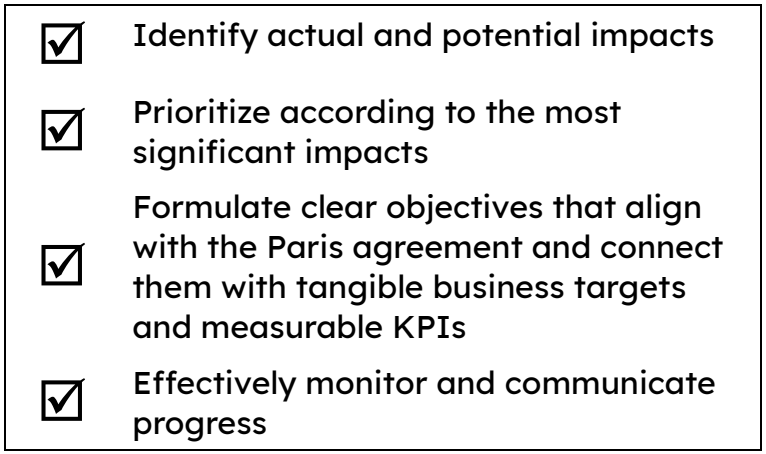


Figure 28: Steps of SDGs development. (Ref. 1)

Some **benefits** for businesses that integrate the SDGs into their business strategy can be the following:

Enhanced Corporate Reputation	Businesses that align their operations with the SDGs and contribute to sustainable development goals often enjoy improved corporate reputation.

Access to New Markets	Businesses focusing on SDGs may find opportunities to enter new markets by addressing unmet needs related to sustainable development. There is a growing consumer demand for products and services that align with environmental and social responsibility.
Innovation and Market Leadership	SDG-related challenges often require innovative solutions. Businesses that actively engage with the SDGs are more likely to foster a culture of innovation, leading to the development of new products, services, and business models.
Community Engagement	Especially small businesses are often deeply connected to local communities. Involvement with the SDGs can strengthen community ties by addressing local social and environmental issues.
Risk Management	By addressing environmental, social, and governance (ESG) factors, businesses can better manage risks. This proactive approach helps businesses anticipate and navigate potential challenges.
Employee Engagement	A commitment to sustainable development can attract and retain talent, particularly among employees who value social and environmental responsibility.
Access to Capital	Investors are increasingly considering ESG factors when making investment decisions. Companies that align with the SDGs may have improved access to capital as more investors prioritize sustainability and responsible business practices.
Cost Savings	Sustainable practices can lead to operational efficiencies and cost savings. For example, energy-efficient processes, waste reduction, and responsible resource management can result in lower operational costs over time.
Long-Term Resilience	Addressing global challenges outlined in the SDGs, such as climate change and social inequality, contributes to the long-term resilience of businesses. Companies that integrate sustainability into their core strategies are better positioned to adapt to changing market dynamics and global challenges.

Partnerships and Collaboration	Engaging with the SDGs often involves collaboration with other businesses, NGOs, and government entities. These partnerships can lead to shared resources, expertise, and increased impact in addressing complex challenges.

While there are many benefits of following an SDG-based business approach, there are also a few **drawbacks**:

Resource Constraints	Limited financial resources, technology, and skilled personnel can significantly impede the implementation of sustainable practices aligned with the SDGs, particularly for smaller businesses.
Regulatory and Policy Hurdles	Inconsistent or unclear regulations related to sustainability pose challenges for entrepreneurs. Navigating varying regulatory frameworks across different regions can be particularly daunting and may hinder the alignment of business practices with the SDGs.
Measurement of Impact	Measuring and reporting the impact of actions on the SDGs presents a substantial challenge. Entrepreneurs often face complexity in developing dependable measurement methodologies and addressing scepticism regarding the credibility of impact assessments.
Market Acceptance	Convincing consumers of the value of SDG-aligned products and services is a common challenge. Limited consumer awareness and understanding of sustainable practices may hinder market acceptance and adoption.

These challenges highlight the multifaceted nature of integrating sustainable development goals into entrepreneurial activities, emphasizing the need for strategic planning, collaboration, and innovation to overcome these obstacles. (Ref. 1)

Getting inspiration through Good Practices

Here are some examples of projects and business ideas that helped creating positive impact and thus supported the further development of some SDGs and the lives of people.

Figure 29: Childcare and elderly care on farms. Source: Assistenza bambini Alto Adige Tagesmutter (kinderbetreuung.it)

Project: Social cooperative: Learning - growing - living with women farmers

The social cooperative "Learning-growing-living with women farmers" was created as a project of the South Tyrolean Women Farmers' Organization, which represents women farmers in South Tyrol. The cooperative is an example of social farming, where women farmers look after children, like a child keeper, in the middle of nature and with agricultural resources. In addition, another offer was added: Elderly care, which provides family care and integration for older people. The technical college for agriculture and household management in South Tyrol offers the training modules "Elderly people on farms" and "child keepers", which are the professional prerequisites for practicing the service.

Figure 30: Logo unruhestandAKTIV.

Project: unruhestandAKTIV (active retirees)

The Repair Café creates awareness for the preservation of valuable materials, brings joy in doing things together and shares knowledge with others. In this way, items can be used for longer and are not immediately thrown away. In this way, the number of raw materials and energy required to produce new products is saved and CO2 emissions are reduced at the same time.

Figure 31: Project "Best of the Rest" Source: Best of the Rest: gemeinwohlprojekte.at
Source: Verein Unruhestand Aktiv Archive - Re-Use Austria (repanet.at)

Many items that could still be repaired and reused after a simple repair are still being disposed. With the Repair Cafè project, the unruhestandAKTIV association brings the 50-plus generation together and helps to conserve resources. At the Repair Café people can work together with a specialist. If someone has nothing to repair, he or she can watch and learn, or help someone else with the reparation.

Project: Best of the Rest

The "Best of the Rest" project aims to contribute to reducing the amount of food that is thrown away. The founder processes food that is still edible in its raw state (such as vegetables or fruit) or food that has already been processed and would almost certainly end up in the bin due to its imperfect appearance or expiration date.

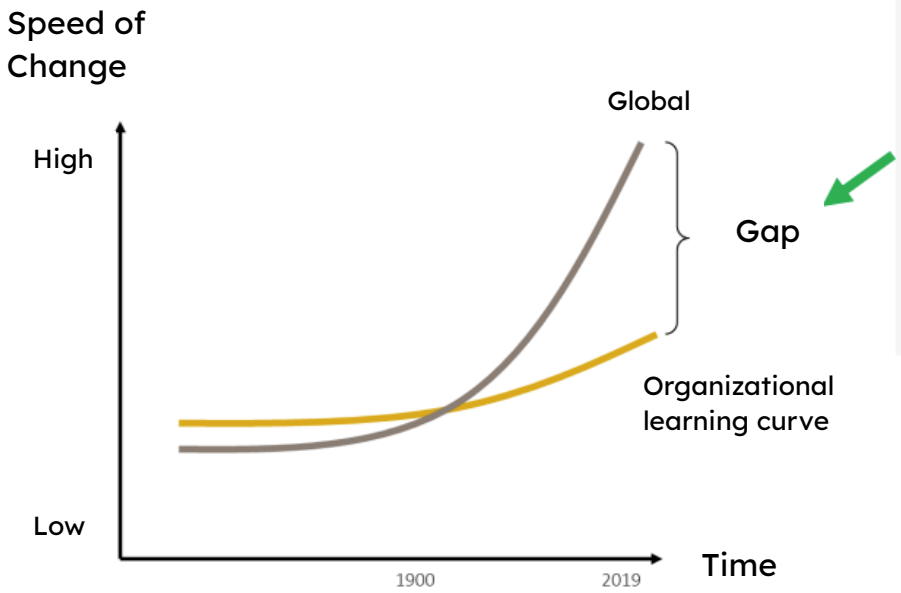
The preserved food comes from regional markets, grocery stores and market gardens. As an experienced restaurateur and chef, she processes the food into "jars with a story" or "buffets with an educational mission". (Ref. 12)

Recommendations

The following recommendations can be of use when considering engaging into SDG-based or social entrepreneurship.

Educate and raise awareness	• Engage into activities to educate and raise awareness about the SDGs in your surroundings. • Stay abreast of changes in the global sustainability landscape, including updates to the SDGs and related policies.
Prioritize and strategize	• Identify and prioritize specific SDGs that align with the mission and values of your business. • Develop a clear strategy that outlines how the business will contribute to and achieve these prioritized goals. • Align the SDGs with the core business strategy to ensure seamless integration into daily operations. • Embed sustainable practices into the business model and value chain.
Measure impact	• Establish clear Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and metrics to measure the impact of the business's activities on the selected SDGs. • Regularly evaluate and report progress to demonstrate commitment and transparency.
Build partnerships	• Collaborate with other businesses, NGOs, government agencies, and academia to amplify the impact and address challenges collectively. • Form partnerships that align with the company's SDG priorities and enhance the effectiveness of initiatives. • Collaborate with stakeholders, including employees, customers, suppliers, and local communities, to build a network of support and leverage collective efforts. • Foster transparent communication with stakeholders about the company's SDG-related initiatives.
Encourage employee involvement	• Foster a sense of ownership and responsibility among employees by involving them in SDG-related initiatives. • Provide training and development opportunities to enhance employees' understanding of sustainability principles.

The Inner Development Goals (IDGs)



The Inner Development Goals (IDGs) are a framework that intends to speed up actions towards the achievement of the SDGs. The global non-for-profit initiative has been founded in 2020 in Stockholm and engages deeply in individual and collective human development.

While the SDGs focus on the outer dimension, the IDGs focus on the inside, as we cannot achieve changes on the outside if our inner perceptions and attitudes do not change. And as there are so many factors changing on a global level, organizations and eventually we as individuals need to change too. This gap shown in the graph below should be addressed by the IDGs to move from a state of knowing to a state of acting.

The IDG framework consists today of 23 skills and qualities grouped into five categories:

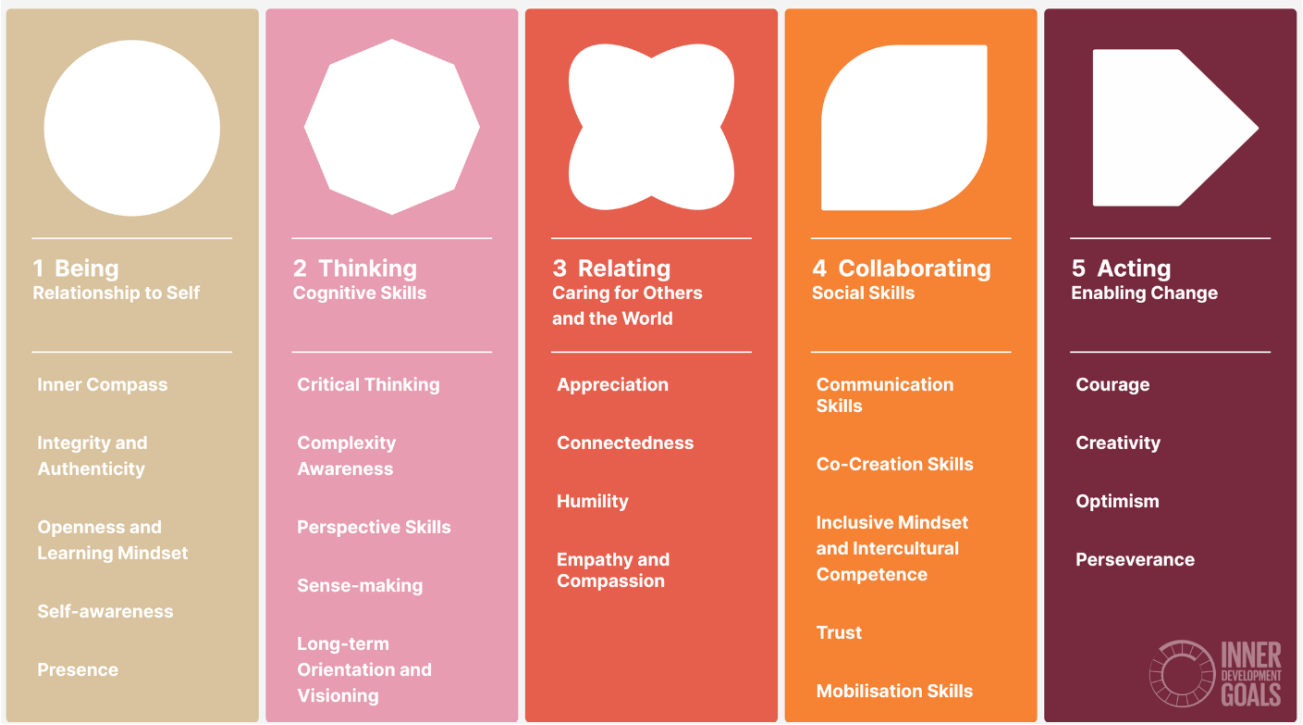


Figure 32: IDG framework: 5 categories, 23 skills. Source: IDG Framework — Inner Development Goals.

A more detailed look into each of the 23 skills and qualities can be found here:

https://assets-global.website-files.com/60bf97e4e4d3871f520114d7/62d81a295bf8e3576efeaae7_211201_IDG_Report_Framework.pdf

Coming back to the topic of entrepreneurship and specifically to sustainable and impact-based entrepreneurship, there are IDG-based models that put their focus on unlocking potentials of entrepreneurs through inner and outer development.

To effectively tackle the challenges encountered by entrepreneurs in the real world, it is essential to collaborate on enhancing both Inner Development (mindset) and Enterprise Development (practical business skills and operations). It has been discovered that guiding and supporting business owners, addressing not only their roles as entrepreneurs but also as individuals, leads to the most successful outcomes. (Ref. 24)

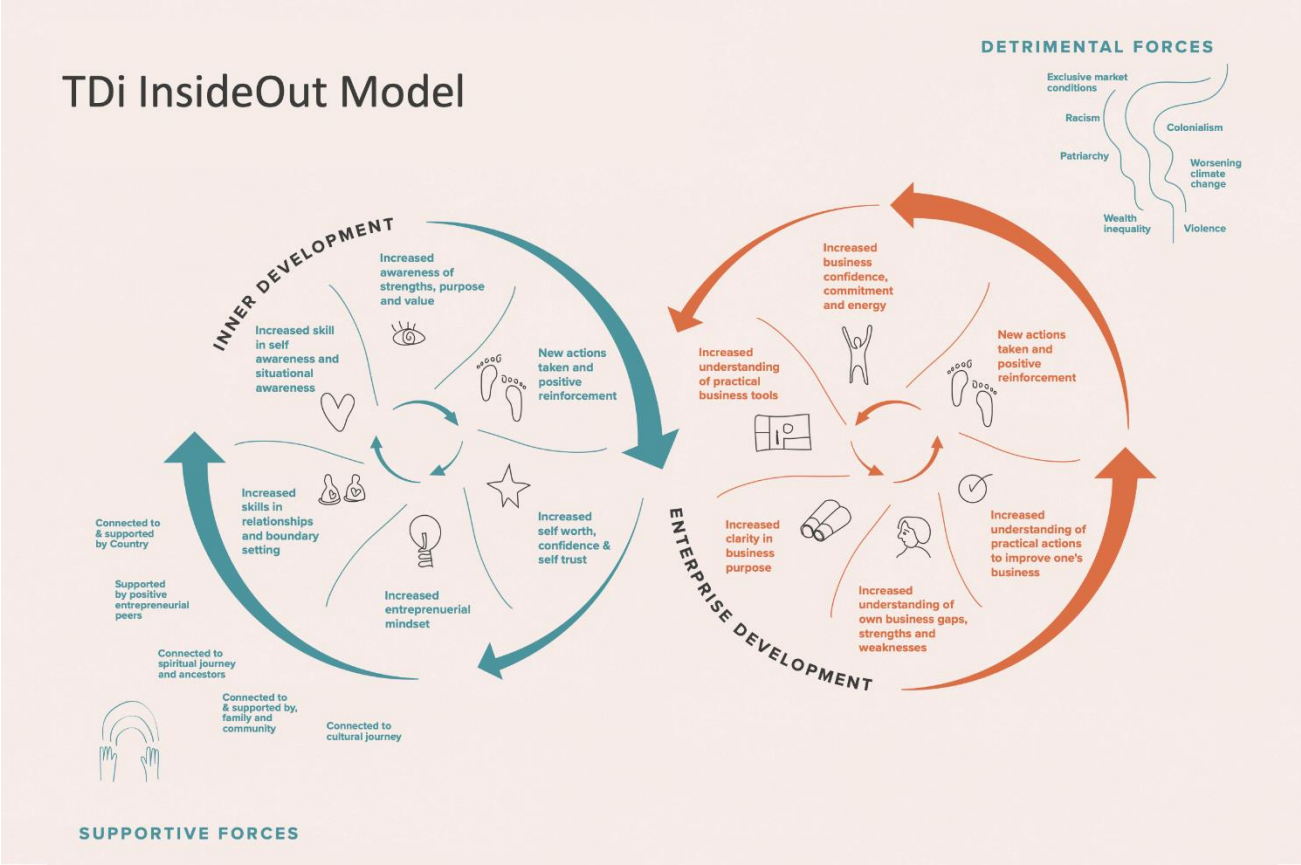


Figure 33: TDi InsideOut Model Source: Inner Development Coaching key to achieve business growth (tdi.org.au).

Conclusion

In conclusion, the emergence and promotion of social and SDG-centred entrepreneurship present a beacon of hope and tangible opportunities for our society. These innovative approaches to business not only redefine success but also advocate for a paradigm shift towards a more sustainable and inclusive global economy. By aligning with the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), entrepreneurs are empowered to address some of the most pressing challenges faced by humanity.

Social entrepreneurship, with its focus on creating positive social impact, serves as a catalyst for positive change, offering solutions that are not only economically viable but also ethically sound. Moreover, the emphasis on People, Planet, Prosperity, Peace, and Partnerships within the SDGs provides a comprehensive framework for businesses to contribute meaningfully to a more just, equitable, and environmentally sustainable world.

Self-assessment questions

1) What is the general idea behind social entrepreneurship and who has coined this term?
2) What kind of sustainable business dimensions exist?
3) Think about how you would describe to a friend in 3-4 sentences what the SDGs are.
4) Think about what kind of contribution (positive and negative) you are having on one specific SDG.
5) Select another SDG and look into its specific targets. What business practices can contribute positively to one of those targets?
6) Think of any good business practice in terms of sustainability you personally know or have heard of.
7) Explain in 2-3 sentences what the IDGs are.
8) Look into the 5 categories and the 23 skills of the IDGs and think about the potential positive outcomes it can bring in a business/ working context.

The opportunities for our society lie in the transformative power of these entrepreneurial endeavours. Socially conscious businesses can drive economic growth while simultaneously addressing social and environmental issues. The positive ripple effects extend beyond financial gain, influencing consumer behaviour and inspiring other businesses to adopt sustainable

practices. The interconnectedness of the SDGs emphasizes the importance of holistic solutions that consider the well-being of individuals, the planet, and the broader global community.

Furthermore, these entrepreneurial ventures foster a sense of shared responsibility, encouraging collaboration between governments, businesses, and civil society. The emphasis on partnerships underscores the need for collective action to achieve meaningful and lasting change. This collaborative spirit not only amplifies the impact of individual initiatives but also fosters a culture of innovation, where diverse perspectives converge to address complex challenges.

In the end, to truly effect positive change in the external world, it is essential to recognize that inner transformations within individuals play a pivotal role. Personal growth, empathy, and a commitment to ethical values serve as the foundation for fostering sustainable and impactful change in the broader social and environmental landscape.

5. SOCIALIZACIJA IN FINANCIRANJE AGROEKOLOŠKIH PROJEKTOV – prevedeno v slovenščino

UVOD

To bistveno področje se osredotoča na ključne korake socializacije projektov in poslovnih zamisli v podeželskem okolju, ustvarjanje strateških zavezništev in pridobivanje sredstev za agroekološke pobude. Udeleženci bodo razumeli pomen komunikacije, povezovanja v mreže in finančnega načrtovanja ter bodo opremljeni s potrebnim znanjem in spretnostmi za spodbujanje in ohranjanje svojih agroekoloških podjetij ali poslovnih podvigov.

UČNI CILJI

ZNANJE

Opisati koncept in pomen socializacije projektov in poslovnih idej v agroekologiji. Opredeliti in pojasniti ključne elemente socializacije projektov v agroekologiji. Razložiti koncept strateških zavezništev. Opredeliti potencialne zaveznike za svoje agroekološke pobude ali poslovne ideje. Razložiti različne možnosti financiranja, ki so na voljo za agroekološke projekte in podjetja. Prepoznati morebitne primerne vire financiranja za svoj projekt.

SPRETNOSTI

Analizirati in razumeti potrebe in značilnosti svojega ciljnega občinstva. Načrtovati in izvajati komunikacijsko strategijo za svoj agroekološki projekt ali poslovno idejo. Razviti prepričljiv predlog zavezništva. Obvladati postopek oblikovanja in upravljanja strateških zavezništev. Napisati uspešno vlogo za nepovratna sredstva. Načrtovati in voditi kampanjo množičnega financiranja. Razviti trajnostni finančni načrt za svoj projekt ali podjetje.

STALIŠČA

Razumeti in ceniti pomen socializacije projekta pri zagotavljanju uspeha agroekološkega projekta ali poslovne ideje. Biti pripravljen sprejeti odprt in vključujoč pristop pri sodelovanju s svojo skupnostjo in deležniki, ceniti njihove prispevke in spodbujati odnose sodelovanja. Ceniti vrednost strateških zavezništev pri pospeševanju agroekoloških projektov. Znati se zavzemati za sodelovalni in partnersko usmerjen pristop. Spoznati pomen raziskovanja različnih možnosti financiranja za uspeh svojega projekta. Sprejemati proaktiven in strateški pristop pri zagotavljanju sredstev za svoj agroekološki projekt.

Razumevanje socializacije projekta v agroekologiji

V tej enoti boste spoznali koncept socializacije projekta, njen pomen in kako jo učinkovito izvajati v okviru svojega agroekološkega projekta ali poslovne ideje. Socializacija projekta je proces sporočanja, razširjanja in zagovarjanja vašega projekta širši skupnosti in zainteresiranim stranem, ki omogoča skupno razumevanje ter spodbuja sodelovanje in podporo. To ne vključuje le obveščanja, temveč tudi vključevanje in pridobivanje podpore ter naložb za vaš podvig.

Opredelitev in pomen socializacije projekta

Socializacija projekta je strateški proces deljenja, spodbujanja in vključevanja projekta v širšo skupnost in med deležnike. V agroekologiji je še posebej pomebna, saj pomaga:

- Pridobiti podporo in potrditev za nov projekt ali poslovno zamisel.
- Olajšati sodelovanje in sklepanje partnerstev.
- Povečati ozaveščenost in razumevanje agroekoloških praks.

Opredelitev socializacije projekta

Socializacija projekta je proces, v katerem se vrednote, poslanstvo in cilji projekta posredujejo širši skupnosti deležnikov. Ta proces vključuje seznanjanje ciljne javnosti s projektom, njegovo razumevanje in sprejemanje. Gre za sistematično prizadevanje, da bi vsi dosegli enako raven razumevanja ciljev projekta ali podjetja, problemov, ki jih želi rešiti, in metod, ki jih uporablja.

V okviru agroekologije je socializacija projektov ključnega pomena za razširjanje inovativnih kmetijskih praks, spodbujanje trajnostnega upravljanja virov in zagovarjanje pobud, ki jih vodi skupnost. Z učinkovito socializacijo projekta ekipa ne le obvešča, temveč tudi spodbuja udeležbo, sodelovanje in lastništvo različnih deležnikov, s čimer ustvarja podporno okolje, ki omogoča uspeh projekta ali zamisli.

Importance of Project Socialization

Slika 34: SeedChange si prizadeva vzpostaviti prehransko neodvistnost s sodelovanjem in partnerji za povečanje biotske raznovrstnosti, spodbujanje ekoloških prehranskih sistemov in preprečevanje neenakosti. Vir: weseedchange.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/SeedChange-WSC_brochure-

1. Vključevanje in podpora skupnosti

Socializacija projekta na področju agroekologije je temeljnega pomena za spodbujanje sodelovanja skupnosti. S tem, ko skupnost seznanite s svojim projektom in njegovimi cilji, jo pozovete k razumevanju in sodelovanju. Takšno sodelovanje lahko privede do močnejše podpore, povečanega prostovoljstva ter boljšega sprejemanja tako projektov kot poslovnih podvigov, zlasti na podeželju, kjer je sodelovanje skupnosti ključnega pomena.

2. Sodelovanje in sklepanje partnerstev

Druga prednost socializacije projektov je, da odpira možnosti za sodelovanje in partnerstva. S seznanjanjem potencialnih partnerjev, kot so lokalna podjetja, izobraževalne ustanove, nevladne organizacije ali vladni organi, s svojim projektom povečujete možnosti za oblikovanje zavezništev, ki lahko ponudijo tehnično pomoč, financiranje ali druge vire za povečanje uspeha vaše zamisli.

3. Ozaveščanje in izobraževanje

Socializacija projekta je lahko tudi dragoceno orodje za ozaveščanje in izobraževanje javnosti o agroekologiji. Ko delite cilje in metode svojega projekta ali zamisli, razširjate tudi informacije o trajnostnih kmetijskih praksah, pomenu biotske raznovrstnosti in prednostih lokalnih prehranskih sistemov. Ta izobraževalni vidik lahko spremeni dojemanje, vpliva na vedenje in prispeva k širšemu sprejetju agroekologije.

4. Mobilizacija sredstev

Učinkovita socializacija projekta lahko pripomore k mobilizaciji sredstev. S predstavitvijo vpliva in potenciala vašega projekta ali poslovne zamisli različnim deležnikom, vključno z donatorji in vlagatelji, boste prepričali o finančni podpori. Ta sredstva so pogosto ključnega pomena za začetek novih pobud, razširitev storitev ali izboljšanje infrastrukture v okviru vašega projekta.

Če povzamemo, socializacija projekta je več kot le komunikacija; je strateški proces, ki agroekološkim projektom ali poslovnim idejam pomaga pridobiti podporo skupnosti, oblikovati strateška partnerstva, povečati ozaveščenost in zagotoviti financiranje. Je nepogrešljiv del izvedbe uspešnega projekta ali poslovnega načrta in napredka na področju agroekologije.

Elementi socializacije projekta v agroekologiji

Za učinkovito socializacijo projekta so ključni razumevanje občinstva, oblikovanje jasnega sporočila, izbira ustreznih komunikacijskih kanalov in vključevanje povratnih informacij. V nadaljevanju se bomo poglobili v omenjene elemente in opisali načine, kako jih lahko uporabite v kontekstu agroekologije.

Proces socializacije projekta ni naključen in zahteva skrbno načrtovanje in strateško izvedbo. V nadaljevanju so predstavljeni štirje glavni elementi socializacije projekta v agroekologiji::

1. Razumevanje občinstva

Prvi korak pri socializaciji vašega projekta ali poslovne ideje je razumevanje, kdo je vaše občinstvo. To so lahko lokalni kmetje, člani skupnosti, potencialni partnerji ali vlagatelji. Razumeti morate njihove interese, vrednote in pomisleke, da zagotovite učinkovitost svoje komunikacije. Lokalne kmete bo na primer morda zanimalo spoznavanje praktičnih koristi vaših agroekoloških praks, investitorje pa bosta verjetno zanimala donosnost in trajnost poslovne zamisli.

2. Oblikovanje jasnega sporočila

Ko enkrat razumete svoje občinstvo, morate oblikovati jasno in prepričljivo sporočilo o svojem projektu/ideji. To sporočilo mora izražati, za kaj gre pri vašem projektu/ideji, kakšni so njegovi cilji in kakšen je njegov potencialni učinek. Poudariti mora edinstveno ponudbo vrednosti vašega projekta - zakaj je pomemben in po čem se razlikuje od drugih pobud. Ne pozabite, da mora biti vaše sporočilo preprosto, jedrnato in zapomnljivo. Vzbuditi mora čustva in spodbuditi k ukrepanju.

3. Izbira ustreznih komunikacijskih kanalov

Izbira komunikacijskih kanalov močno vpliva na učinkovitost socializacije vašega projekta. Glede na občinstvo se lahko odločite za srečanja skupnosti, lokalne radijske oddaje, platforme družabnih medijev, glasila ali kombinacijo teh. Izberite kanale, ki jih vaše občinstvo pogosto uporablja in jim zaupa. Ne pozabite, da je cilj doseči čim več deležnikov in jih vključiti v smiseln dialog o vašem projektu.

4. Vključevanje povratnih informacij

Nazadnje, socializacija projekta mora biti dvosmerni proces. Spodbujajte svoje občinstvo k podajanju povratnih informacij in jih bodite pripravljeni poslušati in se nanje odzvati. Te povratne informacije lahko ponudijo dragocen vpogled v to, kako se vaš projekt dojema in kako ga je mogoče izboljšati. Poleg tega s povabilom k povratnim informacijam dajete občinstvu občutek, da je slišano in cenjeno, kar lahko še poveča njegovo zavzetost in podporo vašemu projektu ali poslovni zamisli.

Ti elementi niso samostoječi, temveč se medsebojno prepletajo in prekrivajo. Na primer, razumevanje vašega občinstva bo usmerjalo vaše sporočanje in izbiro komunikacijskih kanalov. Podobno lahko na podlagi prejetih povratnih informacij prilagodite svoje sporočanje ali strategije vključevanja občinstva. Zato je pomembno, da se teh elementov lotite kot dela celostnega procesa za uspešno socializacijo projekta v agroekologiji.

Študija primera: Uspešna socializacija projekta v agroekologiji

Slika 35: Kilimo Hai, Tanzanija. Vir: facebook.com/groups/1324754037697776/

Da bi bolje razumeli, kako socializacija projekta deluje v praksi, si bomo ogledali primer agroekološkega projekta, ki je uspešno socializiral svoje poslanstvo in cilje, pridobil podporo skupnosti in dosegel svoje cilje.

Agroekološki projekt "Kilimo Hai" v Tanzaniji. (Ref. 1)

Kilimo Hai, kar v prevodu pomeni "Kmetijstvo je življenje", je agroekološki projekt v regiji Kilimandžaro v Tanzaniji. Cilj projekta je opolnomočiti lokalne kmete z učenjem trajnostnih in produktivnih kmetijskih praks, ki povečujejo donos in hkrati ohranjajo ekološko ravnovesje.

1. Razumevanje občinstva

Glavna ciljna skupina projekta Kilimo Hai so bili mali kmetje, lokalne zadruge, vladni kmetijski svetovalci in potencialni donatorji. Ekipa je izvedla več srečanj in anket v skupnosti, da bi razumela potrebe, interese in skrbi, ki pestijo občinstvo. To razumevanje je usmerjalo njihove strategije komuniciranja in vključevanja ter zagotavljalo, da so se prijele pri različnih deležnikih.

2. Oblikovanje jasnega sporočila

Sporočilo projekta je bilo preprosto, a močno: "Trajnostno kmetovanje za uspešno in zdravo skupnost". Sporočilo je izražalo cilj projekta, da se agroekologija spodbuja kot uspešna in koristna kmetijska praksa. Sporočilo je bilo izraženo v lokalnih jezikih in ponazorjeno z zgodbami o uspehu prvih uporabnikov, zato je bilo razumljivo in navdihujoče.

3. Izbira ustreznih komunikacijskih kanalov

Pri projektu je bilo uporabljenih več komunikacijskih kanalov za čim večji doseg in učinek. Za neposredno sodelovanje s kmeti in zadrugami so bila organizirana srečanja in delavnice skupnosti. Lokalni radijski programi in platforme družbenih medijev so bili uporabljeni za doseganje širšega občinstva, vključno z mestnimi potrošniki in potencialnimi donatorji. Projekt je sodeloval tudi z vladnimi kmetijskimi svetovalci, pri čemer je izkoristil njihova omrežja in verodostojnost za nadaljnje širjenje svojega sporočila.

4. Incorporating Feedback

Ekipa projekta Kilimo Hai je aktivno iskala povratne informacije pri občinstvu. Redno so obiskovali kmete, ki so prevzeli agroekološke prakse, in prisluhnili njihovim izkušnjam in izzivom. Spremljali so tudi razprave na družbenih medijih ter se odzivali na vprašanja in pomisleke javnosti. Na podlagi teh povratnih informacij so prilagodili svoje programe usposabljanja in komunikacijske strategije, kar je privedlo do boljših rezultatov.

Uspeh projekta "Kilimo Hai" lahko pripišemo učinkoviti socializaciji projekta. Njihovo razumevanje občinstva, jasna sporočila, strateška uporaba komunikacijskih kanalov in mehanizem odzivnih povratnih informacij so privedli do večjega sprejetja agroekoloških praks, močnejše podpore skupnosti in uspešne mobilizacije sredstev. Njihov pristop ponazarja moč in potencial dobro izvedene socializacije projekta v agroekološkem sektorju.

Kmetija Dagenham (Združeno kraljestvo): Krepitev urbane agroekologije z vključevanjem skupnosti (Ref. 2)

Kmetija Dagenham, ki jo upravlja socialno podjetje Growing Communities (Rastoče skupnosti), je primer uspešnega modela urbane agroekologije, prepletene s sodelovanjem skupnosti. Ta študija primera poudarja njihov strateški pristop k socializaciji njihovega poslanstva, vključevanju lokalne skupnosti in spodbujanju trajnostnih kmetijskih praks v urbanem okolju.

1. Razumevanje občinstva

Pobude podjetja Dagenham Farm so prilagojene mestnim prebivalcem Londona, zlasti tistim iz mestne četrti in bližnjih območij. Kmetija se zaveda vse večjega zanimanja mestne skupnosti za trajnostno življenje in lokalne prehranske sisteme, zato se osredotoča na zagotavljanje dostopa do svežih ekoloških pridelkov in hkrati na izobraževanje o prednostih agroekologije. Pobuda je zasnovana z zavedanjem potrebe po ustvarjanju delovnih priložnosti, ki bodo prilagojene družinskim obveznostim, s čimer pritegne posameznike, ki iščejo ravnovesje med poklicnim in zasebnim življenjem.

2. Oblikovanje jasnega sporočila

Sporočilo kmetije se osredotoča na pomembne prednosti, ki jih lokalna oskrba s hrano prinaša mestnemu okolju in dobrobiti skupnosti. Kmetija Dagenham s poudarkom na pridelavi več kot štirih ton ekološke zelenjave na leto sporoča, da je urbano kmetovanje smiselno za zagotavljanje prehranske varnosti, okoljske trajnosti in zdravja skupnosti. Njihovo sporočilo je jasno: mestne kmetije so lahko produktivni, izobraževalni in koristni prostori v skupnosti.

3. Izbira ustreznih komunikacijskih kanalov

Slika 36: Kmetija Dagenham, ZK. Vir: https://growingcommunities.org/grown-dagenham

Neposredno vključevanje v tedenska prostovoljna srečanja omogoča kmetiji, da učinkovito širi svoje sporočilo in poslanstvo ter vabi skupnost k sodelovanju in učenju o trajnostnih kmetijskih praksah. Poleg tega prodaja pridelkov prek kratkih dobavnih verig, vključno z lokalnimi restavracijami, maloprodajnimi mesti in tedensko stojnico, služi kot komunikacijski kanal in sredstvo za prikaz izvedljivosti ponovne lokalizacije oskrbe s hrano v mestnem okolju.

4. Vključevanje povratnih informacij

Kmetija Dagenham s tesnim sodelovanjem s skupnostjo prek prostovoljnih programov in neposredne prodaje vključuje povratne informacije, da bi tako prilagodila in izboljšala svoje prakse in ponudbo. Ta dinamična interakcija zagotavlja, da se kmetija še naprej odziva na potrebe in interese lokalne skupnosti, ter spodbuja okolje sodelovanja, v katerem predlogi skupnosti vodijo do oprijemljivih izboljšav v samem delovanju kmetije in strategijah vključevanja skupnosti.

Pristop kmetije Dagenham k vključevanju agroekologije v mestni kontekst z vključevanjem skupnosti, jasnimi sporočili, strateškimi komunikacijskimi kanali in odzivnim mehanizmom povratnih informacij kaže, da lahko mestne kmetije igrajo ključno vlogo pri trajnostnem razvoju mest. Njihov uspeh poudarja pomen razumevanja občinstva, oblikovanja odmevnega sporočila, uporabe neposrednega vključevanja v komunikacijo in vrednotenja povratnih informacij skupnosti v širšem kontekstu agroekološke socializacije in vključevanja skupnosti.

Samoocena

Da bi bolje razumeli, kako socializacija projekta deluje v praksi, si bomo ogledali dejanski primer agroekološkega projekta, ki je uspešno socializiral svoje poslanstvo in cilje, pridobil podporo skupnosti in dosegel svoje cilje.

Opredelite svoje občinstvo

V tej dejavnosti boste opredelili ključne deležnike projekta. Njihovo poznavanje je ključno za prilagoditev sporočila projekta in izbiro ustreznih komunikacijskih kanalov. Tukaj je vodnik po korakih:

1. korak: Seznam potencialnih deležnikov

Opredelite vse, ki bi jih vaš agroekološki projekt lahko zanimal, bi na njih vplival, ali pa bi oni vplivali nanj. To so lahko lokalni kmetje, člani skupnosti, potencialni partnerji, vlagatelji, lokalni uradniki ali nacionalni okoljski organi.

2. korak: Določite prednostne interesne skupine

Vse zainteresirane strani ne bodo imele enakega interesa ali vpliva na vaš projekt. Razvrstite jih glede na njihov pomen za vaš projekt in njihovo moč, da vplivajo na njegov uspeh.

3. korak: Razumite svoje deležnike

Poskušajte razumeti vsakega ključnega deležnika - njegove interese, skrbi, potrebe in komunikacijske preference. To vam bo pomagalo prilagoditi sporočilo projekta in izbrati ustrezne komunikacijske kanale.

S pomočjo zgornjih korakov opredelite in razumite ključne deležnike svojega projekta. Svoje ugotovitve dokumentirajte v matriki za analizo deležnikov.

Oblikujte sporočilo projekta

Dobro oblikovano sporočilo projekta lahko spodbudi k ukrepanju in ustvari podporo za vaš agroekološki projekt. Tukaj je opisano, kako lahko pripravite sporočilo projekta:

1. korak: Opredelite svoj projekt

Jasno opredelite, kaj je namen vašega projekta. Kakšni so njegovi cilji? Kakšen učinek želi doseči?

2. korak: Poudarite prednosti

Kakšne so koristi vašega projekta za deležnike in širšo skupnost? Te koristi prilagodite interesom in pomislekom vsake skupine deležnikov.

3. korak: Naj bo nepozaben

Vaše sporočilo mora biti preprosto, jedrnato in lahko zapomnljivo. Uporabite čustven jezik, močne vizualne elemente in prepričljive zgodbe, da bo sporočilo privlačno.

Na podlagi zgornjih korakov oblikujte sporočilo projekta za vsako od ključnih skupin deležnikov.

Izberite svoje komunikacijske kanale

Izbira pravih komunikacijskih kanalov je ključnega pomena za učinkovito doseganje občinstva. Tukaj je opisano, kako se tega lotiti:

1. korak: Raziščite razpoložljive kanale

Naštejte vse možne komunikacijske kanale, tako izven spleta kot tudi na spletu. Ti lahko vključujejo srečanja skupnosti, lokalne radijske oddaje, platforme družbenih medijev, glasila, vladne forume ali delavnice.

2. korak: Uskladite kanale z deležniki

Ugotovite, kateri kanali bodo najverjetneje dosegli vsako skupino deležnikov glede na njihove komunikacijske preference.

3. korak: Načrtujte komuniciranje

Oblikujte komunikacijski načrt, v katerem bo opisano, katero sporočilo bo poslano, po katerem kanalu in kdaj. Poskrbite, da bo dovolj prostora za povratne informacije in dvosmerno komunikacijo.

Z uporabo zgornjih korakov določite najučinkovitejše komunikacijske kanale za vsako skupino deležnikov in pripravite komunikacijski načrt.

Pregled in refleksija

Refleksija uspešne socializacije projekta

Refleksija je bistveni del učenja, saj vam omogoča, da naučeno uporabite v svojem kontekstu. Pri tej dejavnosti preučite študijo primera, ki je bila obravnavana na začetku enote, in odgovorite na naslednja vprašanja:

- Katere strategije so bile uporabljene za socializacijo projekta v študiji primera?
- Kako so te strategije prispevale k uspehu projekta?
- Katere elemente teh strategij bi lahko prilagodili in uporabili pri svojem agroekološkem projektu?

Razmislite o svojih odgovorih in zapišite svoje misli. Razmislek uporabite za oblikovanje lastnega načrta socializacije projekta.

Kviz: Razumevanje socializacije projekta

Namen tega kviza je okrepiti vaše razumevanje koncepta socializacije projekta, njegovega pomena in ključnih elementov, ki so vključeni v socializacijo agroekološkega projekta.

1. Kaj je socializacija projekta in zakaj je pomembna v kontekstu agroekologije?

A) Gre za proces razlage vaše projekta samo ekipi, ki je vključena v projekt. Pomemben je zato, ker zagotavlja, da vsi člani ekipe razumejo svojo vlogo.

B) Je postopek pridobivanja odobritve za projekt od višjih organov. Pomembno je zato, ker z njim pridobite potrebna dovoljenja in finančna sredstva.

C) Je proces deljenja in promocije vašega projekta širšemu občinstva, vključno z deležniki in skupnostjo. Pomemben je zato, ker pomaga pri pridobivanju podpore, povratnih informacij in spodbujanju sodelovanja.

2. Kateri so nekateri ključni elementi, vključeni v socializacijo projekta za agroekološke pobude?

A) Opredelitev projekta, določitev ciljnega občinstva, oblikovanje sporočila projekta in izbira ustreznih komunikacijskih kanalov.

B) Skrivanje projekta, ne vključevanje skupnosti in osredotočanje na dobiček.

C) Opredelitev projekta, izključitev lokalne skupnosti, osredotočanje na tehnične vidike in izogibanje komunikaciji.

3. Katere so nekatere učinkovite metode za prepoznavanje in vključevanje deležnikov vašega projekta?

A) Ohranjanje zaupnosti projekta in izogibanje vključevanju deležnikov.

B) Opredelitev potencialnih deležnikov, razumevanje njihovih interesov in skrbi ter njihovo aktivno vključevanje prek srečanj, delavnic ali spletnih platform.

C) vsiljevanje projekta deležnikom, ne da bi jih vprašali za mnenje ali povratne informacije.

4. Katere premisleke je treba upoštevati pri oblikovanju sporočila o projektu?

A) Sporočilo mora biti zapleteno in tehnično, da se pokaže zahtevnost projekta.

B) Sporočilo mora biti nedoločno, da lahko različnim ljudem pomeni različne stvari.

C) Sporočilo mora biti jasno, jedrnato ter prilagojeno potrebam in interesom ciljne skupine. Učinkovito mora sporočati namen, cilje in koristi projekta.

Povzetek:

Do konca te enote morate biti sposobni opredeliti socializacijo projekta, razumeti njen pomen v agroekologiji in oblikovati ustrezno strategijo za obveščanje ciljne javnosti o svojem projektu.

Ustvarjanje strateških zavezništev za agroekološke pobude

Uspeh vsakega agroekološkega projekta je v veliki meri odvisen od oblikovanih strateških zavezništev. V tej enoti bomo razpravljali o konceptu strateških zavezništev, njihovem pomenu, kako prepoznati potencialne zaveznike ter o korakih oblikovanja in upravljanja teh zavezništev. Obravnavali bomo tudi študijo primera uspešnega strateškega zavezništva na področju agroekologije. Ob koncu te enote boste znali ceniti vrednost strateških zavezništev in pridobili veščine za učinkovito vzpostavljanje in upravljanje teh partnerstev.

Tu bomo raziskali, kaj so strateška zavezništva, zakaj so pomembna, zlasti v kontekstu agroekologije, in kako lahko prispevajo k uspehu vaših pobud.

Opredelitev strateških zavezništev

Strateško zavezništvo je sporazum med dvema ali več strankami, ki si prizadevajo za doseganje dogovorjenih ciljev, pri tem pa ostajajo neodvisne organizacije. V kontekstu agroekologije lahko ta zavezništva vključujejo različne partnerje, med drugim kmetijske zadruge, raziskovalne ustanove, vladne organizacije, nevladne organizacije in podjetja.

Ta zavezništva so še posebej pomembna v agroekologiji, kjer lahko različne organizacije prinesejo edinstvene prednosti, kot so tehnično znanje, dostop do financiranja, regulativna moč ali neposreden dostop do kmetov in podeželskih skupnosti. S sodelovanjem lahko te organizacije dosežejo več, kot bi lahko dosegle same.

Pomembnost strateških zavezništev

Delitev virov:

Strateška zavezništva omogočajo delitev virov. To lahko pomeni souporabo fizičnih virov, kot so orodja ali zemljišča, ali nematerialnih virov, kot so znanje, strokovno znanje ali poznanstva.

Zmanjšanje tveganja in stroškov:

Sodelovanje v zavezništvu lahko pomaga porazdeliti tveganje in zmanjšati stroške. To je še posebej dragoceno za projekte na področju agroekologije, kjer so lahko začetni stroški visoki, rezultati pa se lahko pokažejo šele čez nekaj časa.

Večji doseg in vpliv:

S strateškimi zavezništvi lahko organizacije dosežejo več ljudi in imajo večji vpliv. To je še posebej pomembno za agroekološke projekte, katerih cilj je pogosto izboljšati trajnost in odpornost na ravni skupnosti ali regije.

Inovacije in učenje:

Strateška zavezništva spodbujajo okolje, v katerem se lahko partnerji učijo drug od drugega. To lahko vodi k inovacijam in razvoju novih najboljših praks.

Zagovorništvo in vpliv:

S sodelovanjem imajo lahko organizacije močnejši glas pri zagovarjanju sprememb politike ali drugih sistemskih sprememb.

Strateška zavezništva tako niso le koristna, temveč tudi ključna v kontekstu agroekologije. Omogočajo lahko lažjo izmenjavo znanja in virov, spodbujajo inovacije in povečujejo vpliv posameznih projektov. V naslednjih razdelkih bodo podane bolj praktične smernice o tem, kako učinkovito oblikovati in upravljati ta zavezništva.

Identifikacija potencialnih zaveznikov v agroekološkem sektorju

V tem delu se bomo poglobili v postopek iskanja potencialnih partnerjev, ki imajo enake cilje, lahko dodajo vrednost vašemu projektu in prispevajo k njegovemu uspehu.

Prepoznavanje potencialnih zaveznikov je ključni prvi korak pri oblikovanju strateških zavezništev za vaš agroekološki projekt. Ta postopek mora biti nameren in premišljen, saj lahko izbrani partnerji pomembno vplivajo na uspeh vašega projekta.

Razumevanje agroekološkega okolja

Razumevanje pokrajine vašega specifičnega agroekološkega sektorja je prvi korak pri iskanju potencialnih zaveznikov. To vključuje raziskavo in kartiranje ključnih akterjev na tem področju, njihovih vlog, virov, prednosti in slabosti. Ti akterji lahko vključujejo kmetijske zadruge, raziskovalne ustanove, nevladne organizacije, podjetja in vladne organizacije.

Usklajevanje interesov in vrednot

Ko dobro spoznate pokrajino, je naslednji korak identifikacija organizacij, katerih interesi in vrednote se ujemajo z vašim projektom. Te organizacije bodo najverjetneje zainteresirane za oblikovanje strateškega zavezništva, saj imajo enake cilje kot vaš projekt. Usklajenost vrednot je prav tako ključna za zagotovitev zdravega in produktivnega zavezništva.

Združljivost virov

Razmislite o virih, ki bi jih vsak potencialni zaveznik lahko prispeval k projektu. To lahko vključuje finančna sredstva, strokovno znanje, povezave, zemljišča ali druge fizične vire. Vendar pa združljivost virov ne pomeni le, katere vire lahko potencialni zaveznik ponudi, temveč tudi, katere vire mu lahko ponudi vaš projekt. Uravnotežena izmenjava virov lahko privede do bolj trajnostnega in pravičnega zavezništva.

Dosedanje izkušnje in ugled

Ocenite dosedanje dosežke in ugled morebitnih zaveznikov. Oglejte si njihove pretekle projekte, sodelovanja in dosežke. Tako lahko dobite občutek o njihovi zavezanosti, zanesljivosti in učinkovitosti, kar je pomembno za strateško zavezništvo.

Razpoložljivost in pripravljenost

Na koncu upoštevajte razpoložljivost in pripravljenost potencialnih zaveznikov. Idealni zaveznik morda ne bo ustrezen, če je preveč zaposlen z drugimi projekti ali če ga ne zanima sklepanje novih zavezništev. S potencialnimi zavezniki komunicirajte zgodaj in odkrito, da preverite njihovo zanimanje in razpoložljivost.

Ne pozabite, da cilj ni nujno oblikovanje zavezništev s čim več organizacijami, temveč vzpostavitev nekaj močnih in vzajemno koristnih partnerstev, ki lahko učinkovito podpirajo vaš projekt in njegove cilje.

Oblikovanje in upravljanje strateških zavezništev

V tem poglavju so opisani koraki pri oblikovanju strateških zavezništev, od vzpostavljanja stikov s potencialnimi partnerji do upravljanja odnosov in spopadanja z izzivi, ki se lahko pojavijo v tem procesu.

Ustvarjanje strateških zavezništev ni enkraten dogodek, temveč stalen proces. Da bi bilo uspešno, zahteva skrbno načrtovanje, jasno komunikacijo in premišljeno upravljanje. Tukaj je nekaj ključnih korakov in premislekov za oblikovanje in upravljanje strateških zavezništev v agroekološkem sektorju.

Vzpostavitev stika in krepitev zaupanja

Prvi korak k oblikovanju strateškega zavezništva je vzpostavitev stika s potencialnimi zavezniki. To lahko storite z uradnimi pismi, elektronskimi sporočili, telefonskimi klici ali osebnimi srečanji. Začetni pogovori morajo biti osredotočeni na skupne interese in morebitne koristi zavezništva. Med temi začetnimi stiki je bistvenega pomena vzpostavljanje zaupanja. Iskrenost, transparentnost in strokovnost so ključnega pomena za vzpostavitev trdnih temeljev zavezništva.

Opredelitev vlog in pričakovanj

Ko potencialni zaveznik pokaže zanimanje za oblikovanje zavezništva, je treba opredeliti vloge in pričakovanja. To vključuje določitev, kdo bo odgovoren za kaj in kako bo potekalo sprejemanje odločitev. Pomembno je zagotoviti, da vse vpletene strani jasno razumejo svoje odgovornosti in se strinjajo s pogoji zavezništva.

Vzpostavitev uradnega sporazuma

Za zagotovitev zavezništva je treba skleniti uradni sporazum. Ta sporazum ima lahko različne oblike, odvisno od narave zavezništva, na splošno pa vključuje podrobnosti o vlogah, odgovornostih in obveznostih vsake strani. V sporazumu mora biti opisano tudi, kako se bodo reševali konflikti in pod kakšnimi pogoji se lahko zavezništvo prekine.

Vzdrževanje komunikacije in reševanje konfliktov

Učinkovita komunikacija je ključna za upravljanje strateških zavezništev. Organizirati je treba redne sestanke, na katerih se razpravlja o napredku, obravnavajo težave in sprejemajo skupne odločitve. Konflikti so v zavezništvih pogosti, zato jih je treba reševati takoj in spoštljivo. Na začetku zavezništva je treba vzpostaviti postopek reševanja sporov.

Ocenjevanje in krepitev zavezništva

Stalno ocenjevanje zavezništva je pomembno za njegovo trajnost in uspešnost. To je mogoče opraviti z rednim preverjanjem in uradnim ocenjevanjem. Če se ugotovijo slabosti ali težave, je treba sprejeti ukrepe za okrepitev zavezništva. To lahko vključuje ponovni pregled sporazuma, prilagoditev vlog ali naložbe v dejavnosti za krepitev ekipe.

Ne pozabite, da strateška zavezništva zahtevajo čas, potrpežljivost in predanost vseh vpletenih strani. Vendar pa lahko ob učinkovitem oblikovanju in upravljanju agroekološkemu projektu prinesejo velike koristi.

Študija primera: Uspešna strateška zavezništva v agroekologiji

Študija primera iz resničnega življenja bo pokazala, kako so uspešna strateška zavezništva olajšala doseganje ciljev pri agroekološkem projektu.

Gibanje kmetijstva, ki ga podpira skupnost (CSA), v Franciji. (Ref. 3)

Kmetijstvo v podporo skupnosti (CSA) je inovativen, po vsem svetu uveljavljen model pridelave in distribucije hrane, ki ima pomembno vlogo pri spodbujanju agroekologije. Primer uspešnega strateškega zavezništva v agroekološkem sektorju prihaja iz Francije z oblikovanjem in širjenjem gibanja CSA, znanega tudi kot mreža AMAP (Associations pour le Maintien d'une Agriculture Paysanne – Združenja za ohranjanje kmetovanja). (Ref. 4)

Figure 37: AMAP, Plage Arrière: jardinplato.wordpress.com/lamap/

Oblikovanje zavezništva

Model AMAP je bil uveden v Franciji v začetku leta 2000 po zgledu podobnih pobud na Japonskem in v ZDA. Začela se je z zavezništvom med kmeti in potrošniki, ki jih je združevala skupna vizija podpore lokalnemu, trajnostnemu kmetijstvu. Cilj zavezništva je bil ustvariti vzajemno koristno partnerstvo, v okviru katerega bi potrošniki neposredno financirali kmete v zameno za delež proizvodnje na kmetiji.

Vloga strateških zavezništev

Uspešno razširitev modela AMAP so omogočila strateška zavezništva na več ravneh:

1. Kmetje in potrošniki: Na najnižji ravni so bila zavezništva med kmeti in lokalnimi potrošniki osnova modela AMAP. Potrošniki so se zavezali, da bodo vnaprej kupili del pridelka, s čimer so kmetom zagotovili varen dohodek in neposreden trg.

2. Lokalne skupine AMAP: Ta zavezništva na lokalni ravni so bila pogosto formalizirana v lokalne skupine AMAP, ki so olajšale razdeljevanje pridelkov in usklajevale dejavnosti med kmeti in potrošniki.

3. Nacionalna mreža AMAP: Lokalne skupine AMAP so se nato povezale v nacionalno mrežo "Le Réseau AMAP". To nacionalno združenje je imelo ključno vlogo pri spodbujanju modela AMAP, usklajevanju dejavnosti med lokalnimi skupinami in zagovarjanju podpornih politik.

4. Medsektorska zavezništva: Mreža AMAP je oblikovala tudi strateška zavezništva z drugimi zainteresiranimi stranmi, kot so okoljske nevladne organizacije, raziskovalne ustanove in oblikovalci politik. Ta medsektorska zavezništva so pripomogla k potrditvi modela AMAP, spodbujanju agroekoloških praks in zagotavljanju podpornih politik.

Ključne izkušnje

Primer AMAP v Franciji ponazarja, kako lahko strateška zavezništva povečajo učinek agroekoloških pobud. Poudarja pomen oblikovanja zavezništev na več ravneh, od partnerstev od spodaj navzgor do nacionalnih mrež in med sektorji. Poudarja tudi pomen zaupanja, vzajemnih koristi in skupne vizije pri oblikovanju in upravljanju uspešnih zavezništev.

Aktivnosti

Prepoznavanje potencialnih zaveznikov

V tej dejavnosti se boste naučili prepoznati potencialne zaveznike za vaš agroekološki projekt. Upoštevati boste morali različne deležnike, kot so lokalna podjetja, neprofitne organizacije, vladni organi, izobraževalne ustanove, skupnosti in posamezniki, ki delijo vizijo vašega projekta. Dejavnost vključuje:

- *Iskanje potencialnih zaveznikov:* Napišite imena posameznikov, organizacij in institucij, za katere menite, da bi se lahko povezali z vašim projektom.
- *Opredelitev njihovih prednosti in interesov:* Za vsakega potencialnega zaveznika navedite njegove prednosti in kako bi lahko te prednosti prispevale k vašemu projektu. Razmislite tudi o tem, kateri njihovi interesi se ujemajo s cilji vašega projekta.
- *Prednostno razvrščanje potencialnih zaveznikov:* Na podlagi njihovih prednosti in interesov razvrstite seznam potencialnih zaveznikov glede na to, kdo bi lahko največ prispeval k vašemu projektu.

Oblikovanje predloga za zavezništvo

V tej dejavnosti se boste naučili, kako pripraviti prepričljiv predlog zavezništva. To vključuje:

- *Orisovanje prednosti:* Jasno izrazite, kaj bo potencialni zaveznik pridobil s partnerstvom. To je lahko karkoli, od večje prepoznavnosti, dostopa do novih omrežij ali prispevka k cilju, ki je v skladu z njihovimi vrednotami.
- *Podrobno opisovanje predlaganega sodelovanja:* Navedite, v kakšni obliki bi bilo zavezništvo sklenjeno. To lahko vključuje skupne dogodke, skupne vire, navzkrižno promocijo ali katere koli druge skupne dejavnosti.
- *Priprava predloga:* Napišite uradni predlog s podrobnostmi o koristih in obliki predlaganega zavezništva. Predlog naj bo jedrnat, strokoven in prepričljiv.

Igra vlog: Pogajanja o zavezništvu

Ta dejavnost vključuje igro vlog, v kateri simulirate pogajalski scenarij s potencialnim zaveznikom.

- *Priprava na igro vlog:* Najprej izberite partnerja in se odločite, kdo bo igral vlogo vodje projekta in kdo vlogo potencialnega zaveznika. Vodja projekta naj se pripravi tako, da pregleda predlog zavezništva, ki ga je pripravil v prejšnji dejavnosti.
- *Izvedba igre vlog:* Vodja projekta mora svoj predlog predstaviti potencialnemu zavezniku, ki bo postavljal vprašanja, izražal pomisleke in se pogajal glede pogojev.
- *Razmislek o igri vlog:* Po igri vlog naj oba udeleženca razpravljata o tem, kaj je šlo dobro, kaj bi bilo mogoče izboljšati in kaj sta se naučila o pogajanjih iz te vaje.

Cilj teh dejavnosti je razviti sposobnosti prepoznavanja potencialnih zaveznikov, se pogovoriti o prednostih partnerstva in pogajanja o pogojih sodelovanja. Z vadbo teh veščin boste bolje pripravljeni na oblikovanje in upravljanje strateških zavezništev za vaš agroekološki projekt.

Pregled in refleksija

Razmislek o uspešnem strateškem zavezništvu

V tej dejavnosti refleksije boste premislili o študiji primera iz gibanja za kmetijstvo, ki ga podpira skupnost (CSA) v Franciji. Preučili boste strategije, uporabljene za oblikovanje in upravljanje strateškega zavezništva z deležniki.

Razmislite o naslednjih vprašanjih:

- Katere strategije je gibanje za kmetijstvo, ki ga podpira skupnost (CSA) uporabilo za prepoznavanje potencialnih zaveznikov?
- Kako so zaveznikom prikazali prednosti zavezništva?
- Katere ukrepe so uvedli za upravljanje zavezništva in zagotavljanje njegovega uspeha?

Ta razmišljanja uporabite za premislek o tem, kako bi lahko podobne strategije uporabili pri svojem agroekološkem projektu. Svoje misli in načrte zapišite za uporabo v prihodnosti.

Kviz: Ustvarjanje strateških zavezništev za agroekološke pobude

S tem kvizom boste preverili vaše razumevanje strateških zavezništev, njihov pomen ter kako jih oblikovati in upravljati. Preverili boste tudi svoje znanje o morebitnih izzivih, ki se lahko pojavijo med tem procesom.

Kaj je strateško zavezništvo v kontekstu agroekologije?

A) Uradni sporazum med dvema ali več strankami, ki si prizadevajo za vrsto dogovorjenih ciljev, pri tem pa ostajajo neodvisne organizacije

B) Proces združevanja vseh agroekoloških projektov v regiji pod eno krovno organizacijo

C) Vladna pobuda, ki med kmeti uveljavlja agroekološke prakse

Zakaj so strateška zavezništva pomembna za agroekološke projekte?

A) Omogočajo razdelitev odgovornosti in virov, delitev tveganj in izkoriščanje medsebojnega dopolnjevanja

B) So pogoj za vsak agroekološki projekt, ki želi prejeti državno financiranje

C) Služijo kot mehanizem za zmanjšanje konkurence med različnimi agroekološkimi projekti

Kaj je ključni dejavnik pri iskanju potencialnih zaveznikov za agroekološki projekt?

A) Potencialni zaveznik mora imeti konkurenčen agroekološki projekt

B) Potencialni zaveznik se mora nahajati v isti geografski regiji kot projekt

C) Vrednote, poslanstvo in interesi potencialnega zaveznika se morajo ujemati z vrednotami, poslanstvom in interesi projekta

Kaj mora vsebovati prepričljiv predlog zavezništva?

A) Podroben načrt odgovornosti, ki jih nosi druga stran v zavezništvu

B) Izjava za potencialnega zaveznika, ki opisuje koristi zavezništva in podrobno opredeljuje predlagano obliko sodelovanja

C) Izjava o superiornosti lastnega projekta nad potencialno konkurenco

Zaključek:

V tej enoti ste spoznali pomen strateških zavezništev v agroekološkem sektorju. Razpravljali smo se o tem, kako prepoznati potencialne zaveznike, ki imajo enake cilje kot vaš projekt in lahko prispevajo k njegovemu uspehu. Obravnavali smo tudi, kako pripraviti predlog zavezništva in učinkovito upravljati odnose z zavezniki. S študijo primera je bila predstavljena praktična uporaba teh konceptov v resničnem scenariju. Ne pozabite, da je moč vašega projekta v vaši sposobnosti oblikovanja strateških zavezništev in njihovega učinkovitega upravljanja. Še naprej vadite veščine, ki ste se jih naučili v tej enoti. Tako boste na dobri poti do uspešne socializacije svojega agroekološkega projekta.

Exploring funding opportunities for agroecological projects

Funding is often a crucial factor in the successful implementation and growth of agroecological projects. A variety of funding sources, ranging from governmental grants to private sector investments, can be tapped into to support such initiatives. This unit will help learners understand the different types of funding opportunities available and how to access them effectively. They will learn about potential funding sources, grant writing, crowdfunding, and financial planning. Learners will be guided through the process of identifying suitable funding sources and crafting compelling funding applications.

Understanding Different Types of Funding Opportunities

In this section, we delve into the varied sources of funding that agroecological projects can tap into. For each type, we explore the benefits, drawbacks, and what one can typically expect in the application process.

Government Grants:
Government grants at the local, national, or international level can be significant sources of funding for agroecological projects. Such grants often have specific goals, such as promoting sustainable farming, conserving the environment, or supporting rural economies. While they can provide substantial financial support, the application process can be rigorous, and successful grant recipients often need to meet specific reporting and compliance requirements.

Private Sector Investment:
Private investors, venture capitalists, and businesses can also fund agroecological projects, particularly those with commercial potential. Private funding can provide significant resources, although investors will typically expect a return on their investment. The challenge lies in persuading these entities of the project's potential profitability and sustainability.

Philanthropic Foundations:

Many philanthropic foundations have a keen interest in supporting sustainability, conservation, or community development initiatives. While they often provide funds in the form of grants, it's important to note that these foundations have their own specific objectives and focus areas. You need to align your project goals with these to be successful.

Crowdfunding:
Crowdfunding offers a way to raise funds directly from the public, typically through online platforms. It's an excellent method for projects with high social appeal and can help raise both money and awareness for your cause. However, successful crowdfunding requires a compelling story, good marketing, and an engaged network of supporters.

Microfinancing:
Also known as microcredit, provides small loans to farmers, entrepreneurs, and small businesses who do not have access to traditional banking services. Microfinancing is aimed at empowering the underserved to start or expand their agroecological projects. The benefits of microfinancing include accessibility to those with little or no collateral, the promotion of self-sufficiency, and economic empowerment. However, the interest rates can sometimes be higher than traditional loans, and the amounts available may be limited, which could restrict the scale of projects. The application process usually involves presenting a business plan and undergoing a review by the lending institution, which may be a specialized microfinance institution (MFI), a nonprofit organization, or a community group. Successful applicants will receive funding and possibly additional support services, such as financial literacy training or business mentoring.

In-kind Support:
Not all project support needs to be financial. Businesses, community groups, or individuals may offer support in the form of materials, services, or volunteer labour. These in-kind contributions can greatly help projects, especially those with tight budgets.

Self-assessment questions

Activity 1

To solidify your understanding, research and identify an example of an agroecological project that has successfully used each of the above funding types. Consider what made each funding method effective and how it might be applied to your own project context.

Identifying Suitable Funding Sources for Your Project

In this module, learners will focus on the process of identifying suitable funding sources for their agroecological projects. This involves an understanding of their project's needs, a deep dive into potential sources, and an evaluation of the alignment between the two.

Understanding Your Project's Needs
The first step in identifying suitable funding sources is having a clear understanding of your project's needs. This includes understanding your project's objectives, anticipated costs, and the amount of funding required. It also involves identifying whether you need one-time funding or ongoing support, and whether in-kind contributions could support your project.

Researching Potential Sources
After determining your needs, the next step is researching potential funding sources. This might involve online research, networking, and discussions with similar projects or organizations. In your research, you will need to understand the priorities and criteria of each potential source.

Assessing Alignment
Once you have identified potential sources, the next step is to assess the alignment between these sources and your project. This involves considering each source's focus areas, funding criteria, and objectives, and how well these match with your

project. It's also important to consider the application process and reporting requirements, and whether you have the capacity to meet these.

Activity 2

With your own agroecological project in mind, or a hypothetical one, perform the above steps. Create a shortlist of potential funding sources, provide a rationale for each choice, and outline a preliminary plan for approaching each source.

Writing a Successful Grant Application

In this segment, learners will explore how to craft an effective grant application, from understanding the application guidelines to presenting a compelling project narrative and budget.

1. Understanding the Application Guidelines:
    - *Research the Funder:* Start by getting to know the funding source. What is their mission? What types of projects do they typically fund? What are their main areas of interest?
    - *Read the Guidelines Carefully:* Once you've done your background research, read the application guidelines thoroughly. Understand the submission process, deadline, format, and content requirements.
    - *Ask Questions:* If anything in the application guidelines is unclear, don't hesitate to reach out to the funding source for clarification.

2. Crafting a Compelling Project Narrative:
    - *State Your Purpose:* Clearly state the purpose of your project. Why does it exist and what problem is it addressing?
    - *Define Your Goals and Objectives:* Articulate what your project aims to achieve. These should be measurable and time-bound.
    - *Describe Your Methods:* Explain how your project will achieve its objectives. This includes your planned activities, strategies, and resources.

- *Demonstrate Impact:* Show how your project will make a difference. Who will benefit and how? How will it contribute to agroecology and sustainability?

3. Developing a Detailed Project Budget:
    - *List Expenses:* Identify all costs associated with your project. This includes direct costs like materials and labour, and indirect costs like administration and overhead.
    - *Plan for Contingencies:* Allocate a portion of your budget for unexpected expenses. This demonstrates to funders that you are prepared for potential challenges.
    - *Justify Costs:* Explain why each expense is necessary for the success of the project.

4. Demonstrating Project Sustainability:
    - *Long-Term Impact:* Explain how the project will continue to have an impact beyond the grant funding period. This could be through developing self-sustaining systems, transferring skills and knowledge to the community, or generating ongoing sources of income.
    - *Scalability:* Describe how the project could be expanded or replicated in the future. This shows that your project has the potential for wider impact.

Activity 3

Use these steps to draft a grant application for your agroecological project or a hypothetical one. Make sure you align your application with the specific interests and priorities of the funding source you researched in the previous module. After writing the application, review it carefully to ensure it is clear, compelling, and free of errors. Share it with peers for feedback and revise as necessary before submission.

3.4 Crowdfunding for Agroecological Projects

Crowdfunding is an increasingly popular tool for financing projects of all types. It involves gathering small amounts of money from a large number of individuals, usually via the Internet. This section will provide a step-by-step guide on how to conduct a successful crowdfunding campaign for an agroecological project.

1. **Choose the Right Platform:**

There are many crowdfunding platforms available, each with their own strengths and weaknesses. It is important to research these platforms to find one that suits your project's needs. Consider the platform's fees, reputation, type of projects they support, and the size of their audience.

2. **Create a Compelling Campaign:**

This is where you'll tell your project's story. Key components include:

- *The Pitch:* This should be a clear and concise description of your project and why it matters.
- *Goals:* Be clear about what you're trying to achieve, how much money you need, and what the funds will be used for.
- *Rewards:* Offer incentives for people to donate. For agroecological projects, this might include products from the project, a visit or tour, or public recognition.
- *Visuals and Media:* High-quality images, videos, and other media can greatly increase engagement.

3. **Promote Your Campaign:**

Once your campaign is live, you need to actively promote it. Use all channels available to you, such as social media, email newsletters, local press, and in-person events. Remember, the success of a crowdfunding campaign often relies on its visibility.

4. **Engage with Your Backers:**

Be sure to provide updates throughout the campaign and express your gratitude to your backers. Engaging with your backers helps build a community around your project, and these people are likely to be your project's strongest advocates.

5. **Fulfil Your Promises:**

If your campaign is successful, it is crucial to fulfil all promises made during the campaign, particularly regarding rewards. This will maintain your credibility and pave the way for potential future crowdfunding campaigns.

Activity 4

Based on your project or a hypothetical one, create a draft of a crowdfunding campaign. Consider which platform to use, how to communicate your project, and what rewards to offer. Share your draft with peers for feedback, revise as necessary, and if feasible, consider implementing it as a real campaign.

Financial Planning for Sustainable Project Management

Understanding financial management is key for the long-term sustainability of your agroecological project. Proper financial planning not only ensures that your project stays on budget, but it also increases accountability and transparency, which can lead to greater trust from stakeholders and funders. Below are some of the steps involved in financial planning for sustainable project management.

1. **Understand Your Costs:**

Begin by identifying all potential costs associated with your project. This includes both direct costs, such as materials and labour, and indirect costs, like administrative overheads. It's also a good idea to include a contingency amount for unexpected expenses.

2. **Develop a Budget:**

Once you have identified your costs, you can develop a budget. This should detail how much money you expect to spend and where it will be spent. A good budget also outlines when expenses are likely to occur, helping with cash flow management.

3. **Identify Revenue Streams:**

This involves identifying all possible sources of income for your project. This could be from the sale of agricultural products, services, grants, donations, crowdfunding, or other sources.

4. **Create a Financial Plan:**

Combine your budget and revenue streams into a financial plan. This should outline how your project will be funded and how funds will be used. The financial plan is a critical component of your broader project plan.

5. **Monitor and Review:**

Regularly reviewing your financial plan is essential. Monitor actual expenses against your budget, review your revenue streams, and adjust your financial plan as necessary. This can help you identify potential financial issues before they become major problems.

6. **Audit and Report:**

Depending on the size of your project and funding requirements, you may need to have your finances audited. Regular financial reporting also helps maintain transparency and trust with your stakeholders and funders.

Activity 5

Based on a real or hypothetical project, create a detailed budget, identify potential revenue streams, and outline a financial plan. Discuss the potential challenges in implementing this financial plan and propose solutions.

Case Study: Successful Fundraising for an Agroecological Project

For this case study, we will focus on a real-life example of an agroecological project based in Europe that has successfully navigated the fundraising landscape.

Le Bec Hellouin organic farm in Normandy, France (Ref. 5)

Background:

Le Bec Hellouin is a permaculture farm established in 2004 by Charles and Perrine Hervé-Gruyer. The farm utilizes permaculture principles to grow a variety of crops and raise livestock in an ecologically sustainable manner. The farm is highly productive, with a small area of land producing a high yield of crops, demonstrating the potential of permaculture farming.

Figure 38: Le Bec Hellouin Organic Farm, France. Source: fermedubec.com/

Fundraising Strategy:

1. **Government Grants:**

   In the early stages of the project, the farm received funding from the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD). This grant was instrumental in supporting the initial establishment and development of the farm.

2. **Private Investment:**

   The farm has also attracted private investment, particularly from individuals and organizations interested in sustainable agriculture and environmental conservation. This has provided a significant boost to the project's funding.

3. **Revenue Generation:**

Le Bec Hellouin operates a farm shop, selling their organic produce directly to consumers. This creates a consistent revenue stream for the project. They also run educational courses and workshops on permaculture, creating an additional source of income.

4. **Crowdfunding:**

For specific projects, like the development of a new greenhouse, Le Bec Hellouin has utilized crowdfunding. They managed a successful campaign on a French crowdfunding platform dedicated to agricultural projects, highlighting the power of collective, community-focused fundraising.

5. **Partnerships:**

The farm has formed strategic partnerships with research institutions like INRAE (French National Research Institute for Agriculture, Food and Environment), to study the productivity of permaculture farming. This partnership not only brings in funding but also adds credibility to the farm's work.

Success Factors:

Le Bec Hellouin's success in fundraising can be attributed to a combination of factors. The project's clear mission and values resonate with various funding bodies. Its transparency and accountability, along with a strong track record, have built trust with investors and donors. Additionally, by diversifying their income streams, they have ensured financial sustainability and resilience.

Activity 6

Analyse the fundraising strategy of Le Bec Hellouin. What can you learn from their approach? How can their strategies be adapted to your own project?

Reflect on a Successful Fundraising Strategy

In this reflection activity, you will think back on the case study from the Le Bec Hellouin organic farm. You'll examine the strategies used to secure and diversify funding sources for their agroecological initiatives.

Consider the following questions:

- What strategies did the Le Bec Hellouin organic farm use to identify potential funding sources?
- How did they craft their funding proposals, grant applications, and crowdfunding campaigns to effectively communicate the importance and impact of their work?
- What measures did they put in place to manage the funds and ensure financial sustainability of their projects?

Use these reflections to think about how you could apply similar strategies in your own agroecological project. Write down your thoughts and plans for future reference. By doing so, you'll develop a deeper understanding of fundraising strategies and be better prepared to secure funding for your own projects.

Quiz: Understanding Project Funding

This quiz is designed to test your understanding of the various funding opportunities available for agroecological projects. It covers topics such as the different types of funding options, the key components of a successful grant application, the steps involved in launching a crowdfunding campaign, and the financial strategies employed in real-world agroecological projects.

What types of funding opportunities are typically available for agroecological projects?

A) Government grants and private sector investment only.

B) Crowdfunding and venture capital only.

C) **Government grants, private sector investment, philanthropic foundations, crowdfunding, and in-kind support.**

When writing a successful grant application, what are the key components?

A) A clear project plan, a statement of need, and a list of team members only.

B) **A clear project plan, a statement of need, the project's budget, the evaluation plan, and organizational information.**

C) A clear project plan, a list of team members, and the project's budget only.

Which of the following is a critical step in a crowdfunding campaign for an agroecological project?

A) **Identifying a suitable platform, creating a compelling campaign, promoting the campaign, and keeping donors updated.**

B) Identifying a suitable platform and creating a compelling campaign only.

C) Creating a compelling campaign and promoting the campaign only.

In the Le Bec Hellouin case study, which of the following strategies was not used for fundraising?

A) Government grants.

B) **Creating a viral social media challenge.**

C) Crowdfunding.

Summary:

By the end of this unit, students will be equipped with the knowledge and skills to navigate the funding landscape for agroecological projects. They will understand how to identify appropriate funding sources, write compelling grant applications, and use crowdfunding platforms. They will also have a basic understanding of financial planning for sustainable project management.

Flipbook conclusion

Throughout this learning journey, we've delved into the critical aspects of nurturing agroecological projects, with a keen emphasis on the empowerment of rural women. By dissecting various elements such as project socialization, strategic alliances, and the exploration of diverse funding avenues, the document lays down a roadmap for engendering sustainable agricultural practices that are both environmentally sound and socially equitable.

The core of our discussion revolved around the imperative of forging and nurturing strategic partnerships. Identifying allies who resonate with the project's vision and can contribute materially to its success forms the bedrock of any agroecological initiative. Crafting compelling alliance proposals and fostering a symbiotic relationship with these allies are skills that have been underscored as indispensable. The case studies presented serve as tangible examples, illustrating the successful application of these strategies in real-world settings, thereby offering a blueprint for similar agroecological ventures.

Moreover, the document accentuates the power of effective project socialization. Engaging with the community, understanding their needs, and tailoring communication strategies to resonate with various stakeholders are highlighted as pivotal steps in garnering broad-based support and ensuring the project's sustainability. The interactive exercises and reflective activities embedded throughout the document are designed to reinforce these concepts, encouraging learners to apply these insights to their agroecological projects.

In essence, the document serves as a comprehensive guide for individuals and communities aspiring to embark on agroecological projects, particularly those aimed at empowering rural women. By adhering to the principles and strategies outlined, such as building robust strategic alliances, effectively socializing projects, and securing diverse funding sources, these initiatives can not only thrive but also serve as catalysts for sustainable development and social change in rural landscapes. The journey doesn't end here; it's a continuous process of learning, adapting, and growing, as we strive to make agroecology a cornerstone of our collective pursuit of a more sustainable and equitable world.

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