

Building Vibrant Rural Communities



3 areas that youth can make a difference

2. Cultural and community identity



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Overview

Together, we thrive!

This bite size module puts the spotlight on three areas that youth can bring unique perspectives and solutions to.

1. Health and wellbeing
- 2. Cultural and community identity**
3. Digital futures

Let's dive into cultural and community identity..



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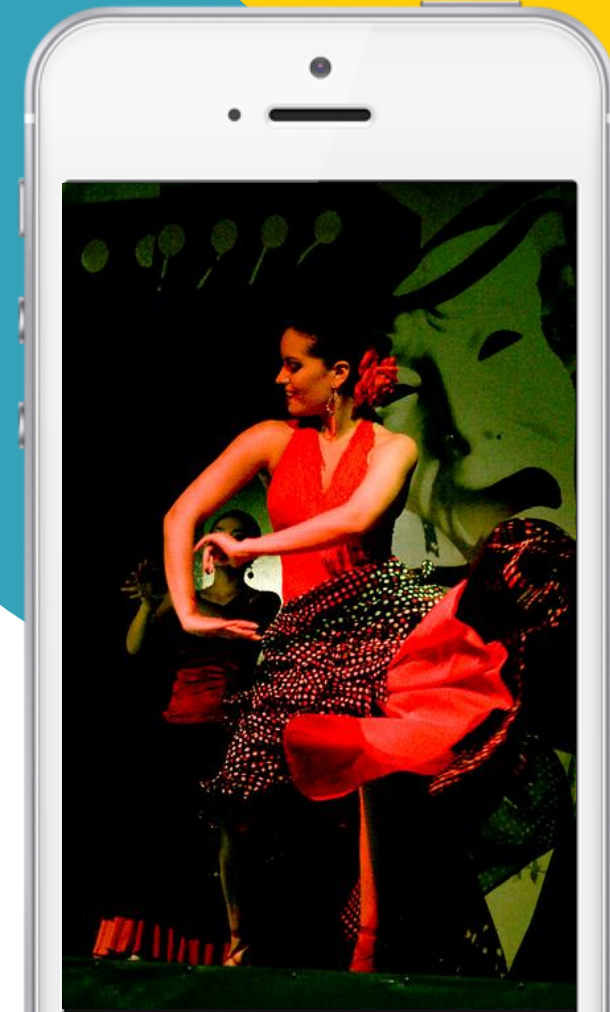
Cultural and Community Identity



The context...

Cultural and community identity are the heart and soul of rural life, especially for young people growing up in these communities. Traditions often provide a sense of belonging and continuity, but for many, they can also lead to a sense of disconnect and isolation.

- Many young people feel the pull to leave their rural homes in search of better educational and career opportunities. As they move away, the once-vibrant villages and towns grow quieter.
- Sometimes rural youth do not see the value of their heritage. Cultural customs are at risk of being diluted or forgotten.
- Limited opportunities for cultural engagement can make it challenging for youth to appreciate and participate in their community's traditions, leading to further disconnection.



What does culture and community identity look like in rural areas?

1. Traditions and Heritage

- **Folk Music and Dance:** Traditional music and dance forms are often integral to rural culture. These can include folk songs, dances, and musical instruments that are unique to a particular region.

Flamenco in Andalusia, sardana in Catalonia, and jota in Aragon are traditional Spanish dances with deep cultural roots.

Traditional Maltese music, called "għana," involves folk singing, while traditional dances are performed during village feasts.

Slovenia's Folk dances like the "Kurentovanje" are a strong tradition

- **Festivals and Celebrations:** Annual festivals and celebrations, often based on agricultural cycles, religious events, or historical milestones, bring the community together. Examples include harvest festivals, local fairs, and religious processions.
- **Oral Histories and Storytelling:** Storytelling is a vital way to preserve and transmit cultural knowledge. Elders often share stories, legends, and family histories, ensuring that the community's heritage is remembered and respected.



IDEAS/ACTIONS that rural youth can instigate

What can you as a young person do to enhance culture and community identity in rural areas? Traditions and Heritage

Capture the wisdom	Craft, Dance, and Jam Session	Festival Boost
Launch a project to record stories from elders. Use social media and digital platforms to create a cool archive of local history and folklore that everyone can access and share.	Host fun workshops on traditional crafts, music, and dance. Learn from the masters and make sure these valuable skills stay alive.	Get involved in planning local festivals that showcase traditional music, dance, and customs. Bring a youth twist to make these events exciting for everyone.



What does culture and community identity look like in rural areas?

2. Art and Craftsmanship

- **Handicrafts:** Many rural areas are known for their unique handicrafts, which can include weaving, pottery, woodworking, and embroidery. These crafts are often passed down through families and can be an important source of income in rural areas.
- **Local Art:** Murals, sculptures, and other forms of visual art often reflect the community's history, values, and identity. Local artists play a crucial role in maintaining and expressing cultural identity, but how many young people are taking up these traditional skills?

Maltese lace-making and filigree jewellery are traditional crafts passed down through generations. The island is also known for its glassblowing.

Spanish ceramics, such as Talavera pottery, and intricate lace-making are traditional crafts.

Irish knitting (Aran sweaters), lace-making, and pottery are renowned.

Slovenia is known for its lace-making, particularly from Idrija, and woodenware such as beehive panels and carved wooden products.



IDEAS/ACTIONS that rural youth can instigate

What can you as a young person do to enhance culture and community identity in rural areas?
Art and Craftsmanship

Apprentice Adventures	Pop-Up Galleries	Community Art Vibes
Set up taster skills or apprenticeship programmes where you can learn traditional crafts like lace-making, pottery, and woodworking from local experts. But add your own design twist.	Organise and pop-up galleries to showcase local crafts and artwork. Give young artists and creators a platform to shine.	Start community art projects like murals and public sculptures that reflect your culture and history. Make your mark on your rural area!



What does culture and community identity look like in rural areas?

3. Cuisine and Food Traditions

- Youth in rural areas often have a direct connection to the food they eat, whether it's through family farms or local markets. Traditional recipes and local food practices reflect this connection. Food festivals are common ways to celebrate and share local cuisine.
- Techniques like canning, pickling, and drying are often part of rural culinary traditions, ensuring food security and passing on knowledge about sustainable living.
- While they respect and uphold traditional recipes, many young people enjoy experimenting by adding modern twists or fusing local ingredients with global flavours.



IDEAS/ACTIONS that rural youth can instigate

**What can you as a young person do to enhance culture and community identity in rural areas?
Cuisine and Food Traditions**

Cook-Offs and Food Workshops	Organise a mini food festival	Recipe Blogs and Vlogs
Host cooking workshops and sharing events where you can learn traditional recipes on an intergenerational basis.	Organise/participate in a local food festival that celebrate slocal cuisine. Include cooking demos, tasting sessions, and recipe sharing	Create a community cookbook or launch a blog/vlog where you can share and preserve traditional recipes



What does culture and community identity look like in rural areas?

4. Language and Dialects

- **Local Dialects:** Many rural areas have unique dialects or languages that are part of their cultural heritage. Preserving and promoting these languages is crucial for maintaining cultural identity.

There is often a decline in the use of Irish Gaelic among youth, particularly outside of Gaeltacht areas.

In Spain, use of regional languages can be inconsistent among youth, especially in areas with strong influences of Castilian Spanish.

Maltese is widely spoken, but there can be a decline in its use among the younger generation.

- **Cultural Expressions:** Proverbs, sayings, and linguistic expressions unique to the area are often used in daily conversation, reflecting local wisdom and values.



IDEAS/ACTIONS that rural youth can instigate

What can you as a young person do to enhance culture and community identity in rural areas?
Language and Dialects

Language Meet-ups	Create and Share Content	Expression Sessions
Form language clubs where you can practice and promote local dialects. Hold regular meet-ups for discussions, storytelling, and cultural exchanges.	Make podcasts, blogs, and videos in your local language to boost its visibility and usage among your peers.	Organise workshops that dive into local proverbs, sayings, and unique expressions. Understand and appreciate your linguistic heritage in a fun way.



What does culture and community identity look like in rural areas?

5. Religious and Spiritual Life

- Youth participation in religious events varies, with higher involvement during major festivals.
- **Places of Worship:** Churches, temples, mosques, and other places of worship are often central to community life. They provide not only spiritual guidance but also a sense of belonging and a venue for social gatherings.
- **Religious Festivals and Rituals:** Celebrations and rituals tied to religious beliefs are significant, bringing together the community and reinforcing shared values and traditions.



IDEAS/ACTIONS that rural youth can instigate

What can you as a young person do to enhance culture and community identity in rural areas? Religious and Spiritual Life

Interfaith Approaches

Promote interfaith dialogues and activities that help you explore and understand different religious traditions within your community

Faith in the Community

Combine religious activities with community service projects, like helping the elderly or a charity fundraiser. Faith-based youth groups help engage young people in their spiritual communities, fostering both personal and communal growth.





Thank you



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