

## Exercise: Exploring Local Actions for Impact

Explore the following examples of impactful actions in local communities involving different stakeholders. What (local) challenges were identified? What solution pathway can you detect?

Exercise on developing actions for impact! To start our discussion, first, we will present compelling examples that will help deepen your understanding of the task at hand. Engaging in this exercise is invaluable, as it enhances your insight into collaborative actions and equips you with the tools to plan meaningful interventions that drive SD. Let us dive in and discover how we can work together to create impact!

Example 1: Westphalian University of Applied Sciences Gelsenkirchen  
Event series "Sustainable on the road!"

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Challenge	To shape a future worth living, we need ideas for new ways of consuming, doing business, and living. Numerous initiatives in the Ruhr metropolis already practice sustainable behaviour. The sustainability challenge, "Food production and food culture, " was among the topics covered.
Background	In the summer semester of 2023, the Ruhr University Alliance, an alliance consisting of three universities, introduced the "Sustainable on the Road!" event series, inviting students, faculty, university staff, and interested members of the public to explore local sustainability initiatives. The series aimed at highlighting sustainable mobility, attitudes, values, and local commitment, encouraging participants to engage actively and experiment with sustainable approaches. Participants visited different sustainability sights in their city. A community-supported agriculture set the scene for a discussion on "The Future of Agriculture - From Small-Scale Farming to Post-Agricultural Production". Each visit was accompanied by keynote speeches from academics and, occasionally, external speakers.
Target groups	Students, teaching staff, employees, citizens
Description	<p>With organic food gaining popularity, the pandemic, climate crisis, and war in Ukraine, we are facing intensified global hunger, moving us away from the UN's second sustainability goal of "Zero Hunger." The event at the Kümper Heide organic farm in Dortmund, Germany, invited participants to engage in sustainable farming practices and understand diverse cultivation processes.</p> <p>Following the hands-on experience, discussions addressed various solutions for feeding the world. Academics shared insights about community-supported agriculture and educational farms, presenting alternative food cultivation methods. Additionally, innovative food production techniques, such as vertical gardens and cell-based meat, were discussed. This exploration connected traditional farming practices with cutting-edge production methods, showcasing human ingenuity in the pursuit of sustainability.</p>

### Example 1: Rede Convergir Online mapping platform

Challenge	Map sustainable and inspiring projects to facilitate collaboration among network members, create synergies, and promote a balanced society with a harmonious relationship with the environment. This initiative aims to foster reflection and raise awareness of each individual's role in building a critical, constructive, active, and empowered society.
Background	The socio-economic crisis in 2011 resulted in declining living standards for many in Portugal yet simultaneously spurred the emergence of alternative projects, including self-organised cultural centres, urban gardening groups, and solidarity-based exchange networks. In this context, Rede Convergir serves as a hub platform ( <a href="https://redeconvergir.net">https://redeconvergir.net</a> ) that lists sustainable projects and events, fostering cooperation and encouraging participation. The platform details project goals, key ideas, founding years, and participant numbers and provides contact information with links to project websites. It also features an active calendar of workshops and events throughout Portugal, covering activities such as tree pruning, permaculture, and team building (Baumgarten, 2017). While it does not strictly define sustainability, the initiative describes relevant projects as those "contributing to local sustainability, based on alternative models" that challenge existing economic practices.
Target groups	Citizens, civil society groups, sustainability-related initiatives
Description	<p>As of 2024, Rede Convergir lists 242 sustainability initiatives across Portugal, categorising them into types (e.g., permaculture, transition, land and nature management) across key areas like agriculture, livestock, eco-technology, art, education, and alternative economy. The platform distinguishes initiatives by their operational settings—urban, rural, or both—while considering accessibility for various visitor demographics, including children, families, and individuals with disabilities. It also assesses the developmental stage of each initiative (germinate, take root, fruiting, seed) and their geographic location.</p> <p>Before listing initiatives, the platform highlights workshops and events in Portugal that participants from the listed projects are promoting.</p>

### Your task

Now that you have completed the first part of the MOOC on community impact, your task is to explore the examples of transdisciplinary actions aiming for local impact. Review the examples provided and identify how the creation of the intervention unfolded. What key challenges were identified? Through what measures have they been addressed? What key stakeholders were involved in the intervention, and for what reason? How might the results of the interventions contribute to systemic change? Consider how these elements could be applied to your project or community initiative.

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