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**INCLUSIVE APPROACHES  
TO COMMUNITY GARDENING  
& GREEN LEARNING SPACES**

**Experiences and  
Practices from Five  
European Countries**

*freiraum = free space*



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# **TABLE OF CONTENTS**

<b>Foreword</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>About Community Gardening</b>	<b>7</b>
Common ground: What is an inclusive community garden?	
<b>Inclusion as the Central Idea</b>	<b>9</b>
What does it mean to be a safe space for inclusion?	
Making inclusion the priority and main value in the community garden	
Planning the community gardens as a safe space for inclusion	
<b>How to open up to the local community</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>How to open up to the inhabitants</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>How to maintain the space</b>	<b>17</b>
Economic sustainability	
Grassroot capacity building	
Sustaining and monitoring community garden as a safe place for inclusions	
Empowering people: make the community autonomous	

## **Inclusive Approaches to Education, Shared Activities and Ecological Practices** **26**

Promote Inclusion through Dedicated Programmes

Formal and Non-Formal Education

Community Gardens as a Paedagogical  
Space for Kids

Food Education in Community Gardens

## **Evaluation** **40**

The Importance of Impact in Social Projects

The GARDENS Impact Assessment Method

## **Measuring Change** **44**

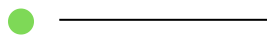
Communicating the Impact

## **Grid** **47**

## **Methods and Tools** **55**

## **Get to know the contributors of this book** **91**

# Foreword



During the GARDENS project we had the opportunity to visit different community gardens and green learning spaces in five European countries. Some of us who are involved in running these gardens had the chance of working together to exchange experiences, share practices and activities, and compare educational methods. We have been able to observe that green spaces are a potentially inclusive bridge between formal, non-formal and informal education. Moreover, they represent a powerful platform for community engagement and an opportunity for green education.

The first part of this publication is aimed at providing an overview of the different steps needed to unleash the potential of turning a green space into a place for community, inclusion and learning.

The second part is dedicated to methods which can be put into practice in inclusive community gardens. It is meant to be used as a handbook: here you'll find instructions and materials to start right away.



GARDENS partners testing the method "Photolanguage"



GARDENS partners designing a garden with nature materials

This ebook is intended to offer practical advice and tools for building a more inclusive community around a garden, either if you are planning to start a community garden or if you are wondering how to involve the community in the activities of an already existing garden. There is no single way of running a community garden, which is why we have also looked into the different ways community gardens are being managed, such as by a municipality or an association.

We will touch on a range of themes that can be explored and developed inside gardens and green spaces, notably food production, ecological education, non-formal learning, and job and therapeutic reintegration. We tried to look at these themes through the lens of inclusiveness, always keeping in mind how to provide value for all community members. We therefore present below a variety of approaches without claiming, however, to cover all aspects of education and inclusion.



Meeting of GARDENS partners in Berlin 2022

## About Community Gardening



*During our meeting in France we became aware that we practically never used the term “community garden”, but mostly talked about “shared gardens”. There is no official definition for the latter term. According to the results of a decision-making practice proposed by our French partner SaluTerre, a shared garden is – for our group – a space, that is open to all and where things (but not necessarily everything) are being discussed and shared (garden plots, knowledge, equipment, etc.).*

During the entire duration of the Erasmus+ project, the participating partners reflected on and discussed a lot a shared idea and definition of an inclusive garden. We finally have come to the conclusion that **an inclusive and accessible community garden can best be understood as a process and that it is therefore difficult to apprehend it as a concept.**

**By using various brainstorming methods and adopting a maieutic approach, we arrived at the following definition:**

*An inclusive garden is a green space designed for and with the people of the community where it is located. It is a safe place to learn new things, skills and people; in which to feel free to propose ideas and where everyone feels welcome. It is an open and public space, easy to access where people can grow vegetables and share resources (material or immaterial), that is based on multicultural values and discusses process creation.*



## Common ground: What is an inclusive community garden?

Planting in a raised bed, photo: himmelbeet



# Inclusion as the Central Idea



Community gardens strive to be true communities for and in their neighbourhood. One of their fundamental values is the **idea of being available for everybody who wants to join**. Participation is important not only because of the many personal benefits experienced by community gardeners, but also in terms of equity around public spaces and of creating a sense of belonging to the neighbourhood. **Inclusion should be deliberate and purposeful**. If it is not, newly arrived immigrants, senior citizens, and those with accessibility challenges are unlikely to participate fully in community gardens. **The most common goals of community gardens are reconnecting urban residents with nature and strengthening the community**. Another major goal is to ensure the existence of green and free spaces inside the city area, especially free from commercial use.

The concept of inclusion is explored in most of the community gardens we have visited during the project cycle. In this part of the guidebook we will therefore try to find an answer to the question:

**What does it mean to be a safe space for inclusion?**



singling plants, photo: himmelbeet

Three words are central to defining inclusion:

## **open, welcoming and safe.**

These three qualifications are closely interconnected and are at the heart of well-functioning inclusive community gardens.

**A safe space means a place where people from different backgrounds feel comfortable and welcome.** Members and visitors of community gardens accept one another. This is possible because inclusion is recognised as a central value to be lived and experienced daily by the community, and especially by the founders and managers of the gardens.

How to create a safe and inclusive community garden?  
After consulting literature on the subject, we have identified two principles:



himmelbeet garden with sign "Dear free space...",  
photo: himmelbeet

### **1. Making inclusion the priority and main value in the community garden**

A community garden should agree in its manifesto or a similar document, which presents its mission and vision, that inclusion is one of the core values which will be supported from the very beginning. The organisers of the garden need to introduce this value at every stage and take care that everybody will be able to use the space of the garden without any barriers. To create an inclusive place also means that any form of discrimination (sexism, homophobia, racism, etc.) has no room in it.

At this stage, we strongly recommend that the garden's members and organisers **get to (better) know the neighbours and local residents** and invite them to participate in planning the garden. It will also be the right time to start identifying the expected future users (or user groups) of the garden, a necessary step to prepare more precise plans during the next stage of the project. The close neighbourhood and local institutions, such as schools, social organisations or housing estates, are good starting points.

## 2. Planning the community garden as a safe space for inclusion

The initial planning process is a decisive phase. Defining groups of garden users will make it easier to design solutions tailored to their needs and interests. It is not possible to take everyone into account at this stage. However, the garden can always be adapted when new community members will join.



GARDENS partners testing the method "Garden of personal needs"

We at himmelbeet, for example, had to abandon our first community garden and move to a completely new place, forcing us to rethink the planning and construction of a rather different community garden. As the idea of inclusion is one of the core values of the garden, we organised a workshop for garden leaders and members to address this issue ahead of the preparatory construction work with the goal of conceiving a garden space for people with different disabilities.

We started the first day of the workshop with a presentation of the topic of inclusion. Participants then reflected on different disabilities that future users might be experiencing in their daily life and defined several starting points. They discussed potential limitations and identified problems arising from them.

During the second day of the workshop, the facilitator presented the results of a survey and research carried out with the help of users with various disabilities who had participated in the old garden. The leaders and members of *himmelbeet* thus received practical and tailor-made recommendations, which were going to be taken into account in the construction of the new garden. Afterwards the workshop participants worked in groups on spaces for different user groups. We recommend this practice, or a similar one, to other community gardens.



building raised beds, photo: *himmelbeet*

## How to Open Up to the Local Community

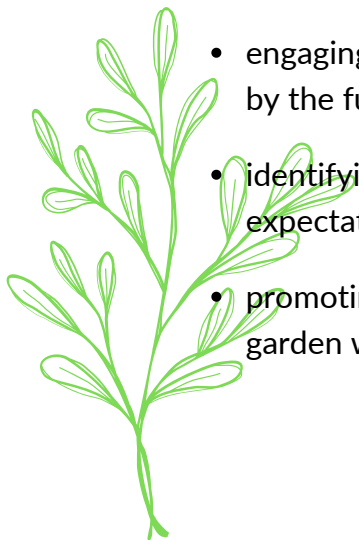


Designing a garden that will be a relevant space for the local community requires as a first step to **analyse the wider context** in which we want to develop our project. Here three elements come into play: the territory; the target; and the resources and needs.

Understanding the territory on which the garden is located means to **explore the possibilities** of a certain place to better understand how to make the best of it. More particularly, if our focus is sustainability and green education, we want to keep in mind the **characteristics of the community** we will be working with. One way of doing this is by establishing a shared diagnosis in collaboration with local organisations and institutions embedded in the neighbourhood.

Such an analysis is not only useful to identify the potential resources and to collect data on the community, but will also enable us to kick-start other processes such as:

- engaging with the stakeholders (associations concerned by the future garden, etc.);
- identifying and more efficiently analysing the expectations and needs of all involved actors;
- promoting positive group dynamics to ensure that the garden will be well-managed and achieve its purpose.



Below, we present a tool designed by our partner SaluTerre to help understand the needs of community gardeners and the strengths and weaknesses of the planned garden.

<b>MOTIVATION</b> Why do you want to implement this project ?			
<b>ENVIRONMENT</b> elements we can't change		<b>RESOURCES</b> elements we can change	
Opportunities	Threats and Risks	Strengths	Weaknesses
<b>ACTIONS:</b> Knowing the opportunities and the risks. How can we use our strengths to overcome our weaknesses?			

Another way of defining the role that our garden may play in the local community is to **map the activities** that are already taking place **and to identify the local institutions** which operate in the area (cultural centres, libraries, schools and nursery schools, social clubs, etc).

Below are some questions we might want to ask ourselves in this context:

- Which activities are missing?
- Which blank spaces does our project want to fill?
- Which problems does our project want to address?
- Should the garden become a space to host external activities?
- Which social realities are predominant in the area?
- How can we create a dialogue and a forum of exchange for local actors?
- Which elements do we have to pay attention to and take into consideration when designing the garden?
- What are the critical issues of the area?

- How can we contribute to the resolution of these issues through the garden?
- Who are the people we are designing our garden for?
- Who are the people we are going to design the garden with?
- Why do we think our garden would be important to them?

Mapping the area of the garden is a helpful exercise to get to know the space and its possibilities. By this we do not mean necessarily a geographical mapping but rather a mental mapping inspired by the **emotions and feelings** evoked by the space: Which is the best spot to relax? In which one do I feel particularly safe? Is there a space in the garden where I hear, smell or see unusual or unexpected things?

We advise to include local inhabitants in this process.

## How to Open Up to the Neighbours?

The SaluTerre experience

Analysing our target group will give us a first idea of the community we want to build or which community we think could be involved in our project from the beginning. Knowing our target group is fundamental because it allows us to propose relevant activities and to choose the right tone of voice in which to communicate them to potential participants.



gardening at ElisaBeet Garden, photo: himmelbeet

## 1st step: Door to door

At SaluTerre we suggest launching a door-to-door operation in housing estates located near the future garden. Such an action has to be well prepared. The language used has to be simple and clear and should be supported by visual elements, such as a flyer with photos, to be adapted to the diversity of the people we are going to meet. Some of the persons encountered may not be fully proficient in the national language, others may not be fully literate, and so on.

Our team goes from door to door at least once. If no one is at home, we pay a second visit on a different weekday and hour. For each flat where we don't succeed in meeting anybody in person, we leave a letter or flyer in the letterbox.

To collect contact details from residents wishing to participate in the garden, we use a sign-on sheet with their name, telephone number or email address. This allows us to inform them about future events, meetings or workshops.



## 2nd step: The first workshop

This should be a convivial event, for example on a Saturday afternoon, that combines practical and intellectual activities. The aim is to involve and mobilise as many people as possible.

Group workshop using "photolanguage",  
photo: SaluTerre



## How to Maintain the Space



Economic resources are, of course, a crucial element for sustaining the project. However, if we lack sufficient funding, we can always rely on human resources: Do participants already have some knowledge about or previous experience in gardening or taking care of green spaces? Are there participants who know how to do carpentry work?

Knowing the skills of each participant and how each of them might contribute to the project will not only favour a collaborative environment but also enable us to spend our economic resources more wisely.

But don't forget the long-term perspective. Once the garden has been built and its community is growing, we will face the question **how to keep the space alive and take care of it?**

A major challenge will be maintaining continuity within the group. As we all know, enthusiasm for gardening is the highest in spring, but in summer people are often away on holiday. There have been numerous times when we did not see each other for several weeks, but thanks to agreed-on watering duties, plants received enough water almost every day.



**Communicating about garden activities** is crucial for making people feel welcome and encouraging them to participate. Here again, we advise to use simple language and signs that can be easily read. If we use online channels, we should make sure that our language can be understood by everybody and that the layout will be transparent and without any barriers.

**Organising regular meetings**, such as garden plenaries, are another means to encourage members to contribute actively with ideas and suggestions, as well as to find answers to questions they have. Moreover, gardeners will be able to **plan the execution of common tasks** by sharing the responsibility for maintaining the space and the garden. Thematic working groups have also proved helpful with some looking after the compost, others taking care of the herbs, still others attending to bee-keeping or focusing on buildings, and so on.

Nor should we forget the **transmission of knowledge** between members leaving the group and new arrivals to ensure that acquired expertise does not get lost. Gardening knowledge should not be the prerogative of a handful of people if we want to promote more democratic ways of jointly managing our garden. It will also reduce the risk of becoming a closely knit group that will exclude those who have not been present since the beginning.

Joint actions and activities, taking care of the space together, punctuated by moments of celebration, will strengthen social relationships and contacts between the garden members. A place that is “loved” is more likely to being taken care of.



gardeners' picnic,  
photo: Krakow's Community Garden "Macierzanki"

# Economic sustainability



Some garden projects rely mainly on volunteers. This may be a deliberate decision to limit the administrative efforts that go into managing the garden. Others are offering paid jobs or employ free-lancers for certain tasks because they want to offer to at least some of their members the possibility of earning income, at the price, however, of greater organisational complexity. There are many ways of organising and managing a community garden, depending on its goals and its mission. However, funding the garden, maintaining a regular flow of income is often a major preoccupation.

As inclusive community gardens, we avoid charging entrance fees to visitors. Fortunately, there are quite a number of other ways to raise funds. Here are some examples:

## 1. non-profit income

- donations (monetary or in kind from individuals or businesses);
- grants, including for projects. Common are funds disbursed by municipalities. Other sources are foundations, such as, in Germany, one that supports urban garden projects ([www.anstiftung.de](http://www.anstiftung.de)) or another that funds inclusive projects ([www.aktionmensch.de](http://www.aktionmensch.de)).
- sponsorships by and contracts with businesses or local authorities;
- membership fees if the legal form is an association or, for example, fees for using raised beds. Membership fees should be moderate to guarantee the inclusive character of the garden.
- crowdfunding;

- support from municipalities: free land use, tools, water containers and free access to water, soil, compost, trainings, a coordinator who supports gardeners through their knowledge or their organisational skills, etc.
- a participatory budget and/or local initiative (city participatory tools);

## 2. special-purpose income

- sale of plants of old and regional cultivated varieties;
- sale of vegetables;
- sale of other garden produce;
- educational work: workshops, including for team-building, garden tours, trainings;
- others activities, e.g. writing articles for the media;
- rental of individual plots;

## 3. income from other economic or commercial activities

- garden caf  and catering;
- building other neighbourhood gardens;
- hiring out a space, such as a tree house.



A tree house in the garden of MJC Berlioz, Pau, France  
photo: Krakow Municipal Greenspace Authority



Gardening workshop, photo: Zasjej archive

A popular way of facilitating different income-generating activities is to register a non-profit-making organisation, depending on the legal system in your country. This mostly facilitates a combination of economic income from horticultural activities, hospitality services, project funding, crowdfunding and donations, but also allows to provide employment opportunities. Nevertheless, keep in mind that the help of a significant number of long-term and short-term volunteers remains crucial and essential for successful community gardens.

## Grassroots Capacity Building



Capacity Building is a process aimed at **enhancing the competences and attitudes** of a group or an individual.

Capacity Building allows the emergence of talents and competences of each individual in the group, namely in two ways: it will **empower the individual**, making the person more aware of their own hard and soft skills, and it will **make the group more aware of the diversity of competences and individuals** the group is composed of.



Capacity building workshop, photo: Kilowatt

Moreover, through Capacity Building, the group will be able **to reflect on their expectations** **aims and needs with regard to the project** they will be working on.

- What and how do I want to contribute to the project?
- What do I want to learn from this project?

Answers to questions like these will allow the members of the group to align with the project's vision and goals, in addition to start defining their active role in it.

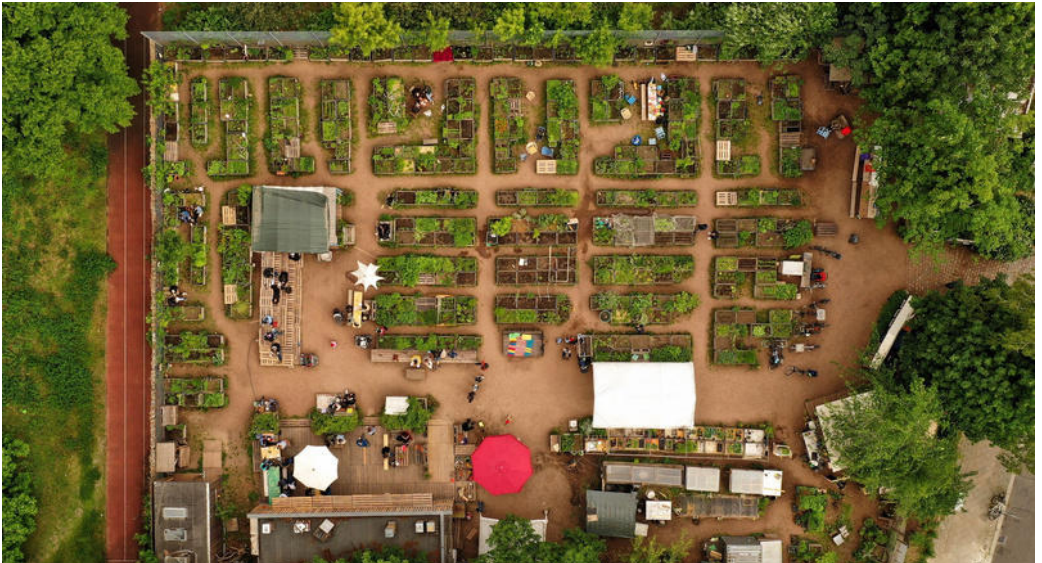
Capacity Building is a **maieutic process** in which the people involved constantly question their peers to facilitate the emergence of everybody's skills and issues. Such an exchange is fundamental if we want to progress on two fronts: **to create a dynamic dialogue** designed to bring out unexpected answers, and **to strengthen relations** within the group.

## **Sustaining and monitoring a community garden as a safe place for inclusion**

The creation of a safe space for inclusion is not the end of the process. If we want to keep the garden inclusive, we need to regularly monitor its evolution to ensure its continued existence in line with its inclusive values. Managers of the garden or its staff should choose quality factors that enhance inclusion and check whether these are being efficiently implemented in the community garden.

At the himmelbeet garden, for example, our mission is to include persons with various disabilities and limitations, such as mobility restrictions or

those from socially disadvantaged groups. For the monitoring we have used a method called **barriers check**, which **garden users who experience barriers in their daily life are inspecting the garden space for barriers and giving us feedback** about their findings. This method, or a similar approach, should be applied more often during the early stages of the garden to check out if proposed changes have happened but also to verify if these have led to new obstacles. Ideally, such a monitoring should take place at the end of each garden season. **Its aim is to help reduce barriers in the garden**, be they spatial, visual, linguistic or of any other kind.



himmelbeet garden before the moving, photo: Volker Gehrmann

Another way of preserving the inclusiveness of the garden consists in assigning the role of an “inclusion observer” to one or several staff members, who will then be responsible for ensuring on a daily or weekly basis whether the space is (still) in compliance with pre-defined standards set for inclusion.

# Empowering People: Promoting the Community's Autonomy

For every new project, we should strive to achieve the two following objectives:



- creating a group dynamics that is socially inclusive;
- developing the group's autonomy and furthering the social and spatial appropriation of the garden by the inhabitants of the neighbourhood.

Co-production is the key word here. It refers to an approach of doing things “with” not “in place of” the inhabitants. This means

1. mobilising and co-designing gardens as social and spatial spaces through:
  - raised awareness of the relationship people have or could have with their living place;
  - alternative forms of discussion and expression of knowledge to ensure that everyone has a voice;
2. encouraging involvement and learning by relying on concrete situations and practices in the garden, that is proposing operating methods and not recipes.

Working together with the inhabitants on social aspects, which influence spatial arrangements, as well as on spatial aspects, which have an impact on the collective dynamics, is really crucial in this respect.



At SaluTerre, we usually moderate **workshops with participator activities** (expression of feelings, development in sub-groups, ternary method, etc.) by using the method of “project pedagogy”: **each participant becomes an actor in the decision making process** We offer a methodology that combines at the same time user-friendliness, work production and training.

SaluTerre uses facilitation techniques to make these “think tanks” productive and participatory by adopting methods of individual work or work in small groups, which allow more isolated people to express themselves, less inhibited by an already formed group.

## **Below are some examples for thematic workshops**

### **Co-Designing Gardens**

The objective is to collect the most consensual opinion possible, with a notion of expertise of future users of the site, on the development of the designed garden. Several meetings are held, all of them led by competent facilitators who use techniques suitable for better projecting the layout of the integrated garden.

### **Practical Food Workshops gardening cooking compost**

These workshops offer an opportunity for all gardeners to take action and leave the results of the practical workshop (square gardens, gardens for disabled people, lasagna gardens, etc.) for future use by all. They will allow to assess the appropriations of these different techniques and approaches, as well as to measure their sustainability in the garden.

## Governance Workshop

The participants jointly prepare a series of documents that present the values and the spirit of the garden but also the rules governing its use, explaining how control measures and mediation work and how sanctions are officially consigned. Thus, they become at the same time familiar with the rules and can easily bring them to life on a daily basis.

## Inclusive Approaches to Education, Shared Activities and Ecological Practices

### Promoting Inclusion through Dedicated Programmes

Offering a variety of small and large projects in addition to regular activities is an efficient way to involve a broad spectrum of people. Some of these projects can be part of dedicated programmes that **focus on involving target groups who have less access to green education** and, more generally, to participation in society.

**Through dedicated activities and participative actions,** we are able to make certain target groups feel more welcome, encouraging them to join the garden as an interactive space.



concert at the former himmelbeet garden, photo: himmelbeet

## Aims of dedicated programmes in a community garden can be:

- **to address socially disadvantaged target groups**, in the sense that
- they have less access to education and participation in civic society;
- to work on the **issue of “accessibility”** (physical, communicational, technical);
- **to offer a more friendly environment** for people with different backgrounds and needs **to take part**;
- to create a **safe space for learning**;
- **to value previous experiences** and know-how acquired in other contexts, such as in an earlier life setting or in the country of origin (for instance, when working with refugees or people with a migration background);
- **to empower participants** to make use of their existing knowledge and skills;
- **to enhance social interaction** and strengthen social relationships between participants, especially at the neighbourhood level;
- **to lower “mental and cultural barriers”** and enrich people’s life
- by opening up new perspectives;
- **to facilitate participation** of marginalised groups.



Integration at the common table, photo: Zasioj

The central purpose of these programmes is to promote inclusion. Even if we describe ourselves as a community and an open space, inclusion still needs to be actively encouraged and taken care of:

***“Community gardens provide an opportunity for people in marginalised groups to fully participate and to take on leadership roles. In our society, power is not distributed equally - disparities exist along racial, ethnic, gender, and sexual orientation lines. In the context of a community garden, participants have the opportunity to place a high value on equity, diversity, and inclusion, and to learn how to work together in a way that truly reflects these values. This does not happen automatically. Without intentional, continuing efforts to practice equity, diversity, and inclusion, community gardens default toward replicating the same systems of exclusion and unequal access to power that exist in broader society.”*** (Albornoz Sari “Strengthening communities through community gardens”, Sustainable Food Center, 2015.)



Meeting of GARDENS partners in Krakow 2021

## **Who is involved in dedicated programmes?**

The target groups, the garden team, stakeholders, such as external volunteers and supporters, institutions in the neighbourhood cooperating with the garden, as well as persons and organisations providing funds.

## **How can a dedicated programme be put into practice?**

**Ideas and Needs:** Observe which part of the neighbourhood is not yet involved in the garden (who is missing?) and what are the needs and unresolved conflicts in your neighbourhood. It is helpful to carry out a survey or research that collects data about the needs and backgrounds of the people you would like to reach out to.

**Getting in Touch with People and Involving Them:** Identify persons with whom you can develop the project and put it into practice.

Make contact with **local institutions** working on social issues, starting in the immediate neighbourhood of your garden.

**Engage with people belonging to the target group to jointly develop a concept for the programme;** they are experts in these matters, since they experience accessibility and inclusion in everyday life. Develop and adapt the programme of the planned workshops by taking into account the **special needs** of the target group

**Create a team.** Find out which skills participants bring to the programme. Missing skills will be acquired more easily by **learning as a team** as will building up knowledge and the sensibility of the team working in a garden when inclusion is the main goal.

**Secure appropriate funding.** Launching a funding campaign is an excellent moment to work on new ideas and to ask what needs should be addressed and how to do this.

**While working on the project, we should try as much as possible to focus on the target group:** needs, expectations, interests and motivation, former experience; age, gender, languages, cultural and social backgrounds; special needs, different starting points, disabilities. What are they interested in? What do they need? Which programme can the garden team offer to respond to these needs and interests?

to ask ourselves as a team and as an organisation what are we interested in? What are our goals? **Which impact do we want to achieve?** What are our strengths? What is our time frame? What resources do we need to put the idea into practice?

to ask ourselves **which barriers are there in the garden?** How accessible is the garden and what can be improved? By barriers we mean not only **physical but also visual and communicational** ones. We should think about signs, texts and languages we intend to use. to use practical activities with the aim of **promoting self-efficacy**. Our planned actions should have clear results that can be achieved within a short time horizon.

**to collect feedback from participants.** Evaluating our programme will help improving the quality of our future activities.

## Case study: TUML – Teilhabe und Mitbestimmung leben (Living participation and codetermination)



TUML group, photo: himmelbeet

At the himmelbeet community garden we created a dedicated programme conceived by and for people with and without disabilities who are interested in urban gardening, sustainability and environmental protection, who take pleasure in living both inclusion and ecological gardening. The aim of TUML was to enable in particular people with physical or mental disabilities to enjoy self-determined leisure time in nature and in the garden.

The TUML group has been meeting since April 2015. In Spring 2017 we came up with the idea of producing a book about our experience. Over the next two years, we organised weekly inclusive workshops on ecological gardening during which participants created their own beds, planted vegetables and co-wrote the book, which was published in 2019 under the title Vegetables from the City: A Garden Book in Easy Language (Gemüse aus der Stadt - Ein Garten-Buch in Leichter Sprache ISBN: 978-3-94115-231-9). For their work, the tuml group received an award in August 2019 within the framework of the competition "Social Nature" organised during the UN Decade on Biological Diversity.

In 2020 our TUML group started to work on a new book project, this time about a more ambitious topic: inclusion and sustainability. We wanted to find answers to questions such as: How do we manage to be good to ourselves and to others? How can we live in a more environmentally conscious way? And how can we get even more people excited about climate protection? This second book has been published in 2022 under the title Climate protection for every day – A book of ideas in easy language (Klima-Schutz für jeden Tag -Ein Ideen-Buch in Leichter Sprache ISBN: 978-3-94231-251-3).

### **Ulrike Bruckmann, one of the founders of TUML, tells us how the project originated:**

*"(The group) started with the question: 'How can people with disabilities get actively involved in the garden?' They observed that the people joining the garden were not very diverse and asked themselves how can people with disabilities find an access to the garden and understand how to get involved. How can they find a task for themselves?" The project then started to build up a cooperation with a social institution and organised regular meetings with practical activities."*

Ulrike says: *“It takes a good effort to reach the target group. It takes time to reach the people and create a regular group. We experienced, there was not so much networking between people with disabilities. [...] At the same time it is helpful to identify a cooperation partner, such as an institution working with people with disabilities. It is also important to clarify with them, how much time and involvement they can put into the cooperation.”*

Follow the TUML group [on instagram](https://www.instagram.com/tuml.berlin) (tuml.berlin).

## Formal and Non-Formal Education



Community gardens fulfil many different roles in the neighbourhood. One of their functions is education, which is present on many levels. The knowledge acquired in community gardens belongs to different fields, such as green, environmental and sustainable education (and science), gardening and food, nature, biology and ecosystems. Many inhabitants of big cities have never participated in any educational activities that bring them into close contact with nature before joining a community garden. **How then do participants or visitors of community gardens acquire new knowledge or new skills?** Much depends on the nature of the target group and the particular characteristics of the community garden, which is a meeting place for persons from different cultures and backgrounds or belonging to different age groups.



Non-formal education is understood in this guide as a planned educational activity similar to that found in schools or universities. In this way the community garden can be conceived as a **classroom with a strong link to learning from experience**. Some primary schools, for example, maintain **school gardens** that are open to the neighbourhood and other local communities, allowing teachers of different subjects to move formal education from the classroom to the garden. Most methods of non-formal education present in community gardens stem from an experimental and interdisciplinary approach. For this reason, 95% of the **workshops** organised in a community garden do not consist of simple lectures for a passive audience but are hands-on experiences that mobilise all five senses: sight, sound, smell, taste and touch. The underlying concept is that of learning by doing. Typical topics are:



Showing seeds in the garden, photo: himmelbeet

- gardening-related subjects,
- environmental issues,
- different dimensions of sustainability,
- everything about food, from production to waste treatment.

Practical aspects are highly valuable and effective in particular for an older audience. The educational material used includes **information boards, descriptions, flyers, web pages and videos**.

The simple fact of taking part in the everyday life of a community garden can be an **informal way** of being educated. Thus, gardens are propitious – “natural” – places for learning about the environment. Throughout the seasons and on each day, child and adult gardeners develop a better understanding of the weather, the interaction of birds and insects, soil quality and its impact on growth, the different ways in which vegetables and flowers are growing and other phenomena. People learn how to grow their own food and understand the environmental impact of producing themselves a small portion of it.

How does this happen? Most gardeners are learning **from the group and from each other by doing things together, having discussions and exchanging practices and knowledge**. Other forms are **one-on-one garden coaching** or **garden therapy**. Perhaps, the concept of peer-learning best summarises the informal education that takes place in community gardens.

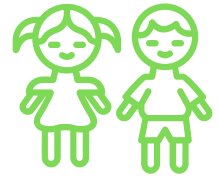
Gardening expertise acquired in community gardens with their focus on transferable skills and knowledge stands a much better chance of becoming lifelong skills than in a private garden. The effectiveness of environmental education dispensed in community gardens is enormous and has probably contributed to the current revival of the food discourse. It promotes relational methods of learning, discussing, and practising that integrate food security, social interactions, community development, environmental activism, and cultural integration.



Screen printing activity,  
photo: himmelbeet

The pedagogical value of community gardens has still not been fully recognised and sufficiently investigated. This is why our Gardens project is so keen on filling this gap at least partly. For us who are interested in the various dimensions of sustainability, community gardens ought to be included as educational spaces in systems of formal education because they bring experience-based learning to the classroom.

## Community Gardens as Paedagogical Spaces for Kids



We want schools to use the potential of the green area next to their buildings and gain an **additional classroom, a green studio, to conduct lessons in the open air and to actively encourage learning through direct experience of Nature.** Children themselves would then have an opportunity to observe natural processes in situ and influence them by working in the garden, where they could sow, plant, cultivate, harvest and taste fruit and vegetables from their school garden. Most children in cities, unfortunately, do not have this option.

To become an attractive educational tool for teachers and children, school gardens should be interesting places that are invitations to explore, experiment and carry out practical work, such as describing the garden, creating garden interiors, dividing it into zones (vegetable garden, sensory garden, flower meadow, decorative garden, bird or butterfly area and so on).



Children gardening,  
photo: Krakow Municipal Greenspace Authority

It all depends on the nature of the school, the creativity of the staff and the possibilities of the area. Teachers need not fear to be left to themselves. As community gardeners, we are prepared to lend a helping hand, providing substantial support, training materials and, if necessary, material support for the development of planned activities.

Moreover, a school garden can become a place of integration for the entire school community (teachers, children, parents, grandparents, etc), as well as for residents living nearby or the local community.

**A school garden offers many scientific and documented benefits**

- Children actively learn in the garden ("green class") by **tangibly experiencing natural processes** and experimenting, following the curriculum not at the school desk but outside, close to the subject of their lessons.
- Growing plants encourages kids to adopt a **better and healthier lifestyle**
- Working together and solving problems **helps young people to communicate better** with each other and with the environment.
- A garden allows children to **develop and strengthen their sense of responsibility and agency**, teaches them how to plan and increases problem-solving skills.
- Spending time in the garden **enhances children's concentration and sharpens their sense of observation** The garden builds interest in natural processes and, more generally, in nature.
- It favours a positive attitude towards school, teachers and classmates. More children will go to school more willingly.
- It increases the quality of teachers' work and their job satisfaction.
- It limits the occurrence of a nature deficit syndrome (NDD) in children.

# Food Education in Community Gardens



Community gardens have a high potential to act as centres for sustainable food education. **Growing our own food or experiencing how others grow food can raise not only awareness of the food we eat but also how it is being produced.** Moreover, previously unfamiliar kinds of edible plants can be (re)discovered. We can explore eating what grows best in the garden instead of growing only what we spontaneously want to eat and know from the supermarket. Further different topics for discussion are:

- how to critically read food labels (ingredients, nutrition values, country of origin);
- alternative sustainable food production (permaculture, hydroponics, agroforestry);
- Re-use, recycling, circular economy.

A very engaging and effective method for approaching a topic and kick-starting a discussion is to cook together:

- this will promote a sense of community (co-creating);
- sharing stories about food-related identities (people might bring their own pickles, jams, chutneys);
- talk about food practices
- learning how to use harvested plants as food.

## What to prepare

Tables, table cloth (more hygienic), knives and peelers, bowls, a stove, pots, cutting boards, first aid kit, possibility to wash hands, spices, printed recipes or knowledgeable volunteers.

Inform everyone about the final result and divide people into peeling, cutting and cooking teams. Recipes should be easy to realise. Soups or stews allow people to have a conversation while preparing the food and have a high chance of resulting in a delicious meal.



children playing in the garden, photo: Krakow's Community Garden "Macierzanki"

## Green Learning and Sustainability Awareness in the Gardens

There is no better place for learning than a garden. It offers endless possibilities during each season and is a perfect and safe place for people of all ages to observe nature. **With a bit of imagination gardens can be easily transformed into an outdoor laboratory, an art studio, a lecture hall, a kitchen or a gym.** An open and barrier-free space invites us to explore it with all our senses. In the garden we do not only use our rational thinking but also our bodies – through gardening, exercises, walks or any other kind of movement. This form of learning helps us stay more connected with our surroundings while also translating into greater awareness and understanding of global ecological and sociological challenges. It raises awareness of the importance of gardens in an urban environment as spaces supporting biodiversity and mitigating the consequences of climate change.

The most common learning activities can be divided into a few categories: **games** **workshops** **meetings and events** they can be indirectly or directly related to the garden. In the first case we will only use the green space as “a background” for events such as **exhibitions** **concerts** **movie screenings or flea markets**. In the second case, green spaces will play a more central role. Here activities include: gardening workshops (composting, preparing seedlings, sowing, planning of a vegetable garden, etc.), cooking or cosmetics classes (preparing preserves and fermented food, manufacturing herbal cosmetics, teas, candles, beeswax food wraps, etc., ideally by using ingredients from the garden), treasure hunts and quizzes focusing on the environment and ecology, experiments (e.g. analysing the pH value of water and soil) and carpentry classes (building beehives or birdhouses).



two women gardening,  
photo: Krakow Municipal Greenspace Authority

Cooking workshops in public spaces are an efficient tool for community empowerment through

- raising awareness about a community’s needs and their food resistance methods by discussing the resources of the neighbourhood;
- promoting the knowledge of inhabitants, and particularly of vulnerable people;
- sharing convivial moments of commensality (eating together);
- building a supportive community by having informal discussions about the local food system.

A **guided walk** through a garden is a very popular educational pastime. We could organise, for example, a simple and informal stroll with a particular focus on architecture, art, botany, ornithology or any other theme. Maps can be handed out to participants who will then be asked to mark their favourite spots in the garden. Looking together for interesting plants or animals is another entertaining way for exploring the garden. Overall, this is a great way to raise awareness of the importance of green spaces and biodiversity in cities.



A guided walk in the garden, photo: Agnieszka Dybowska



Seed bank

Last but not least, gardens enhance the social cohesion of a local community while also allowing people to learn more about sustainability. We can gather to organise a **harvest festival** or to **celebrate** Soil Day (5th of December) or World Bee Day (20th of May), meet in the **woman circle** and exchange our knowledge about plants or start a shared **seed bank** in the garden.



# Evaluation

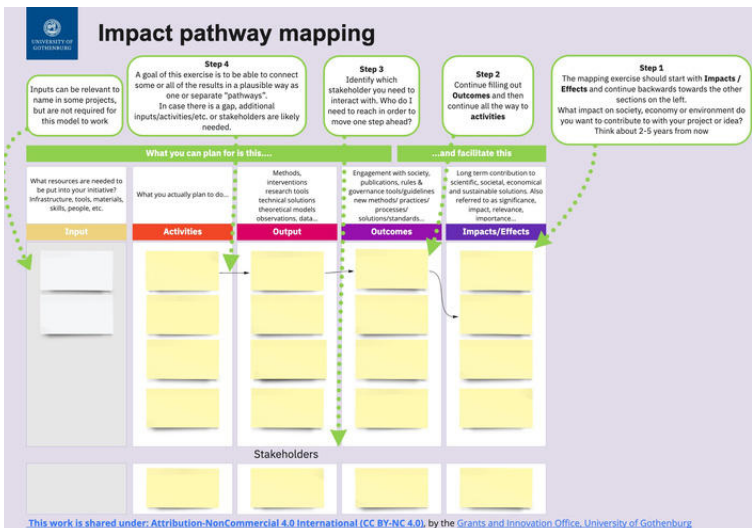


## Why is measuring impact so important for social projects?

The general definition of impact is to have a strong effect on someone or something. Synonyms are affect, influence, have an effect on, transform, change, shape. It is easy to imagine how social projects might transform or shape a neighbourhood, reducing crime for example. As community gardeners we find ourselves often in situations where we want, or have to, communicate the importance of our project, its impact, to our stakeholders. This raises the question of how to measure or assess it.

## The GARDENS impact assessment method

Our project team decided to present the Impact Pathway Canvas (by the W.K. Kellogg Foundation) as a method for measuring impact because it is easy to understand, can be applied to most cases, is adaptable and allows us to assess both the quantitative and qualitative impact of our work.



Start the exercise by answering the questions figuring in the last column called “Impacts”, which forces us to think about our idea from a long-term perspective. This helps us keeping in mind our long-term goals when filling the remaining columns. Remember: “You don’t plan a party based on what you have in the fridge”.

No preparation is needed for the assessment, which will take 10 to 40 minutes to accomplish. Only look briefly at the template before beginning the appraisal. To obtain the best possible results, be as specific as possible and try to make succinct statements. You can do it with the help of a whiteboard, a pin wall with Post-Its or digitally.

The template consists of two parts.

**Part 1:**

Start from the right-hand column (“Impacts”). Work your way from top to bottom, where you are asked about the ultimate goal of your project and the long-term impact it hopes to achieve on the economy, society and/or the environment. Whereas the questions seem very broad, it is crucial to be specific in your answers because it will allow you to design, later on, indicators to measure the results you are aiming at. For example, it would be very difficult to verify how much your project will have contributed to increase social development in the city you will be working in. On the contrary, if your projected impact is to reduce the share of crimes committed by young people by x percent within a given timeframe, your future assessment will be so much easier.

Note that you can use for your impact assessment an external reference, such as the goals and sub-goals of the United Nations’ Sustainable Development Goals (SDG).

Continue with Outcomes. These are changes that have taken place as a result of the project (e.g. a higher proportion of foreign-born people completing secondary education and entering the labour market).

You'll find other examples in the template.

Outputs are concrete results of the project activities accomplished by the end of the project cycle (e.g. publications or new methods).

Under Activities/Design, list concrete activities implemented during the project (e.g. starting a project in cooperation with a leisure centre).

Inputs are the resources needed to carry out the activity. What skills, equipment and data are required?

## Part 2: Pathway & Risks

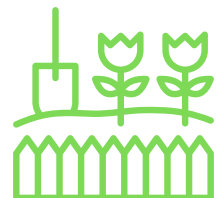
Once you have completed Part 1, you can start with Part 2, which is aimed at linking the previously mentioned categories, this time from left to right, that is from "Inputs" to "Impact", by creating a "pathway". If you do not succeed in creating a reasonable pathway, a crucial element is likely to be missing.

After successfully establishing a pathway, move on to the last element of Part 2. Here, additional questions are asked about the adoption of the pathway and the risks it entails, as well as about relevant stakeholders.

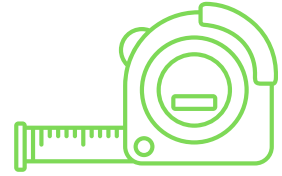
Assumptions and risks:

- What uncertainties do exist?
- What makes the objective difficult to achieve?

Stakeholders: who do I need to reach out to if I want to start the next step?



# Measuring Change



## How to define impact indicators and how to communicate the results of the assessment?

Impact indicators are meant to be defined at the start of a project on the basis of your goals, formulated in the “Impact” section of the template. However, they can be reviewed and adjusted at later stages of the project, for example if external circumstances change.

**Impact indicators can be both quantitative and qualitative.** Usually Key Performance Indicators (KPI) are quantitative, but it may not always be possible to describe social changes quantitatively. In this case, you may define qualitative indicators. An alternative is to use so-called proxy indicators (e.g. time spent with the family is used as an indicator for happiness). Finally, best practice advocates defining a baseline against which to compare the changes that have happened after the project ended.

## How to Use the Impact Pathway Canvas

Although it might be difficult to achieve during the first use of the template, the answers to the different categories should be as specific as possible. The more specific and clear your answers will be, the easier it will be to formulate impact indicators or proxy indicators.

To sum up, the Impact Pathway Canvas should serve as a working document that ideally is being reviewed on a regular basis during the course of the project. Note that such a review is easier to accomplish and may not take more than 15 minutes once you are familiar with the template.

## Communicating the Impact

Communicating the impact of your project in reports is the final step of your impact evaluation. The **report is a tool for planning and analysis**. At the same time it tells **the story of the impact vision, the impacts generated and the audiences or stakeholders involved**. The objectives of an impact assessment or report are many. **It helps evaluate the strategies adopted, is used to communicate to external actors what has been generated and serves as an accountability tool for partners and stakeholders.**

Impact describes the **difference between what happens after an intervention has been implemented and what would have happened without the intervention.**

Impact is therefore very difficult to **measure in absolute terms**. However, it can be estimated (and therefore evaluated). **Transparency is one of the key principles** of impact reporting, which is why the conditions under which evaluations are being carried out should be made explicit and the process transparent. **Don't focus only on numbers**. The narrative that holds the numbers together and puts them in context is no less important.

Communication of the impact is usually done for several reasons, namely

- highlighting the coherence between vision, activities, results and impacts achieved;
- engage more with stakeholders, public administration, funders, those who support our activities;
- creating or consolidating the reputation of the organisation and strengthening the relationship with the target audiences;
- accounting for the value generated (assess how to give value);
- rallying collaborators behind the project's goals and vision;
- improving the communicative effectiveness of the identity and brand.

To produce a solid impact assessment, prepare it in good time. **Archived documents to which you can refer** such as interviews, questionnaires, status reports and photographs, will greatly facilitate your task. Don't restrict yourself to present numerical data or to provide a pure description. **Data have to be analysed and interpreted to make sense**. Think what **readers you want to address** with your report. If uncertain, try to understand how other organisations communicate and **compare it to our own experience**.

Storytelling does not mean “telling stories” but transmitting content through a story that respects the facts and can thus gain people's trust. In practice, this means creating a narrative that is grounded in an analysis of methodologically accurate data collected in the course of the project. Methodological transparency, adequate statistical techniques to analyse the data and proper terms of comparison are needed to achieve this goal.

In the next part, we will present some of the methods and tools we are using in our community gardens. We hope they will be useful for you, too, and will inspire you to create others.

We started the project GARDENS with a needs assessment within each partner identified strength and weaknesses in their practices to implement inclusive and integrative green education in community gardens. Based on the needs, we developed indicators and created a self-assessment grid, helping educators to self-assess practices they use.

Below you will find GRID, which can help you choose the right methods for working with people.

## GRID

### Part A

Checklist for Educational Smart Practice Teaching in Garden Education– A Quantitative assessment

The method must reach at least half of the indicators in order to be further qualitatively assessed in part B.

Please note the aims of the Gardens project are to teach green topics, engage with the community, include disadvantaged groups and build links between green topics, education, and inclusion

Tick Yes / No

ESSENTIAL FORMAL REQUIREMENTS	YES	NO
The level of knowledge for the participants is clear (beginner/experienced etc.).		
The direct and indirect Target audience is defined.		
The necessary resources, methods and materials are defined.		
All sources are cited copyrighted material, if used, is identified and used with clear permission		
DIDACTIC INDICATORS FOR GREEN EDUCATION AND IN GENERAL		
Green education is visible in the practice.		
The practice addresses at least two of the following topics: 1. Sustainability 2. Circularity 3. Ecosystem 4. Biodiversity 5. Horticulture Ecological / Organic Food Production		
Learning by doing and practical aspects are present in the practice.		
The practice is suitable for an alternative learning place.		
The learning goals are clear and there is an emphasis on the process.		
A safe learning environment is created.		
The practice stimulates creativity or involves creative methods.		



## COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT INDICATORS

The practice is stimulating community building.

The practice is suitable to promote teamwork.

There is a cross-cultural aspect present that is suitable to generate teamwork

## INCLUSION AND INTEGRATION INDICATORS

The practice supports the empowerment of participants.

The practice provides access for everyone.

The practice helps the emotional and physical stimulation of the learner.

The practice allows grassroots capacity building.

## DISSEMINATION AND IMPACT

The practice has a process to transfer results into the everyday life of the learners

The practice and its results are shared to a wider audience.

Tools are used to measure the impact of the practice.

The practice is easy reproducible by the participants/students.

**TOTAL SCORE:    /22**

## Part B

Qualitative Assessment – just to be filled if the practice reached half the indicators in section A.

Part I General information	
Name of the organisation performing/creating the practice	
Name of the practice	
How and why was the practice created?	
How is the practice applied? Please provide a step-by-step description to support other educators.	
Where is the practice used?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Local</li><li>• Regional</li><li>• National</li><li>• International</li></ul>
Which kind of institutions perform the practice?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• From the governmental sector</li><li>• From the private sector</li><li>• From the non-governmental sector</li><li>• Other:</li></ul>
What are the goals of the practice?	
Target groups	
Number of learners who already participated in the practice	

Which parts of the practice have been adapted from other methods? Which parts have been used by other practices?

1.Context:  
Aspect used:  
2.Context:  
Aspect used:

**Part II Core information** **Points**

Which of the green education aspects are present in the practice? Please describe how they are addressed.

Sustainability

.....  
.....

Circularity

.....  
.....

Ecosystem

.....  
.....

Biodiversity

.....  
.....

Horticulture

.....  
.....

Ecological/ Organic Food Production

.....  
.....

Others: which?

.....  
.....

\*\*

<p>In which way does the practice help to build/encourage communities? Please give some examples.</p>	<p>1..... 2..... 3.....</p>	<p>**</p>
<p>To which age range do the participants belong?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Under 21 years</li> <li>• 21 - 7</li> <li>• Over 7</li> </ul>	<p>** **</p>
<p>How do you secure a safe space for exchange?</p>		<p>**</p>
<p>In which way does the practice support learners regarding:</p>	<p>Diversity ..... Barrier-free accessibility .....</p>	<p>** ** **</p>
<p>Which preparation for the educator is needed?</p>		<p>**</p>
<p>Which impact using the practice can you notice?</p>	<p>On the community ..... on the learner .....</p>	<p>** ** *</p>
<p>How is the method transferable to other educational sectors or other organisations?</p>		

What makes the practice unconventional?		**		
How is the community involved in the practice?		**		
What kind of assessment process do or did you use to follow the impact and secure that learning goals are reached?				
SWOT ana	Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
	**	**		
Tell a story about the practice, that might inspire others.				**

On our website you can find  
**GRID in other languages**

[www.greeninclusion.eu/post/grid-qualitative-assessment](http://www.greeninclusion.eu/post/grid-qualitative-assessment)



# METHODS AND TOOLS

Green Detective \_\_\_\_\_

How to Make a Toast \_\_\_\_\_

Touch Feel See \_\_\_\_\_

Design Web \_\_\_\_\_

PLANT ME! \_\_\_\_\_

Grassroots Capacity Building \_\_\_\_\_

Searching for Wild Herbs \_\_\_\_\_

Inclusive Meetings \_\_\_\_\_

Photolanguage \_\_\_\_\_

Seeds Workshop \_\_\_\_\_

Garden of Needs \_\_\_\_\_

Barriers Check \_\_\_\_\_

# Green Detective

sensory card game



[www.greeninclusion.eu/post/green-detective](http://www.greeninclusion.eu/post/green-detective)

## GOAL OF THE EXERCISE

Learning by using several senses; raising awareness of the natural environment; facilitating inspiration and creativity; promoting language skills



## PARTICIPANTS

2 to 30 persons

**Target group** children/youth/adults

**Age** 3 or above



## DURATION OF THE METHOD

15 to 30 minutes, depending on the number of participants and the number of cards handed out



## MATERIALS / PLACE

Game cards (1 to 10 per participant) - scan qr code

Containers (one for each participant)

(Optional) mobile phones with a camera or paper for note-taking

A green space (garden, park, forest)



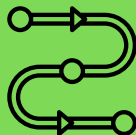
## PREPARATION

Print and cut out the game cards. Use the templates available here or create your own cards.



## STEP BY STEP

1. Explain the rules of the game. Within a designated area, each participant has to find something that has the characteristic mentioned on the game cards they will receive, collect the object, take a photograph of it or memorise it to describe it later to the group.



2. Shuffle the cards and deal 1 to 10 of them to each participant, who will also be handed a container.
3. Set a time frame for the task and ask participants to collect their findings by exploring the game area.
4. Once the allocated time has passed, participants gather and show (or describe) their findings to the group.

## ALTERNATIVE USE

Use the game cards for a storytelling game, where each participant is asked to invent a story inspired by the game cards received.



## FEEDBACK



Translate the labels of the cards into other languages.

## EXPERIENCES

The game raises awareness of the natural environment by letting participants explore it and discuss their findings with each other



## CREDIT AND REFERENCES:



[https://zsm.krakow.pl/images/pliki/aktualnosci/miniatury/zielony\\_detektyw/zielonydetektyw1.pdf](https://zsm.krakow.pl/images/pliki/aktualnosci/miniatury/zielony_detektyw/zielonydetektyw1.pdf)

## CATEGORIES

#green education  
#inclusiveness and interculturality  
#non-formal education





# How to make a toast

a design thinking game



[www.greeninclusion.eu/post/how-to-make-a-toast](http://www.greeninclusion.eu/post/how-to-make-a-toast)

## GOAL OF THE EXERCISE

Making participants aware how differently they think and proceed; promoting creativity, co-designing, problem-solving skills and learning empathy.



## PARTICIPANTS



3 to 15 persons

**Target group:** young people, adults

**Age:** 1 or above

## DURATION OF THE METHOD

30 to 0 min, depending on the number of participants



## MATERIALS / PLACE



Sheets of thick paper or cards

Markers or pencils

Sticky notes

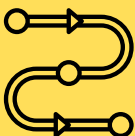
The location should allow participants to fix their drawings to a large wall space for presentation.

## PREPARATION

not required



## STEP BY STEP



1. For the first round ask participants to draw on a sheet of paper instructions for preparing a toast without using words or numbers. Hand out drawing materials to each participant.

2. Ask participants to share their work with the group by holding up their drawings to encourage comments on how they differ. Which ones are simple, which ones complex? Which ones show people, and which ones don't? And so on.

3. For the second round, ask participants to draw step-by-step instructions on separate sticky notes, then fix these on the wall. They are allowed to amend their instructions from the first round. Hand out sticky notes.

4. For the final round, ask participants to jointly compare the different sets of instructions and observe what is similar and different between them and then select the optimal set of drawings.

## ALTERNATIVE USE

Use a different task, such as drawing instructions on how to create a compost.



## FEEDBACK



Use an icebreaker before the game if participants don't know each other well. Ask participants to work in pairs.

To encourage shy participants to express their opinion, use cards of different colours to represent the most relevant steps of the instructions during the second round.

## EXPERIENCES

The game is likely to produce a lot of laughter but will also illustrate how different we are and how collaboration will lead to better outcomes.



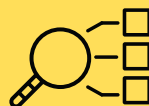
## CREDIT AND REFERENCES:

<https://www.drawtoast.com/>



## CATEGORIES

#community organising #co-design  
#inclusiveness and interculturality



# Touch Feel See



[www.greeninclusion.eu/post/touch-feel-see](http://www.greeninclusion.eu/post/touch-feel-see)

## GOAL OF THE EXERCISE

Empowering sensory integration; learning by using different senses; raising awareness; inspiration; developing an interest in nature; promoting creativity.



## PARTICIPANTS

5 to 30 persons

**Target group:** children, young people, adults

**Age:** 7 or above



## DURATION OF THE METHOD

30 to 60 min (can be more depending on the way you play or number of participants)



## MATERIALS / PLACE

Different small natural objects found near the location, one for each participant.  
A green space (garden, park, forest).



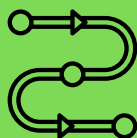
## PREPARATION

Collect a variety of small natural objects near the location.



## STEP BY STEP

1. Ask participants to gather in a circle.
2. Briefly introduce the method by explaining to the participants how we sometimes ignore details in the natural environment in our daily life, although these details are important parts of the entire natural ecosystem, each with its own place and crucial role.



3. Tell participants to close their eyes (unless they feel uncomfortable with this) and move their hands behind their back.

4. Put one of the small objects collected in each participant's hands. Ask them to focus on it without opening their eyes and to silently explore its characteristics (size, weight, shape, surface, temperature, etc.) rather than to identify it.

5. After a little while, once participants have an idea of what they are holding in their hands, ask them to reflect on what they associate with the object or what memories they have of it. This task should be accomplished in a quiet and calm atmosphere that empowers their experience.

. Once some time has passed, ask participants to open their eyes and to describe in turn the object they are holding to the group without identifying it. The other participants then have to guess what the object might be. After it has been correctly identified, it is shown to the group.

If a participant has difficulties describing the object, help them with questions such as "What shape does it have?" and "How does it feel to the touch?"

## ALTERNATIVE USE

Ask participants to find themselves a small natural object that is important to them, because they associate it with pleasant childhood memories or it has caught their attention. When describing the object to the group they are also asked to explain the reasons for which they have chosen it.

Participants can work in pairs, thus sharing their sensory experience and support each other when describing the object.

Participants can explore the object by using other senses than only touch (e.g. smell, taste, sound).



Use natural objects from a different climate zone for the discussion.

Use only a specific part of the plants chosen (leaf, seed, flower, etc.) for this method and discuss the differences between them (e.g. to accompany a lesson on dendrology).



## FEEDBACK

The method can be easily adapted for different topics and for specific target groups.

## EXPERIENCES

The game and its variants raise the participants' awareness of nature and let them discover many elements hidden in nature, which are then used for a more general discussion.



## CATEGORIES



#green education  
#inclusiveness and interculturality  
#non-formal education



# Design Web



[www.greeninclusion.eu/post/design-web](http://www.greeninclusion.eu/post/design-web)

## GOAL OF THE EXERCISE

Learning how to think more creatively and openly when designing anything from a small garden lot to big projects or even your life.

Instead of viewing the design process as a linear sequence, its various aspects are visited through a web that tricks our brain.



## PARTICIPANTS



to 30 persons

**Target groups:** adults, young people, mixed groups, intercultural groups, teams

**Age:** 12 or above

## DURATION OF THE METHOD

30 to 0 min, depending on the complexity of the project and on how detailed your plan aims to be



## MATERIALS / PLACE



13 A4 sheets, each bearing one of the 12 or 13 keywords of the Design Web (complemented possibly by short explanations or questions):

- Visions & Goals
- Help (What do you need help with? Where can you get this help from?)
- Limits (What might block your path, keep it small or slow it down? What difficulties can arise?)
- Patterns (Routines?)
- Ideas (What do you want to create?)
- Principles (Ethics and values)

- Integration (How to bring it all together?)
- Action (What do you want to get done?  
What are the next steps?)
- Momentum (How can you keep it up?)
- Appreciation
- Reflection
- Pause (What can be restful routines?)

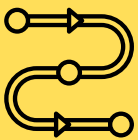
Paper and pens for note-taking

A large open space where small groups of people can comfortably move around the keyword sheets arranged on the ground in a circle

## PREPARATION



- Write the key words on the sheets (and add additional information if desired).
- Place all the sheets in a big circle on the ground.
- Read more about the Design Web and listen to a podcast available here:  
<https://makingpermaculturestronger.net/engaging-the-design-web-with-looby-macnamara/>
- Formulate a question, problem or topic for the project you would like the group to design.



## STEP BY STEP

1. The workshop trainer asks participants to form a circle and presents themselves. This can be followed by a short warm-up if participants do not yet know each other well.
2. The trainer explains the activity and the designing task to be accomplished (e.g. how can we make our community garden more inclusive for children?).
3. Once everyone understands the task, the trainer divides participants into small groups of three people, with one of them designated to take notes.

4. The small groups are then asked to freely circulate among the sheets with the keywords, visiting each one at least once in no particular order, and, during each stop, to discuss what they associate with a particular keyword. When they reach the keyword “Action”, for example, they could talk about actions to be undertaken to involve more kids in the garden, such as reaching out to schools and nursery schools, which are then consigned in writing by the note-taker.

There is no time limit for any particular stop. If nothing comes to mind, a group simply moves on to the next stop and comes back to it later. Stops can also be revisited to add new perspectives.

5. Once the allocated time has passed, the trainer asks everyone to stop circulating and to finalise their notes, before forming once more a circle.

6. Each group finally shares its results with the other participants. Ideally the note-taker prepares a document that can be used by decision-makers, or the entire group, during a follow-up designed to structure and plan the implementation.

## ALTERNATIVE USE

Use the method with a single small group or individually. Add “Celebration” as a keyword to the Design Web (How do we celebrate success?)



## FEEDBACK

Some participants prefer the keywords to be explained or complemented by questions, others consider this a restriction of their creative thinking.



## EXPERIENCES

\*Pretty eye-opening what happens if we don't follow a certain order"







## CREDIT AND REFERENCES:

Looby Macnamara "Design Web"

## CATEGORIES

#community organising  
#co-design  
#designing #planning #vision  
#idea\_creation



# Plant Me Here!

Role-playing as a design method



[www.greeninclusion.eu/post/plant-me](http://www.greeninclusion.eu/post/plant-me)

## GOAL OF THE EXERCISE

Selecting plants and their future location if you are designing or planning a garden. Educating the participants about plants, their characteristics and the best location for planting them.



## PARTICIPANTS

5 to 50 persons

**Target group:** adults, young people, children teamed up with adults, mixed groups, intercultural groups, teams

**Age:** 5 or above

## DURATION OF THE METHOD

0 to 120 min depending on the number of participant, their previous expertise and the size of the site.



## MATERIALS / PLACE

- Printed observation cards for note-taking
- Printed plant cards
- Pens, pencils
- Mobile phones (for research)
- If appropriate, small signs bearing the name of the plant, which you can stick in the ground

A green space (garden, part of a park, field or forest).

Note: Be aware that there are laws and regulations governing planting in public spaces (property damage!) if you decide to use real plants. Guerilla gardening might be tolerated if considered an embellishment.

## PREPARATION



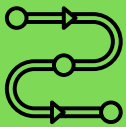
Select the plants you want to use and collect information on them. The method works best for trees and shrubs.

Create printed cards listing their scientific and common name(s), their characteristics that determine their best location (height, width, light, soil, water, companion or competing plants, etc.) and add a photograph of the plant. The link below leads you to a template:

[https://www.canva.com/design/DAFNfwlc2g\\_g4MhooGdGQZ79\\_xnpq3w/edit?utm\\_content=DAFNfwlc2g&utm\\_campaign=designshare&utm\\_medium=link2&utm\\_source=sharebutton](https://www.canva.com/design/DAFNfwlc2g_g4MhooGdGQZ79_xnpq3w/edit?utm_content=DAFNfwlc2g&utm_campaign=designshare&utm_medium=link2&utm_source=sharebutton)

Prepare observation cards for note-taking

(Optional) Prepare signs that can be used in place of the plants to indicate the desired location.



## STEP BY STEP

1. Explain the rules and goals of the activity.
2. Divide the participants into small groups of two to five persons and hand out an observation card to each of them.
3. Ask participants to explore the site and note their observations. The time allocated for this task will depend on the size and complexity of the site.

Guiding questions are:

- Which places receive direct sunlight, which are shadowy?
- Which locations are dry, which ones wet?
- Which ones are exposed to the wind or protected against it?
- What kind of basic soils are present at the site (sandy, silty, loamy)? If appropriate, explain how to do a quick soil test, e.g. by squeezing the moist soil with the hand, then opening it and observing its texture or by digging a small hole, filling it with water and observing how fast the soil is draining).
- What plants are already growing there?

4. Ask participants to assemble and share their observations and experience.

5. Hand out a plant card and a plant, or sign with the plant name, to each participant who is then asked to identify with the plant and look for the „perfect“ location on the chosen site by using the information presented on the plant card. Briefly explain the principle of companion planting and resource competition if necessary.

Guiding questions are:

- “How do I want to grow?”
- “How big will I grow?”
- “What neighbours do I get along with?”
- “How competitive am I?”

. Gather the participants who will explain reasons for their choice and how they arrived at it. Jointly discuss their findings by raising objections or making suggestions. Generally, it takes no more than 15 to 30 min to place some 20 trees and shrubs.

## ALTERNATIVE USE



a) Create cards for annual plants and vegetables.

b) Co-designing a herb layer. Designate small areas and set out trays with plants best fit for polyculture. Small groups of participants (3 or 4 persons) are then asked to create their own herb layer design.

c) If your aim is co-designing a garden, include locations for other garden elements (tool shed, garden beds, etc.).



## FEEDBACK

It's a great method to quickly identify good locations for each plant. Participants engage with the plant and feel a sense of responsibility while interacting with each other. This can be a good starting point for tree adaptation programmes.

Depending on the level of participants' knowledge, more information should be added to the plant cards.

## EXPERIENCES



It was a lot of fun! The role-playing is always much appreciated.

## CREDIT AND REFERENCES:



Content and idea: Skogstrdgrdsboken  
Philipp Weiss    Annevi Sjberg  
Game layout: Anne Franze    Jordanov

[https://www.canva.com/design/DAFNfwlc2g8/g4MhooGdGQZ798\\_\\_xnpq3w/editutm\\_content=DAFNfwlc2g8&utm\\_campaign=designshare&utm\\_medium=link2&utm\\_source=sharebutton](https://www.canva.com/design/DAFNfwlc2g8/g4MhooGdGQZ798__xnpq3w/editutm_content=DAFNfwlc2g8&utm_campaign=designshare&utm_medium=link2&utm_source=sharebutton)

## CATEGORIES



#green education  
#inclusiveness  
#non formal education  
#plantation  
#planting  
#game



# Grassroots Capacity Building



[www.greeninclusion.eu/post/capacity-building](http://www.greeninclusion.eu/post/capacity-building)

## GOAL OF THE EXERCISE

Getting to know the competences, motivation and commitment of each group member, creating a common vision, team-building



## PARTICIPANTS

10 to 30 persons

**Target group:** best suited for a target group intending to work together on the same project.

**Age:** 15 or older



## DURATION OF THE METHOD

0 to 1 0 min, depending on the number of participants

10 to 15 min to fill in the card (individually or in pairs)

5 min for each participant to present the results

20 min for the final discussion



## MATERIALS / PLACE



Paper and pens.

(Optional) Pin wall, Flip charts or similar devices; felt pens, pens or sticky notes to visualise the results

A quiet place, if possible outdoors in a garden or green space

## PREPARATION

Prepare and print out the required number of copies of the capacity building card according to the number of participants.

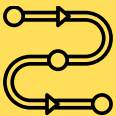


The card used for this method consists of 7 fields which need to be completed by each participant.

**The 7 areas are:**

- **Participant's name**
- **Hard skills:** skills gained through hands-on experience, training or education
- **Soft skills:** examples are interpersonal skills, ability to work in a team, leadership skills, communication skills, problem-solving skills, time management and critical thinking skills. Think: "how would a friend describe me?"
- **Stress factors / Critical issues:** what are the mechanisms, situations in which you experience stress or which you perceive as problematic when working in a team?
- **What do I already know about green education and sustainability?**
- **What do I want to learn about green education and sustainability?**
- **How do I want to contribute to the project?**

## STEP BY STEP



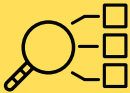
1. Hand out a card to each participant.
2. Each participant fills out the card or, if you work in pairs, interviews their partner to collect the information before writing it down.
3. Each participant presents the results of their card to the group.
4. Gather for a plenary final discussion.
5. (Optional) Attempt to visualise the results, e.g. by forming competence clusters.

## FEEDBACK



Using pairs to fill in the card can help those who feel shy or less confident in the group.

The method works particularly well if it ends with a final discussion during which the results are being visualised.



## CATEGORIES

#community organising  
#co-design





# Searching for Wild Herbs



[www.greeninclusion.eu/post/wild-herbs-workshop](http://www.greeninclusion.eu/post/wild-herbs-workshop)

## GOAL OF THE EXERCISE

Raising interest in wild herbs; getting to know the wild herbs in their natural environment; promoting creativity, sharing knowledge and exploring intercultural aspects (e.g. by sharing names of the herbs in other languages, traditional uses and stories).



## PARTICIPANTS

5 to 25 persons (no more than 20 children only)

**Target group:** adults, young people, children, mixed groups, intercultural groups, teams.

**Age:** 5 or above



## DURATION OF THE METHOD

to **minutes** depending on the length of the initial information



## MATERIALS / PLACE



Pictures of the wild herbs selected or of different parts (leaves, flowers, seeds), depending on the number of participants

Printed list of questions for each small group (for more documents follow the link on the top of the method or scan the QR code)

Pencils and clipboards for note-taking

A green space (garden, park, forest). Make sure the site is not polluted, especially if participants are meant to taste or consume the herbs.

## PREPARATION



Visit the site beforehand to identify which herbs could be used for this method (maximal 8 to 10 wild herbs) and ensure that it is not polluted.

Get information about the wild herbs to be used, take photographs, look for illustrations or collect parts of the herbs shortly before organising the activity.

Prepare questions for the search that are adapted to the target group's characteristics (language, age, special needs, etc.). Graphic elements are likely to be useful. Or use the template provided (see attached template).

Reflect on how to accommodate possible special needs of participants.

Work out a time schedule for each part of the activity.

(Optional) Collect visual documents on the wild herbs that will be used and that can be exhibited on a board, showing the wild herbs during different stages of their life cycle or significant parts of them (leaves, seeds, flowers, etc.). Prepare labels for them.



## STEP BY STEP

1. Ask participants to form a circle. Present yourself and briefly explain the method. If appropriate, use an icebreaker so that participants can get to know each other: ask participants in turn to announce their name and their favourite (wild or cultivated) plant if they have one.
2. Introduce the topic by taking into account participants' previous knowledge of wild herbs. Ask participants why wild herbs are interesting. Common answers are: health and nutritional reasons, use for cooking or preparing cosmetics, traditional knowledge, self-sufficiency, interest in botany or biodiversity, a connection to nature...

3. Ask participants what we should know before gathering wild herbs (e.g. how to recognise them, how to taste or consume only safely identified herbs, cleaning plants before consuming them, avoiding polluted sites).

4. Divide participants into small groups of two to four persons and assign to each group the task of looking for a spot where a particular wild herb is growing on the chosen site and answering a number of questions. If appropriate, provide them with a photograph or a part of the wild herb they will be searching for or use a board with visual information (see Preparation). Hand out the list of questions you have prepared or the template provided. Count about 15 min for the task.

5. Gather participants in a circle and let each small group in turn share their findings. If appropriate, provide additional information about each wild herb, especially for participants who are new to the topic. The aim is to create common knowledge available to all. Conclude by asking participants for feedback about this method.

## ALTERNATIVE USE



Add a cooking session to the workshop during which participants first collect more herbs, clean them and then prepare a dish or several to be enjoyed on the spot or taken away for later consumption. You could, for example, prepare a wild herb pesto and a salad and share them with some bread!

## FEEDBACK



Try to keep it simple! Some people have little botanical knowledge and might find it difficult to identify a wild herb or recognise it by name.

Adapt the activity to the target group (allocated time, previous knowledge, etc.).

Encourage participants to use all their senses to explore the wild herbs or use storytelling for an easier approach. Giving room to creativity means more fun and makes the method more inclusive for participants who don't know much about wild herbs.

Facilitate knowledge transfer between participants.

Accommodate participants' special needs (e.g. by exhibiting wild herbs on a table if participants experience mobility restrictions).

## EXPERIENCES

*"This activity was fun! We shared our stories about the plant we looked for, we had the possibility to be creative together by inventing a story."*

*"I liked the fact that the plant plays an active role: it can talk and tell us something. It shows a way to turn around the human-centred perspective".*

*"I felt inspired to go looking for wild herbs in my neighbourhood and getting to know them better, also for preparing home-made teas and meals."*



## CREDIT AND REFERENCES:

Scan QR-code for details

## CATEGORIES

#green education  
#non-formal education  
#inclusiveness and interculturality



PROPOSED BY

himmelbeet

# Inclusive Meetings



[www.greeninclusion.eu/post/inclusive-meetings](http://www.greeninclusion.eu/post/inclusive-meetings)

## GOAL OF THE EXERCISE

Meetings are essential for group processes, exchanging information and decision-making. Here we suggest ideas how a meeting should be structured and what elements are necessary to allow each participant to be included, to take part and contribute, and feel welcome.



## PARTICIPANTS

2 to 15 participants

**Target group:** no restrictions.

**Age:** 15 or above

## DURATION OF THE METHOD

Meetings can last from 15 min to several days depending on the needs of the group and the goals of the meeting.



## MATERIALS / PLACE



A meeting can be offline, online or even hybrid. Here we focus on physical meetings.

Agenda (and possibly a protocol of a previous meeting)

Paper and pens for note-taking or computer

Timer

Visualisation materials (flip charts, sticky notes, felt pens, paper, etc.)

The venue should as far as possible accommodate the needs of the participants to make them feel comfortable (accessibility, table sizes, seating arrangements, accessibility, safety, noise level, etc.). A pleasant environment will contribute to this, too. Some form of catering (drinks, snacks) should be available, especially if the meeting lasts more than a couple of hours.

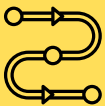
## PREPARATION



When setting the time of the meeting, respect every participant's availability (working hours, family obligations, public holidays, etc.).

Prepare the agenda well ahead of the meeting. Ask all participants if and how they intend to contribute and whether any specific topics should be raised. Ensure that there will be enough time for short presentations, questions and discussions, as well as for breaks, but also set time limits to avoid endless discussions – a topic can always be rescheduled for another meeting.

Facilitation methods will contribute to include everybody and make the meeting more democratic. If appropriate, include time for warm-ups or energisers to help participants focus on the meeting. A well-structured meeting is key to its success. Think of the goals you want to achieve with the meeting. Send the agenda to all participants some time before the meeting and a reminder of the time of the meeting a working day before it.



## STEP BY STEP

### 1. Opening the meeting

- Start by welcoming the participants. Everybody should feel appreciated. Continue with a short presentation round or a warm-up (or energiser) so that participants get to know each other and feel comfortable in the group. Ask for preferred pronouns. Make sure you are able to pronounce every name correctly. For a bigger meeting use name tags.
- Introduce and agree on the use of hand signals for specific contributions (agreement, disagreement, questions, etc.).
- Establish rules for the conversation that help reminding everybody what is important and gives a frame to the meeting. Ask participants to speak slowly and clearly and not to interrupt each other. Encourage them to voice their opinions and to join discussions with the aim of promoting alternative perspectives ...

- Assign different roles, or tasks, to the participants, such as that of a moderator (this could be the person who prepared the meeting); note-taker for the protocol; time-keeper; or vision-keeper (who reminds participants of the meeting's rules and intervenes if necessary).
- Present the agenda, explain who will be responsible for certain parts of the meeting and remind participants of the goals you have. Asking participants what they expect of the meeting helps steering the meeting.

## **2. During the Meeting:**

- As a moderator be aware of your own biases and pay attention to participants who tend to dominate the conversation or those who form closely knit subgroups.
- Make sure that everyone can hear what is being said, is listened to when they speak and that even shy or quiet person are able to voice their opinion. Moderation methods help structuring the meeting and achieving your goals.
- Disruptions should be addressed immediately because they are a learning and communication barrier. If not been dealt with, they are likely to prevent or falsify the problem-solving process.
- Respect the time of all participants and end the meeting at the agreed hour.

## **3. Ending the meeting:**

- Summarise the results, decisions and tasks so that everybody is on the same level.
- If a follow-up meeting is planned, organise a rotation of the different roles, thus offering an opportunity to experience the meeting from different points of view.
- End with a round of thanks and collect feedback!
- Share the protocol with everybody after the meeting.

## **ALTERNATIVE USE**

If several languages are spoken during the meeting, ask another participant to do a “whisper translation”, that is sitting next to the person and whisper into their ear.





## EXPERIENCES

“Essential for every group and a diverse participation”

## CREDIT AND REFERENCES

### Inclusive Meetings

<https://www.atlassian.com/de/team-playbook/plays/inclusive-meetings>



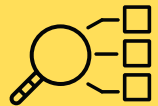
## FURTHER READING



- examples for hand signals:  
<https://www.seedsforchange.org.uk/handsig.pdf>
- systemic consensing <https://clips.gen-europe.org/systemic-consensing/>
- keywords for search engines: inclusive meetings, events sensitive to discrimination, deciding methods in groups, moderation methods

## CATEGORIES

#community organising  
#inclusiveness and interculturality





# Photolanguage



[www.greeninclusion.eu/post/photolanguage](http://www.greeninclusion.eu/post/photolanguage)

## GOAL OF THE EXERCISE

Expressing visions, desires, needs, fears through images.



## PARTICIPANTS



At least 3 persons

**Target group:** children, young people, adults. The method is particularly well-suited for intercultural groups.

**Age:** 5 or above

## DURATION OF THE METHOD

5 to 30 min, depending on the number of participants.  
Count about 30 seconds per participant.



## MATERIALS / PLACE



Photographs related to the topic to be addressed  
(garden, nature, food, etc.)

Indoors or outdoors. The location should be equipped with  
a wall space or a large table so that the photos can be  
comfortably looked at (best at eye-level).

## PREPARATION

Choose and print photographs,  
depending on the number of participants.



## STEP BY STEP



1. Gather participants in a circle and explain the method and announce the guiding question (e.g. "Which picture represents a community garden for you?").

2. Ask participants to move around and look at the pictures exhibited before selecting one of them.
3. Participants in turn show the chosen photograph and explain the reasons of their choice.
4. (Optional) The facilitator summarises the results of the method.

## ALTERNATIVE USE

Use an icebreaker during which participants present themselves.



## FEEDBACK



The method has proved particularly useful for participants who are not proficient in the same language or who have difficulties expressing themselves.

## EXPERIENCES

The method has been successfully used for starting a project of community gardening.

Very useful for letting participants share their representations. Sometimes participants select the same picture but for different reasons.

Participants are excited and happy about being given the opportunity to contribute and make suggestions.



## CATEGORIES



#civic participation  
i#nclusiveness and interculturality



# Understanding & Storing Seeds

A short workshop

[www.greeninclusion.eu/post/seeds-workshop](http://www.greeninclusion.eu/post/seeds-workshop)



## GOAL OF THE EXERCISE

Raising awareness of the importance of seeds in our life; acquiring basic knowledge about how seeds are dispersed in nature and in our garden; saving seeds and getting inspiration how to know them better.



## PARTICIPANTS

3 to 20 persons

**Target group:** gardeners and anybody interested in saving seed

**Age:** 12 or above

## DURATION OF THE METHOD

90 to 120 min



## MATERIALS / PLACE

A big sheet of paper on which you draw a circle and divide it like a cake into six segments representing six ways seeds are dispersing (wind, water, animals, humans, gravity, explosion).

A4 paper and crayons or pencils to create seed bags

Garden or park, the more biodiversity the better.

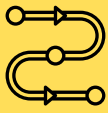
## PREPARATION

It's a good idea to read up on seeds, understand their diversity and how they are dispersed. A good starting point is this [Wikipedia article](#). Write down some examples. Gardeners might find it useful to have some basic knowledge on how to store seeds.

If you don't know how to make a simple seed bag, you might want to watch the following video clip:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pgxlulUXcwM>





## STEP BY STEP

### 1. Which seed are you?

Ask participants to carefully look around the garden, or park, for smaller and bigger seeds near them. Then ask them two questions: “Which seed is the most meaningful, important or interesting for you at this moment?” and “Which seed are you today?” Answers should be in the form of a drawing or an expression through body language. The other participants are asked to guess which seed is being shown. Then each participant explains why they have chosen this particular seed. Examples of answers could be: “Today I feel like a chestnut: warm, stable and well-grounded.” Or: “I have chosen dandelion seeds because I used to blow them as a child and love the memory of it.” Finally, thank the participants and “greet” all the seeds in the garden.

### 2. How do seeds travel?

Ask each participant in turn to think of the seed with which they have identified themselves earlier and by which method they disperse to start a new life as a plant. Collect the answers and write their name on the previously prepared sheet depicting the various modes of dispersal.

If a group is small or if the chosen seeds lack diversity, suggest a list of other seeds to illustrate how different seeds can be. The aim is to familiarise the participants with the biology of seeds and their role in the ecosystems in which they thrive. The information can also be useful for designing an urban garden.

### 3. How to save seeds?

Ask the participants to walk around the garden or park, and collect some more seeds, either on their own or divided into small groups of two or three persons that focus on seeds that disperse in a particular way. Once they have returned, show them a simple way to prepare a seed bag (see Preparation). Then ask them about the kind of information that should figure on a seed bag. Common answers are common or scientific name, date and place of collection, colour, smell and taste, need for water and sun, time when they should be collected or planted. etc. Choose wisely the ones you believe to be the most important ones and ask participants to inscribe them on their seed bags by using different colours, drawings, pictograms and other means they can think of. Conclude the session by informing participants about the best methods of storing seeds (e.g. drying them, where to store them, etc.).

## ALTERNATIVE USE



Instead of the entire workshop, focus just on one part.

When talking about seed dispersal, ask participants what seeds they consume regularly, where these seeds come from and how long they need to travel until they reach you to start a discussion about the ecological footprint and food sovereignty.

During the final discussion, talk about seed banks in various parts of the world and about community seed banks.

Using graphical means to describe the seeds instead of written notes will make the method more inclusive.



## FEEDBACK

Reflect on how to make the method even more inclusive.

## FURTHER READING



You can find a lot of information online about seed storage. Here are a few examples:

<https://www.seedsavers.org/learn#seed-saving>

<https://www.realseeds.co.uk/seedsavinginfo.html>

[https://seedalliance.org/wp-](https://seedalliance.org/wp-content/uploads/2010/04/seed_saving_guide.pdf)

[content/uploads/2010/04/seed\\_saving\\_guide.pdf](https://seedalliance.org/wp-content/uploads/2010/04/seed_saving_guide.pdf)

<https://www.communityseedbanks.org/>



## CATEGORIES

# seeds

# community organising

# green education



# The Garden of Personal Needs



[www.greeninclusion.eu/post/garden-of-personal-needs](http://www.greeninclusion.eu/post/garden-of-personal-needs)

## GOAL OF THE EXERCISE

Sharing a vision of your own garden and needs by drawing together a common garden without words; finding a common way of reconciling the needs of many people in a single piece of work; communication without words about own needs



## PARTICIPANTS

At least 4 persons

**Target group:** no restrictions

**Age:** 2 or above



## DURATION OF THE METHOD

30 to 120 min



## MATERIALS / PLACE

Coloured chalk or a large sheet of paper and painting and drawing materials, depending on the location

Outdoors (a large area of pavement or a parking lot) or indoors (a large table or the floor)



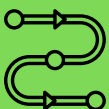
## PREPARATION

No particular preparation required



## STEP BY STEP

1. Explain the task to the participants and hand out the drawing materials.



2. Participants are asked to draw their vision of a garden according to their personal needs on a single drawing space, without communicating with each other by speech.
3. Participants are asked to discuss their needs and their artistic choices.

## ALTERNATIVE USE

Use the method for drawing any other common space (e.g. a city, town or village).



## FEEDBACK



A very inclusive method as anybody can paint or draw.

## EXPERIENCES

It was interesting to silently design together a common garden while respecting each participant's needs.



## CATEGORIES



- # co-design
- # civic participation
- # inclusiveness and interculturality
- # non-formal education



# Barriers Check

Exploring a Space from an Inclusionary Standpoint



[www.greeninclusion.eu/post/barriers-check](http://www.greeninclusion.eu/post/barriers-check)

## GOAL OF THE EXERCISE

Familiarising participants with the concept of a barriers check; awakening empathy; discovering new ways in which a garden, or another space, is being perceived; reflecting upon privileges, finding practical solutions for more inclusiveness



## PARTICIPANTS

5-20 persons

**Target group:** adults, young people, mixed groups with children

**Age:** or above

## DURATION OF THE METHOD

45 to 0 min



## MATERIALS / PLACE



Clipboards

Pens or pencils

Cards describing roles

A list of questions (scan the QRcode)

A space where to look for barriers, e.g. a garden

## PREPARATION

Acquaint yourself with the concept of a barriers check.

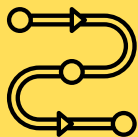
Create roles that allow participants to explore barriers in the chosen space.

Prepare a list of questions you want participants to use while exploring the selected space for barriers.





## STEP BY STEP



1. Explain to the participants the concept of a simulated barriers check and its goals, which are to raise awareness about possible barriers in a given space, experienced by persons who face them in daily life (ca. 5 min).

2. Divide the participants into small groups of two to four persons and assign each of them a role with the aim of helping them experience the space and daily activities related to it from the perspective of a person who is facing specific barriers, such as mobility or sensory restrictions and linguistic insecurity. Ask them in particular to look into the three main dimensions of a barriers check:

- How will the person described by the role get to the space?
- How will they be able to enter it?
- How will they be able to cope with it?

If appropriate, suggest activities that take place in the space in the course of a typical day or provide a list of additional questions.

3. Gather the participants and ask each group to share the results of their investigation and jointly discuss the findings.

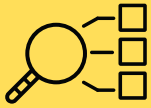
## ALTERNATIVE USE

Use this method as a starting point for joint efforts to make a space more accessible by reducing physical, visual, linguistic, social, cultural and other barriers for specific target groups.

Use this method to examine possible barriers related to a specific activity you are planning, such as a workshop, by asking how to access information about it, how to get to the venue, how to take part in it, etc.



Add a session during which participants will make practical suggestions how to make the space more inclusive. Guiding questions would be: What should be improved? What changes should be made? How could these be implemented?



## CATEGORIES

- # community organising
- # co design
- # civic participation
- # inclusiveness and interculturality
- # non formal education



# GET TO KNOW THE CONTRIBUTORS OF THIS BOOK

## Krakov Municipal Greenspace Authority


 Krakov, Poland

"Krakov's Greenery" team



Kraków  
Municipal Greenspace  
Authority



 <https://zmk.krakow.pl>

**MAIN PURPOSE:** Maintenance /development of green spaces / collaboration with inhabitants /urban agriculture / education / blue green solutions

**TARGET GROUPS:** inhabitants of Krakov

**FOUNDED IN:** 2015

**NUMBER OF PEOPLE**

**REGULARLY INVOLVED:** 260/6

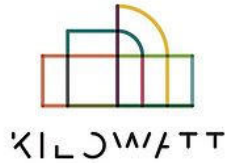
**RECENT PROJECTS :** community gardens (e.g. regulations on how to start and maintain them); educational activities (Center of Ecological Education "Symbiosis"; educational programmes, such as "Green Classes", "Teachers close to nature", "Krakov Apiary").



### CONTACT US, IF YOU WANT:

- to learn more about regulations concerning community gardens.
- to inform yourself about other projects.

# KILOWATT



Bologna, Italy



<https://kilowatt.bo.it>

**MAIN PURPOSE:** community engagement / sustainability / non-formal education

**TARGET GROUPS:** citizens (students, workers, families, elderly people, kids), disadvantaged people, third sector organisations

**FOUNDED IN:** 2013

## NUMBER OF PEOPLE

**REGULARLY INVOLVED:** 30 (permanently), 50 (seasonally)

**RECENT PROJECTS** Le Serre dei Giardini Margherita, KW Garden, Resilienze Festival, Semino, GREAT Life

**COOPERATIONS** Municipality of Bologna, Regional office, educational institutions, territorial organizations, local associations



## CONTACT US, IF YOU WANT:

- to know more about community organising and capacity building
- to discover how the urban regeneration process of a space works
- to develop activities focused on innovation and sustainability
- to visit us when your are in the neighbourhood

# Changemaker AB

 Göteborg, Stockholm, Boden, Skellefteå and Karlstad, Sweden



**Main Purpose:** Learning and Innovation - Change the World

**Target groups:** Companies and Public Organisations

**FOUNDED IN:** 1998

**NUMBER OF PEOPLE REGULARLY INVOLVED:** 5-10

**RECENT PROJECTS** Various Erasmus+ projects in the fields of circular economy, agriculture, citizen science, sustainable education and tourism




 <http://changemaker.nu>



**CONTACT US, IF:**

- you look for a cooperation partner for gamification, sustainability education, EU project management
- you need an experienced partner for Erasmus+ projects
- you want to build educational programmes

# SaluTerre

 Sainte-Foy-la-Grande, France



 <http://www.saluterre.com>

SaluTerre 

**MAIN PURPOSE** create nourishing spaces such as shared gardens, urban farms, local food systems

**TARGET GROUPS:** Public authorities, social housing, real estate developers

**FOUNDED IN:** 2004

**NUMBER OF PEOPLE REGULARLY INVOLVED:** 6

**RECENT PROJECTS:** Shared gardens (Antony, Ozoir-la-Ferrère, Saint-Gaudens, etc.) ; local food strategy of the city of Epinay-sur-Seine; neighbourhood farm in Metz.



**CONTACT US, IF:**

- you adopt an inclusive and/or a coproduction approach in your projects;
- have insights about food justice.



# himmelbeet



Berlin-Wedding, Germany

**MAIN PURPOSE :** promotion of urban greenery through community gardening with a focus on participation, self-organisation, environmental education and inclusion

**TARGET GROUPS:** citizens (especially direct neighbourhood), disadvantaged people, local initiatives

**FOUNDED IN:** 2012

**NUMBER OF PEOPLE**

**REGULARLY INVOLVED:** 10 employees, more than 200 gardeners, many volunteers

**RECENT PROJECTS** different projects on environmental education, with a focus on urban gardening, participation, inclusion and climate protection, such as "Ab in den Garten!" – inclusive urban gardening workshops in easy language; "Klima im Kiez" – activation and education about climate change in the immediate neighbourhood



 <https://www.himmelbeet.de>



## CONTACT US, IF YOU WANT TO:

- know more about urban gardening      urban nature in Berlin
- learn about the social and ecological value of these places
- exchange knowledge on inclusive approaches to community gardening
- visit Berlin, come by to participate and get your hands in the ground!

# Zasiej



Warsaw, Poland



**ZASIEJ**



<https://zasiej.org>

**MAIN PURPOSE:** sustainability & ecology awareness and education, hortitherapy, food and seed sovereignty, cultural and artistic projects, community engagement

**TARGET GROUPS:** allotment gardeners, local inhabitants and cultural institutions

**FOUNDED IN:** 2019

**NUMBER OF PEOPLE  
REGULARLY INVOLVED:** 5

**RECENT PROJECTS:** Warsaw Seed Bank – saving seeds and educating about them in local urban gardens and institutions; art exhibition Widoki – collaboration with local culture house; Micro\_exhibition „Allotment holders or allotment gardeners?” – collaboration with local culture house; Garden season – let’s meet on the plots – process of opening of the allotments in collaboration with the city of Poznan; garden guided walks and workshops.



## CONTACT US, IF:

- you want to get involved in our local community garden in Warsaw
- you are a seed saver and want to exchange seeds!
- you would like to organise a guided walk in the allotment gardens, workshops on ecology, gardening, food, seeds, allotments(land)art, hortitherapy, forest bathing, etc.



# Comparative Research Network

Comparative Research Network:

Aims – People – Projects – Methods – Results



Berlin-Wedding, Germany



<https://crnonline.de/>

**MAIN PURPOSE:** Connect the scientific world with society and citizens, developing new educational methods for participation, inclusion, sustainability, etc.

**TARGET GROUPS:** adults and citizens, organisations active in participatory projects and local communities in Berlin, especially the urban district of Wedding

**FOUNDED IN:** 2007

**NUMBER OF PEOPLE REGULARLY INVOLVED:** 25

**RÉCENT PROJECTS :** projects with migrants or about teachers and digital tools (EU- Prepare, EDU+, Mentoring Change, Beyond Zoom, CirculART-e, Includate, Lang@Work). improving skills in civic society (Overcome Fakes, NACCS, EUARENAS), in the field of sustainability (Competences4ESD, Growing Green Communities, Conscious Consumption, SMILEce, Green Routes) and many others.



## CONTACT US, IF:

- you want to learn innovative methods about participation and inclusion and sustainability,
- you would like to develop, write and apply for new projects,
- you want to exchange methods in adult education,
- you want to see how we work in the neighborhood, write to [central@crnonline.de](mailto:central@crnonline.de)