

# Youth DemocRAID: Education, Debate, Action

## WORKSHOP

### “Community Action and Grassroots Initiatives”

# CONTENT TABLE

<b>Disclaimer on Ethical Standards</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Introduction to the CERV program</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Presentation of Youth DemocrAID</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Agenda</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Introduction – What Are Grassroots Initiatives</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Planning a Local Initiative – From Idea to Action</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Presenting Ideas and Constructive Feedback</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Learning from Practitioners – Guest Speaker Session</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Annexes</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>LOCAL INITIATIVE PLANNING TEMPLATE</b>	<b>15</b>

## Disclaimer on Ethical Standards

Welcome, everyone, to this workshop. Before we begin, I would like to take a moment to highlight some important values and ethical standards that will guide our discussions and activities. These principles are not only central to this workshop but also reflect the core values of the European Union under the Citizens, Equality, Rights, and Values (CERV) program.

- **Respect for Human Dignity:** Everyone deserves respect. All voices and perspectives are welcome, and we'll listen with open minds.
- **Equality:** Every person is valued equally, regardless of gender, race, religion, or background. Discrimination won't be tolerated.
- **Gender Equality:** All genders are treated equally, ensuring equal opportunities to contribute and participate.
- **Non-Discrimination & Anti-Racism:** We embrace diversity and stand against racism and discrimination. Let's challenge any biased behavior.
- **Freedom of Expression:** Share your ideas freely, but always with respect for others' dignity and rights.
- **Tolerance & Understanding:** Our differences are strengths. We'll focus on dialogue based on mutual understanding.
- **Participation & Inclusion:** Every voice matters, especially those that are often marginalized. Let's ensure everyone feels heard.
- **Solidarity & Cooperation:** Let's support and collaborate with each other to find solutions that benefit all.
- Our **Child Protection Policy** aims to protect children and young people from harm, exploitation, negligence, and violence in all activities organized by our organization, while ensuring a safe and inclusive environment for everyone involved.

By upholding these values, we'll foster a positive, respectful, and productive environment. Thank you, and I look forward to our session!

## Introduction to the CERV program

The Citizens, Equality, Rights, and Values (CERV) programme is a major European Union initiative aimed at protecting and promoting the fundamental rights and values enshrined in the EU Treaties and the Charter of Fundamental Rights. The programme supports projects operating at local, regional, national and transnational levels, with the aim of building open, inclusive and rights-based societies founded on the principles of democracy, equality and the rule of law.

These projects focus on promoting social inclusion, combating discrimination and protecting the rights of vulnerable groups, such as minorities and migrants. The programme also addresses issues such as racism and xenophobia, encouraging respect for diversity across Europe.

A key part of the programme is the promotion of democratic engagement and citizen participation in decision-making processes. By fostering dialogue between civil society and government, the CERV programme aims to ensure that citizens' voices are heard in shaping the future of Europe.

It also contributes to preserving Europe's shared history and cultural heritage, strengthening the sense of unity among European citizens. It supports initiatives that celebrate common values while recognising the richness of different European cultures.

Overall, the CERV programme plays a key role in creating a more inclusive and just European society. By strengthening civil society and promoting civic participation, the programme helps to ensure that equality, democracy and human rights remain central to the life of the European Union.

## Presentation of Youth DemocrAID

In today's fast-changing world, the importance of engaged and informed citizens cannot be underestimated. Active participation in democratic processes, from voting to community involvement, is fundamental to the health and vitality of any democracy. However, recent research and polls have revealed a worrying trend: a significant decline in political participation among young people, particularly those between the ages of 15 and 25, in several countries in Europe and beyond. Low voter turnout, disengagement from institutional politics and lack of civic awareness have become pressing problems.

'Youth DemocrAID' is a project created within the framework of the Citizens, Equality, Rights and Values (CERV) programme. Its main objective is to support and promote democracy, particularly with regard to the involvement of young people. They represent the emerging generation of citizens whose active engagement is essential to strengthen democracy and make the European Union more inclusive and united.

Youth DemocrAID aims to prepare engaging learning materials using non-formal education methods, offer workshops specifically designed for young people and connect them with their peers in partner countries by organising an international youth forum.

The activities are mainly aimed at young people aged between 15 and 25, enabling them to engage with their peers in the five participating European countries (Italy, Poland, Slovakia, Portugal and Greece) during a series of local workshops and debates conducted in each country.

# Agenda

## 3h 55 min proposal

10 min	I. Introduction - Ethical Standards and European Values, Introduction to the CERV program, presentation of the project
30 min	II. Introduction – What Are Grassroots Initiatives?
60 min	III. Planning a Local Initiative – From Idea to Action
15 min	IV. Coffee Break
45 min	V. Presenting Ideas and Constructive Feedback
15 min	VI. Coffee Break
30 min	VII. Learning from Practitioners – Guest Speaker Session
30 min	VIII. Summary and Next Steps

# Introduction – What Are Grassroots Initiatives

**Objective:** Participants will gain an understanding of grassroots initiatives, their significance, and their impact on communities.

Duration: 30 min

Target Group: Youth aged 16-30

Format: In-person, interactive

Number of Participants: 15-25

Materials needed: "Map of Change" exercise material, pens

## **Key Topics:**

- Definition of grassroots initiatives and their role in fostering social change.
- Differences between grassroots activism and institutional action.
- The role of young people in driving local and European-level changes.

## **Inspiring case studies:**

- **Fridays for Future** – A global youth movement addressing climate change.
- **Participatory Budgeting** – How citizens can influence local financial decisions.
- **Charity and mutual aid initiatives** – Organizing local support actions for marginalized groups.

## **Methods:**

- **Short presentation** (10 minutes): Overview of grassroots activism and its impact.

### **"Map of Change" exercise** (20 minutes):

- In groups, participants identify key issues affecting their communities.
- Each group selects the most pressing issue and maps out its causes and effects.
- Group discussion on how these issues influence their everyday lives.

# Planning a Local Initiative – From Idea to Action

**Objective:** Participants will learn how to develop an action plan for a grassroots initiative and structure their ideas into achievable steps.

Duration: 60 min

Target Group: Youth aged 16-30

Format: In-person, interactive

Number of Participants: 15-25

Materials needed: planning template, pens

## **Key Topics:**

1. **Identifying relevant social issues** – What are the most pressing community needs?
2. **Defining a SMART goal** – How to set clear, measurable, and realistic objectives.
3. **Planning actions** – Structuring the project with clear responsibilities and timelines.
4. **Resources and stakeholders** – What is needed to implement the initiative?
5. **Outreach and promotion** – How to engage the community and spread the word.
6. **Building partnerships** – Collaborating with NGOs, local authorities, and media.

## **Methods:**

### **Group work:**

- Each group selects a topic for their initiative (e.g., environmental protection, social inclusion, educational outreach).
- Using a structured **planning template**, they outline:
  - The problem they want to address.
  - The specific goal of their initiative.
  - A timeline and action plan.
  - Resources needed and possible sources of support.
  - A communication and promotion strategy.

### **Project presentations:**

- Each group presents their initiative in **three minutes**.
- Facilitator and other participants provide feedback on feasibility and impact.

# Presenting Ideas and Constructive Feedback

**Objective:** Participants will practice public speaking and receive feedback to refine their ideas.

Duration: 44 min

Target Group: Youth aged 16-30

Format: In-person, interactive

Number of Participants: 15-25

Materials needed: paper, pens

## **Key Topics:**

- How to present an initiative clearly and persuasively.
- The power of storytelling in grassroots movements.
- How to handle criticism and answer challenging questions.

## **Methods:**

### **"Pitch Your Idea" exercise:**

- Each group gives a short, structured pitch of their initiative.
- The audience votes on the most innovative or impactful idea.

### **Facilitated discussion:**

- What challenges could arise in implementing these initiatives?
- How to overcome common obstacles in grassroots projects?

# Learning from Practitioners – Guest Speaker Session

**Objective:** Participants will gain insight from an experienced activist or NGO representative about the realities of running grassroots initiatives.

Duration: 30 min

Target Group: Youth aged 16-30

Format: In-person, interactive

Number of Participants: 15-25

Materials needed: none

## *Key Topics:*

- How to start a community project and sustain long-term engagement.
- Common mistakes young activists make and how to avoid them.
- Strategies for securing funding and building partnerships.

## *Methods:*

- **Live interview:** A facilitated conversation with an activist, NGO leader, or local government representative.
- **Q&A session:** Participants can ask direct questions about real-life experiences and strategies.

## Summary and Next Steps

**Objective:** Encourage participants to translate their ideas into real actions and provide them with practical guidance for moving forward.

Duration 30 min

Target Group: Youth aged 16-30

Format: In-person, interactive

Number of Participants: 15-25

Materials needed: paper, pens, resource mapping material

### *Key Topics:*

- How to implement the workshop ideas into actual community projects.
- Finding support – where to look for funding and guidance.
- Networking – building a strong support system for social initiatives.

### *Methods:*

- **"Resource Mapping" exercise:** Participants brainstorm organizations, funding sources, and contacts that can help them implement their ideas.
- **Motivational closing statement:** Facilitator shares examples of individuals who started similar projects and made a real impact.
- **Certificate distribution** (optional).

### **Expected Outcomes:**

By the end of the workshop, participants will:

- ✓ Understand how grassroots initiatives work and their importance.
- ✓ Have a structured action plan for a local initiative.
- ✓ Know how to effectively communicate and promote a social cause.
- ✓ Be familiar with potential funding sources and partnerships.
- ✓ Be motivated and empowered to take action in their communities.

### ***Additional Materials for Participants:***

#### **Handouts & Worksheets:**

- Local Initiative Planning Template
- SMART Goal Setting Worksheet
- Community Resource Map

#### **Useful Links:**

- Platforms for youth activism and community organizing
- Funding opportunities for grassroots projects
- Youth DemocRAID project website

#### **Recommended Videos:**

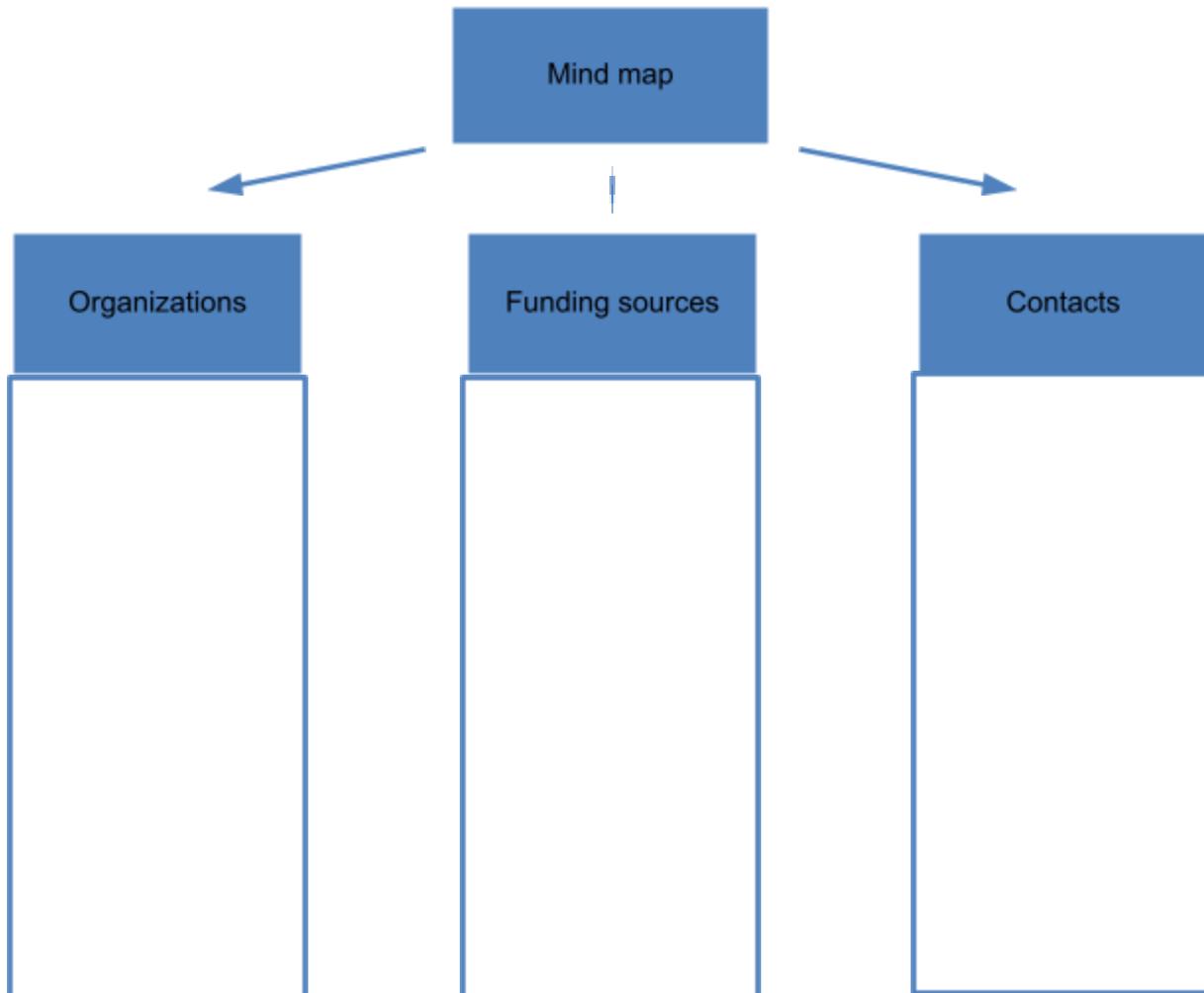
- TEDx Talk: "How Small Initiatives Change the World"
- Documentary: "Activism in the Digital Age"

# Annexes

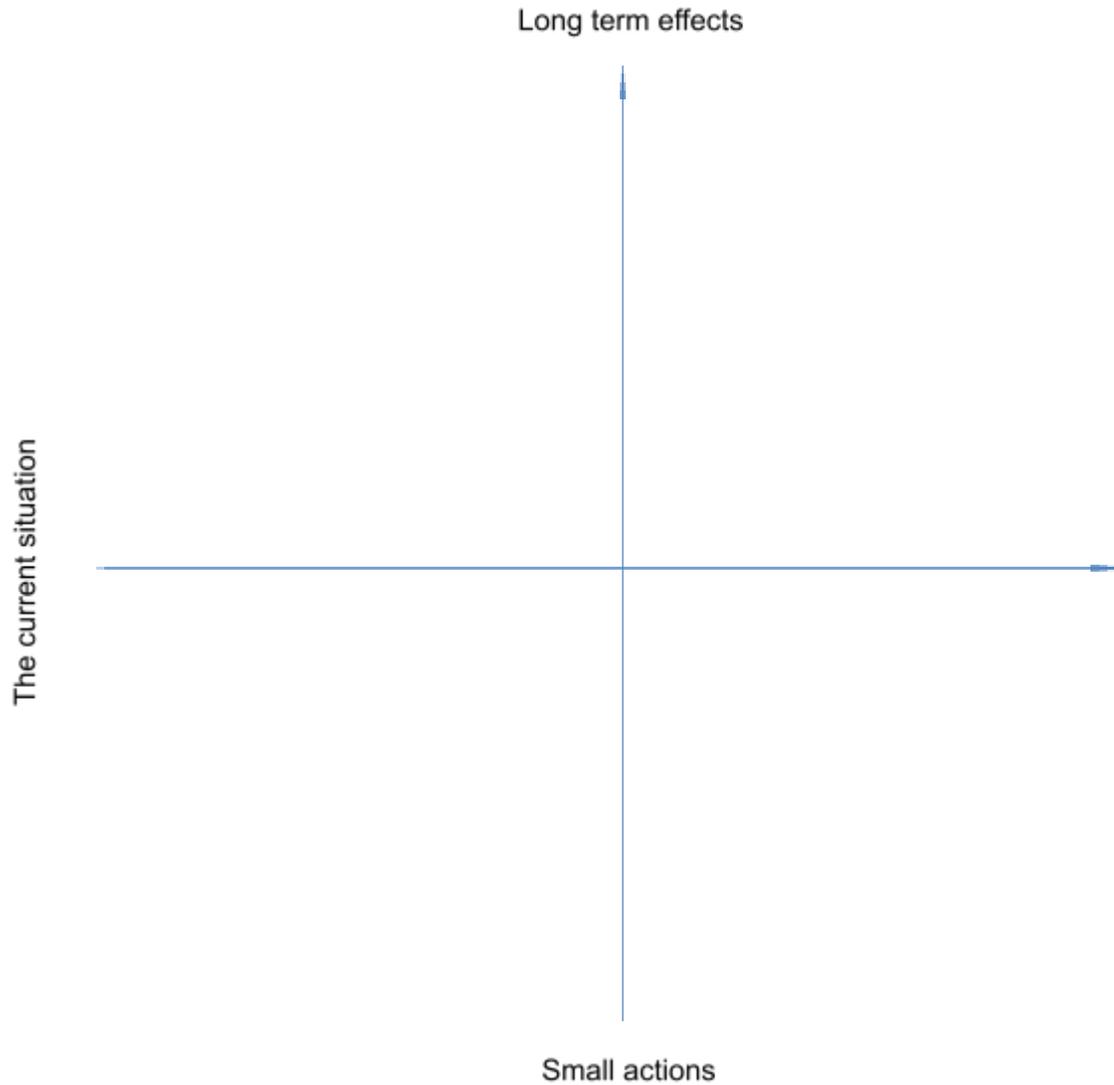
## Planning template:

What's the problem?	
What is the specific goal of the initiative?	
A timeline and action plan	
Resources needed and possible sources of support	
A communication and promotion strategy	

„Resource Mapping" exercise material



## "Map of Change" exercise material



# LOCAL INITIATIVE PLANNING TEMPLATE

This template is designed to help you structure and plan your grassroots initiative effectively. Fill out each section with as much detail as possible to create a solid foundation for your project.

## 1. GENERAL INFORMATION

- **Initiative Name:**
- **Project Team (Names & Roles):**
  - Project Leader:
  - Communications Manager:
  - Logistics Coordinator:
  - Community Engagement Lead:
- **Location of the Initiative:**
- **Target Audience (Who will benefit from this initiative?)**

## 2. IDENTIFYING THE PROBLEM

- **What is the issue you want to address?** *(Clearly define the problem you are trying to solve.)*
- **Why is this issue important to your community?** *(Provide evidence, statistics, or real-life examples if possible.)*
- **Who is affected by this problem?** *(Identify the specific groups impacted.)*

## 3. DEFINING YOUR GOALS (SMART Goals)

SMART = *Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-bound*

- **Primary Goal:** *(What is the main goal of your initiative? What change do you want to see?)*
- **Specific Objectives:** *(Break your goal into smaller, measurable objectives.)*
  - Objective 1:
  - Objective 2:
  - Objective 3:

#### 4. ACTION PLAN

List the key steps required to implement your initiative.

Action	Responsible Person/Group	Deadline	Resources Needed
Step 1: Planning & Research	[Name/Team]	[Date]	[Tools, Materials]
Step 2: Community Engagement	[Name/Team]	[Date]	[Partners, Media]
Step 3: Implementation	[Name/Team]	[Date]	[Volunteers, Funding]
Step 4: Evaluation & Follow-up	[Name/Team]	[Date]	[Surveys, Reports]

#### 5. RESOURCE PLANNING

- **Human Resources (Who will be involved?)**
- **Material Resources (What equipment, supplies, or spaces are needed?)**
- **Financial Resources (What is the estimated budget?)**

Item/Resource	Estimated Cost	Source of Funding
[Resource 1]	[\$ Amount]	[Self-funded, Donation, Grant]
[Resource 2]	[\$ Amount]	[Sponsor, Crowdfunding]
[Resource 3]	[\$ Amount]	[NGO, Municipality]

#### 6. COMMUNITY & PARTNER INVOLVEMENT

- **Who are your key stakeholders?** (*Organizations, community leaders, local government, businesses, etc.*)
- **How will you engage them in your initiative?** (*Meetings, emails, partnerships, social media, etc.*)
- **Expected roles of stakeholders:** (*What do you expect from each partner? Financial support, promotional help, etc.*)

#### 7. PROMOTION & OUTREACH STRATEGY

- **What channels will you use to promote your initiative?** (*Social media, local events, press, flyers, etc.*)
- **Key messages you want to communicate:** (*What do you want people to know and do?*)
- **Hashtags & Social Media Tags (if applicable):**

## 8. CHALLENGES & SOLUTIONS

Identify possible obstacles and how you plan to overcome them.

Potential Challenge	Proposed Solution
Lack of funding	Apply for local grants, crowdfunding campaign
Low community engagement	Partner with local influencers, hold an awareness event
Lack of volunteers	Promote through schools, offer incentives

## 9. MONITORING & EVALUATION

- **How will you measure the success of your initiative?** (*Surveys, number of participants, feedback, social media reach, etc.*)
- **What does success look like?** (*Define clear indicators of impact.*)
- **What are the next steps after this initiative?** (*Will this be a one-time event or an ongoing project?*)

## 10. SUMMARY & NEXT STEPS

- **Next Actions to Take (After Completing This Template):**
  1. Review with your team.
  2. Present to potential partners or funders.
  3. Develop a timeline and assign responsibilities.
  4. Start implementation!

### Notes & Additional Comments:

(Use this section to jot down any additional ideas, contacts, or notes relevant to your initiative.)

### Instructions for Use:

- Print and distribute this template to all team members.
- Use it as a reference document to track progress and ensure accountability.
- Update it as needed throughout the project lifecycle.

## SMART Goal Setting Worksheet

This worksheet will help you define clear, structured, and achievable goals using the **SMART** framework. SMART stands for **Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-bound**.

### 1. Define Your Goal

- **What do you want to achieve?** (*Describe your goal in one sentence.*)
- Example: "Organize a community clean-up event in our neighborhood."
- **Why is this goal important?** (*Explain how this goal will create a positive impact.*)
- Example: "To reduce litter and improve the quality of public spaces for residents."

### 2. Apply the SMART Criteria

### **S - Specific (Clear and well-defined)**

- What exactly needs to be done?
- Who is involved?
- Where will it take place?
- How will you accomplish it?
- Example: "Recruit 30 volunteers to clean up the park and nearby streets over one weekend."

### **✓ Refined goal statement:**

#### **M - Measurable (Quantify your progress)**

- How will you measure success? (Use numbers, percentages, or other quantifiable indicators.)
- What data or feedback will you collect?
- Example: "The goal will be reached if we collect at least 50 bags of waste and engage at least 30 participants."

### **✓ Measurement criteria:**

#### **A - Achievable (Realistic and within your capacity)**

- Do you have the resources and skills to reach this goal?
- What challenges might arise, and how will you overcome them?
- Example: "We will collaborate with local schools, businesses, and NGOs to recruit volunteers and secure trash bags and gloves."

### **✓ Resources and potential challenges:**

#### **R - Relevant (Aligned with your mission and values)**

- Does this goal support a broader mission or long-term vision?
- How does it contribute to solving a real problem in the community?
- Example: "This aligns with our goal of promoting environmental awareness and civic engagement in our neighborhood."

### **✓ Relevance to your mission:**

#### **T - Time-bound (Set a deadline or timeline)**

- When do you want to accomplish this goal?
- What are the key milestones?
- Example: "Plan the event in two months, hold it on June 15th, and evaluate its success by June 20th."

✓ **Deadline and timeline:**

### 3. Final SMART Goal Statement

Combine all elements into a final goal statement.

Example:

*"By June 15th, we will organize a community clean-up event in our neighborhood, recruiting at least 30 volunteers to collect 50 bags of waste, improving the cleanliness of public spaces and raising environmental awareness."*

✓ **Final SMART Goal:**

### 4. Action Plan

Break your goal into smaller steps to track progress.

Step	Responsible Person/Group	Deadline	Resources Needed
Research locations and get permissions	[Name/Team]	[Date]	[Contacts, Permits]
Recruit volunteers and promote the event	[Name/Team]	[Date]	[Social Media, Flyers]
Secure cleaning supplies (gloves, bags, etc.)	[Name/Team]	[Date]	[Donations, Sponsorships]
Conduct the event	[Name/Team]	[Date]	[Volunteers, Supplies]
Evaluate and report results	[Name/Team]	[Date]	[Surveys, Feedback]

### 5. Reflection and Next Steps

- **What potential challenges do you foresee?** (E.g., weather conditions, low volunteer turnout, funding issues.)
- **How will you track and adjust progress?** (Regular team check-ins, data collection, mid-project evaluations.)
- **What's the next step after achieving this goal?** (Can it be expanded, repeated, or used as a model for other initiatives?)

**Instructions for Use:**

- Fill out this worksheet for each new initiative.
- Review it regularly to stay on track.
- Adjust goals as necessary while maintaining SMART principles.

### Community Resource Map Worksheet

This worksheet will help you identify and map out key resources in your community that can support your grassroots initiative. Resources may include **organizations, funding opportunities, community leaders, volunteers, facilities, and media platforms.**

## 1. Define Your Initiative

- **Name of Initiative:**
- **Main Objective:** *(What issue are you addressing?)*
- **Target Audience:** *(Who will benefit from this initiative?)*

## 2. Identify Key Community Resources

### A. Local Organizations & NGOs *(Who can provide expertise, funding, or logistical support?)*

Organization Name	Type of Support (Funding, Training, Space, Volunteers)	Contact Information
Example: Green Earth Foundation	Environmental project funding, education workshops	info@greenearth.org
Example: Local Youth Center	Free space for events, promotion	youthcenter@city.org

✓ List at least three organizations that align with your cause.

### B. Local Government & Institutions *(Can city officials or institutions support your initiative?)*

Department/Representative	Type of Support (Permits, Endorsements, Grants)	Contact Information
Example: City Council Office	Event permits, public space access	citycouncil@city.gov
Example: Local University	Student volunteers, research support	university@edu.org

✓ Consider how government officials or educational institutions can contribute to your project.

### C. Community Leaders & Influencers *(Who are the key people that can help spread the word and mobilize resources?)*

Name/Role	Influence/Support Provided	Contact Information
Example: Local Activist (Jane Doe)	Can help promote event via social media	janedoe@activism.org
Example: Business Owner	Willing to donate materials or sponsor activities	business@email.com

✓ Identify community leaders who can help amplify your message.

**D. Volunteer & Human Resources (Who can help you run your initiative?)**

Volunteer Role	Responsibilities	Number of People Needed
Event Coordinator	Organizes logistics, schedules	1-2
Social Media Manager	Promotes event online	1
Field Volunteers	Help with setup and implementation	5-10

✓ Consider reaching out to schools, youth groups, or local businesses for volunteers.

**E. Available Facilities & Equipment (What locations or materials are accessible for your event or project?)**

Facility/Resource	Purpose	Owner/Provider
Community Hall	Meeting space for workshops	City Hall
Local Park	Public event space	Municipality
Printing Services	Flyers, banners	Local print shop

✓ Check if local libraries, cafes, or public spaces can support your event.

**F. Media & Communication Channels (Where can you promote your initiative?)**

Platform/Media	Type of Coverage	Contact Information
Local Newspaper	Article on the initiative	editor@newspaper.com
Community Radio	Event announcement	radio@station.com
Facebook Groups	Community engagement	Facebook Group Name

✓ Identify media channels that can help increase visibility for your project.

### 3. Strategy for Engaging Resources

- How will you reach out to these resources? (*Emails, calls, meetings, presentations?*)
- What support will you request from each resource? (*Financial, in-kind donations, expertise, endorsements?*)
- What partnerships could be formed for long-term collaboration? (*Sustainable alliances with local organizations?*)

### 4. Summary & Next Steps

- Top three priority resources to engage first:
  - 1.
  - 2.
  - 3.
- Immediate actions to take within the next week:

✓ This resource map should be updated regularly as new partnerships and opportunities arise.

#### *Instructions for Use:*

- Fill out this worksheet before launching your initiative.
- Identify gaps in resources and adjust your outreach strategy accordingly.
- Use it as a reference when applying for funding or partnerships.