



YOU PART

Engage. Connect. Empower

LOCAL ACTIONS FOR GLOBAL CHANGE

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LOCAL ACTIONS FOR GLOBAL CHANGE

FACTS

Age of participants: 15+

Number of participants: 4-20

Duration: 240+ minutes (weekend workshop or 4-8 shorter workshops possible by combining some of the steps)

GOALS

The main goal of this activity is to support young people in planning and implementing local actions in their communities. First, they will think about which global challenges are important to them and what they would like to change in their local environment; then, step by step, they will develop a plan to organise and implement a local action.

These guidelines are designed to support young people in carrying out “live” local actions. The aim is also to encourage young people to participate, socialise (in person) and thus strengthen their social skills through the organisation and implementation of the action.

TOPICS

Any topic that is relevant to participants. TIP: *Topics connected to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).*

Our world is increasingly connected. Some say the world is becoming a global village. But what does that really mean? To give young people an idea, ask them to think about how many times they have a piece of chocolate. Do they ever wonder, for example, where the cocoa that is the main ingredient in chocolate grows, who produced it and under what conditions, how much the workers are paid for a full day's work on the plantation, what impact does cocoa farming have on the environment in which it thrives, where is the chocolate made, what journey did the chocolate have to travel to get into their hands? Similar questions could be asked about all the things that we use. Of course, we do not have time to research the background of all the things that surround us from morning to night. But it is important to be aware of how each one of us affects people and the environment, and at the same time to ask ourselves what doesn't feel right and what each one of us could do differently to contribute in our own way to change for a better world.

As Vanessa Andreotti said, “we are all part of the problem and part of the solution” (Soft versus critical global citizenship education, 2006). It's important to discuss with young people what it is that they would like to change - whether at home, at school, in their local community, in their country or in the world. Action is about making the change you want to see happen. It could be an action to reduce the use of plastic bottles at school, a second-hand clothes swap, an action of writing letters to decision-makers, an activity that you organise for refugee children, a promotion of fair-trade, an activity aimed at raising awareness about climate change, and so on. It is important to think as broadly as possible about organising actions, because every decision you make and every action you take affects many people and the environment, both in your immediate neighbourhood and around the world. Young people can organise an action on their own or with others - with their classmates, with their friends, with their family members or with anyone else willing to contribute to positive social change.

MATERIALS

workshop: markers, paper (A4), posters, tape, computer

other materials and equipment: depending on what the participants will need to carry out the action

INSTRUCTIONS

Step 1 – What is the problem that young people want to address?

The first step in planning a local action is to find out what really matters to young people and why it could matter to others. What doesn't feel right in the world, what makes them sad or angry and what do they want to change? Then they should think about what they can do and how they can make it happen.

You should ask the participants to think about what they actually know about the global problem or challenge that they want to address. If they are going to present facts or statistics as part of their action, first they have to make sure these facts are true and up-to-date and they come from reliable sources.

The participants should use as many different sources as possible when researching the background of their topic. A lot of information can be found on the internet. However, you need to remind the participants to not forget about newspapers, magazines, books and other sources that they can access at school, in the library or at home. If they don't know where the best place to find the information they need is, they can ask you and your colleagues.

Step 2 – How to present the idea?

Explain to the participants that it is important to think about who can actually contribute to the changes they want to see before they decide to present their idea to others. The answer to this question will influence to whom they present their idea and how they present it. The participants should be aware that when presenting an idea, it is important to present it quickly and clearly. They must always keep two things in mind: *What is the problem? What do I want to change?* Remind them that they already know much more about the problem than others who may not even know that the problem exists. So they should keep it simple: keep their message short, clear and engaging!

Step 3 – How to build the team?

For many topics, there are NGOs that warmly welcome activists and volunteers. One advantage of these organisations is that they have a lot of know-how about how to implement various actions - online and offline: from online petitions and individual events to organising demonstrations and long-term campaigns. However, if young people are interested in organising a certain activity themselves – as DIY as possible – then the youth centre and the youth workers will probably be the first point of contact in this context.

Ask the participants to make a list of people to whom they could present their message and think about the best way to do it. For example: colleagues, classmates, friends, parents or carers, neighbours, teachers, members of local community, etc. They should think of anyone who could help them or even be part of their team: at the youth centre, at school, at home or in their local community. It could be someone who is creative and artistic, who is communicative and influential, who can spread the message quickly or make it more visible, who wants to make a difference, who feels personally connected to the issue. The participants should make sure that their message is clear before inviting others to participate or asking for help. This will make it easier to motivate them to join in.

Step 4 – How to develop the idea?

Once participants have a clear message and they know who they want to communicate it to and how (in a funny or serious way), they should think about how they can do it (taking into account organisational and financial capacity). Here are some suggestions for presentations, but invite them to add their own ideas to the list: posters, petition, competition, street action ("flash mob"), theatre play, article, video, art exhibition, etc.

When choosing how the participants will present their work, they should think about what would be the most appropriate way to present it to a specific target group. If they want to get their message across to different groups of people, they can use several different approaches. Whichever way they think is best, they should remember that it is important to reach as many people as possible. For example, a video may look great if you get an audience to watch it, but a message on a poster can reach more people if you just put it in the right place!

Step 5 – The participants should be realistic!

After participants collect the ideas for their action, ask them to take some time and think about what is realistic to do. They should keep in mind that they cannot change the world, but they can make a difference to unjust or unsustainable practices in their local community. Support them to think as broadly but also as realistically as possible!

When and how can young people actually organise an action? They should take into account their schedule and any commitments they have. Remind them to think about all the things they will need: a suitable place (indoors or outdoors), materials (e.g. portable music system with speakers and microphones, power source, stand, car, bikes, etc.), the services that would be needed for the event (e.g. official registration of the event, design, printing, transport), the people they need in their team, etc.

How much money will they need to organise the action? Support the young people in making a clear calculation of all the costs and ask them to consider if they can afford it.

If they have not already asked earlier, this is the right time to make it clear to the participants what kind of support the youth centre and youth workers can provide: personnel and material resources/equipment and spaces, budget for the action, and, above all, support with administrative matters (e.g. an event in a public space must be registered with the relevant city authority) and networking (e.g. established contacts to relevant organisations and local authorities).

Step 6 – Is there any change needed?

Once the participants have the full list in front of them, ask them to look at it again and think about any changes they might need to make: *Do they have enough time to organise their action?* They should think about how they can reduce the estimated costs. *Can they borrow or rent some of the things they need instead of buying them, or even make do them by their selves (e.g. a poster stand)? Can they negotiate a lower price or free stand rental at the municipality? Can they invite someone else to join their team who has the necessary skills to implement the action?* They should also calculate the costs for the celebration after successfully completed local action – on the same or next day/weekend (e.g. money for snacks, beverages, fee for a location and/or DJs etc.).

They should also think about what could go wrong with the event (bad weather, negative audience reactions, etc.). *Is there any possibility in principle to postpone the action?* Remind them that good action requires patience and flexibility, and that sometimes compromises have to be made. And also that they should not forget that if they believe in their idea and put in the real effort, many things are possible!

Step 7 – How to prepare an action plan

In the next step, you should support the participants in preparing an action plan that will enable them to implement the action well. The action plan should clearly state who will do what, when they will do it and who is responsible for what. It should also include a detailed timetable, listing all the tasks and people responsible.

The timetable should be accessible to the whole team so that everyone can check what is happening and when at any time. To make sure that all team members stick to the action plan and follow the objectives, the participants need to monitor the action plan regularly. If it turns out that their action plan needs to be adapted, they should inform the whole team of the changes well in advance.

Step 8 – Keep track and spread the word!

Explain to the participants the importance of documenting the progress of the action and present them how they can collect various forms of evidence. All the evidence of the action will later be a fun reminder of how it all went and who was involved in the preparation and implementation. When collecting evidence (photos, videos, surveys, etc.), the participants should keep in mind that they will later share them with others (e.g. on social media, in a newspaper, on the radio, in their youth centre or local community).

Step 9– ACTION DAY, ACTION TIME!

When the day comes to carry out the action, remind participants to start it with a short logistical meeting of everyone involved to remember what their tasks are and when things need to be done. If they have forgotten something, now is the time to sort it out! During the action itself, they should be relaxed and have fun, keeping in mind what their main purpose is. If they have a question or an idea in the meantime, they should write it down.

Support participants to get the word out to as many people as possible. Remind them to take photos and/or videos and share them on their social media channels (Instagram, Facebook, TikTok etc.) during and after the action.

If they want, they can prepare a bigger presentation of their action after the event. They should think about when would be the best time for the presentation and where it will take place. They should check out the possibilities of presenting their action in the youth centre, in the school, on the radio or TV show, on the main town square, or in front of the Parliament - anything is possible!

Step 10 – PARTY TIME!

Finally, remind the participants that success should always be celebrated together with everyone who helped to organise the action. The party can be organised on the same day after the end of the event or later. The participants should not forget to thank everyone who contributed in any way to the preparation and implementation of the action, even if their role was small. They should agree where and how they will celebrate the success in advance so that everyone receives an invitation in time. The important thing is to get together and have fun!

Step 11 – Evaluation

Dedicate some time for evaluation and support the participants to think about how well their action was organized, how it could be improved and discuss about ideas for future actions.

Here are some questions that might help you to facilitate the evaluation:

- *Did you stick to the action plan or did you change it?*
- *Did anything go wrong?*
- *What could you do better?*
- *What could you do differently?*
- *How did you work together as a team?*
- *How did you resolve tensions if they arose?*
- *How did your main audience react?*
- *How many people have your message reached?*
- *Could you have presented the action in a different way?*
- *What did you learn during the preparation and implementation of the action?*
- *Does anyone have some ideas for a new action?*

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION FOR FACILITATORS

The facilitator can plan a full day workshop or divide it into shorter activities (that's only suitable if there is a group of young people who would attend all shorter activities).

If there is a bigger group, the facilitator can ask the participants to create few smaller groups of 4-5.

As a first step, the facilitator can briefly introduce the Sustainable Development Goals.



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