

Activity:

RURAL VISION CAFÉ GUIDE: EMPOWERING YOUTH VOICES

This guide provides a framework for a young person to set up and facilitate a Rural Vision Café, creating an environment where the youth can actively contribute their ideas for community development.



Learners can use this guide to understand the step-by-step process of organising such an event and actively engaging with their community to foster positive change.



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How to follow the guide?: -

Be Inspired By Tom: For a better understanding, we have created a fictional person, Tom. He's a young, active person who likes the area where he lives. With the support of the municipality, he allocated funds for creating or improving recreational spaces such as parks, sports facilities, community centres, or other public spaces. It's time to give rural young people a voice!

Our Suggestions: in each section, we have given our suggestions on how you could develop the specific parts of the activity for your rural area.

Check Your Readiness! By answering the questions in each chapter, you can test readiness for the activity.

Define the Purpose and Its Vision:

Our suggestions:

Clearly articulate the purpose of the Rural Vision Café, emphasising the goal of gathering diverse ideas and perspectives from the youth for rural community development.

Be Inspired By Tom:

Tom had a vision to provide vibrant and inclusive recreational spaces in his rural area that cater to the diverse interests of young people in the community.



And now, write your vision for your local area!

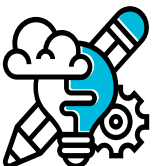
Identify Key Topics or Elements to Talk About

Our suggestions:

- Choose relevant and compelling topics or themes that resonate with the rural youth in the community.
- Consider issues like education, employment, environmental sustainability, and social inclusivity.
- Ensure the topics are relatable and engaging for young participants by preparing a small survey where you ask young people about their opinion and their wish to lead or participate in the activity.

Be Inspired By Tom:

Tom prepared a survey for young people, asking them for their opinion on the recreational activities that could be organised in the area. He got many answers, where young people expressed a wish for hiking competitions, skateparks, outdoor fitness or sports documentary events. Around 40 % were eager to participate in further developing activities!



What kind of questions would you ask in your local community? Try to enlist at least 5 questions based on your vision.

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Arrange an event to make things really happen!

Our suggestions:

- Organise a public event where you can discuss preparing activities with participation by decision-makers and other experts.
- Engage young people who expressed a wish to become so-called ambassadors of the event.
- Utilise social media platforms, community bulletin boards, local schools, and word of mouth to promote the Rural Vision Café.
- Emphasise the importance of rural youth participation and encourage diverse voices to join the discussion.

Be Inspired By Tom:

Tom reached out to the participants who had shared their contact information in the survey and formed a planning committee. This committee comprised rural young individuals, experts, and decision-makers.



Who would you like to invite to a planning committee?

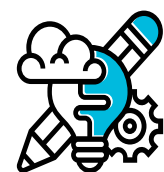
Plan Logistics:

Our suggestions:

- Work with a planning committee on selecting an inclusive venue accessible to rural youth, such as a community centre, school, or outdoor space.
- Determine a suitable date and time, taking into account the availability and preferences of young community members.

BE INSPIRED BY TOM:

Tom coordinated a planning workshop with the help of a committee to develop a two-hour event plan encompassing activities, workshops, and future steps. They decided to use the local youth center's outdoor park for the event, which was freely available. Tom arranged for the local municipality to cover the catering costs. He promoted the event through school announcements, local bulletin boards, social media, and collaboration with rural youth groups. To ensure maximum participation, they scheduled the event for a Saturday afternoon.



- 1) What channels will you use to spread the word (name at least 5)?*
- 2) Try to find a suitable time and day by focusing on the benefits and challenges of specific time slots!*

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Set Up the Café Atmosphere:

Our suggestions:

- Create a welcoming and inclusive environment with comfortable seating arrangements, vibrant decorations, and refreshments.
- Foster an atmosphere that encourages open communication and collaboration.

BE INSPIRED BY TOM:

Tom set up an event at the park by the youth centre, laying out blankets and chairs. He created a good vibe with some cool tunes, bringing in a local DJ. Making sure everyone could easily find a seat, he added lively decorations that matched the community's spirit. And, of course, he didn't forget about capturing the moment with a photographer and sorting out some food.



Who can you ask for support in preparing the event? Are there any artists who can help you in preparing a more impactful event?

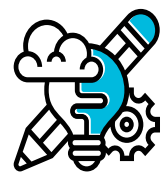
Facilitate discussion

Our suggestions:

- Incorporate icebreaker activities that help participants feel comfortable and build connections with each other.
- Begin the session with a brief introduction, explaining the purpose of the Rural Vision Café and the significance of youth perspectives.
- Establish ground rules that promote respect, active listening, and constructive dialogue. Encourage participants to share their thoughts, experiences, and ideas.

Be Inspired By Tom:

Tom started with a story of why he decided to find new solutions for the local rural community. He also encouraged participants to present themselves with a story of why they decided to participate in the event. He then prepared a world café activity where the participants worked in mixed groups with the goal of developing new ideas to help their local communities.



*What would be your personal story? How would you like to inspire others?
What could be the rules and suggestions for your event? Try not to discourage participants by it.*

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Capture Ideas Creatively:

Our suggestions:

- Provide tools such as flip charts, whiteboards, or digital platforms for capturing and visualising ideas as they emerge.
- Encourage participants to express their ideas creatively through drawings, mind maps, or written statements. In each mixed group, find a participant who will be a group speaker.
- Summarise key points and ensure participants feel their contributions are valued.
- Select a committee of experts to comment on the decision (e.g. feasibility, funding, etc.)

Be Inspired By Tom:

Based on the world café activity, 4 solutions were developed by participants. They were based on the ideas that had already been developed through the survey. Each group had 5 minutes to explain their idea, and afterwards, a committee, based on the experts, made their decisions and prepared suggestions for better implementation of the activities. In the end, these were the solutions: a football tournament between villages, a nature fitness trail, a movie night with documentaries of extreme sports, and an outdoor learning space.



What tools do you need to present the activities of the participants?

What kind of solutions do you expect? Do you think that all solutions are feasible?

Voting

Our suggestions:

- After the event is finished, organise a public vote on the topic through social media. You might also ask the municipality for support in developing a transparent voting solution.
- Encourage participants to volunteer or form working groups to take specific initiatives forward.

Be Inspired By Tom:

After the event had finished, the municipality prepared a voting opportunity for young people to vote for the best idea developed within the event. The voting was organised transparently with the support of the voting register (only young rural people from the municipality who were 16-30 years old could vote). The voting was promoted by a social media strategy and videos (TikTok, Snapchat, Instagram ect.). When all the votes were collected, a football tournament was selected, which will be financed by the municipality.



How will you organise voting? Do you think that the regional government will support you in implementing it?

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12. Feedback and Follow-up:

- Collect feedback on the Rural Vision Café to improve future sessions.
- Establish a follow-up plan to track the progress of initiatives and maintain rural community engagement.
- Share the outcomes with the rural community, local leaders, and relevant stakeholders to ensure transparency and accountability.
- Establish a platform or forum for ongoing youth engagement in community development.
- Encourage the formation of rural youth-led initiatives and projects.

BE INSPIRED BY TOM:

Tom asked all participants to fill in a survey about the event. The committee has further worked with a local committee on documenting the preparation of the football tournament, which was very successful! When sharing the activity with local decision-makers, he prepared a thorough report with indicators (before and after) about the preparation, implementation and dissemination. In the next year, Tom again started a new cycle of the Rural Vision Café and also established a special webpage for the purpose of the event!



What long-term impact do you expect from your event? Do you think that there could be additional similar cycle organized in your community?

