YOUTH
FIT
FOR | 55

Module 5

Environmental strategies for youth organisations

Blueprint Youth Fit For 55

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organisations - Blueprint Youth Fit for 55

Learning objectives

What are you going to learn here?

- Assess organizational environmental impact through **carbon footprint** calculation and emissions source identification.

- Implement **sustainable strategies** focusing on energy efficiency, responsible mobility, procurement, and waste management.

- Design youth environmental education and civic **engagement programs** to promote sustainability.

- Develop a **progress tracking** and communication system with key sustainability indicators.

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Introduction

In today's rapidly evolving landscape, sustainability has become a critical focus for youth organizations across Europe.

The Youth-fit-for-55 survey, which gathered responses from 45 diverse youth organizations, reveals both the challenges and opportunities these groups face in integrating sustainable practices and strategic management into their operations.

The survey results highlight that while many organizations are aware of the **importance of sustainability**, there's still significant room for improvement in **several key areas** :

01 Mission and vision alignment

Only 47.4% of organizations reported strong alignment with European trends and policies, indicating a need for better integration of sustainability goals into core missions.

02 Strategic planning

63.6% of organizations have strategic and operational plans in place, but 27.3% are interested yet unsure how to proceed, suggesting a need for guidance in strategic management.

03 Communication and stakeholder engagement

While 50% of organizations believe they communicate effectively with stakeholders, there's room for enhancement, particularly in leveraging digital tools and platforms.

04 Environmental practices

Organizations are implementing various environmental initiatives, with recycling and waste reduction (42.3%) and energy efficiency measures (26.9%) being the most common. However, there's potential for more comprehensive sustainability strategies

05 Financial stability and resource challenges

38% of organizations report moderate financial stability, with limited funding opportunities (37.1%) and resource limitations (31.4%) being significant barriers to implementing sustainability initiatives.
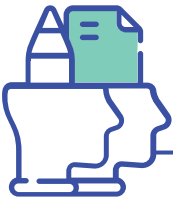
06 Skill development needs

Organizations identified fundraising and grant writing (36.7%), digital marketing (31.6%), and data analysis (26.5%) as crucial areas for development.

The environment is a fundamental pillar (3rd pillar) of sustainable development.

Youth organizations play a crucial role in promoting sustainable practices, not only to reduce their ecological impact but also to raise awareness and mobilize young people around environmental issues.

*   *World Commission on Environment and Development. (1987). "Our common future."*

According to the Brundtland Report*, sustainable development is "development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs."

Understanding environmental impact

Impact Assessment

- **Carbon Footprint:** conducting an evaluation of greenhouse gas emissions generated by your activities is essential. A study by Carbon Trust* highlights that organizations can reduce their emissions by identifying major sources of impact.
- **Source identification:** analyze your main sources of energy consumption, travel, and waste. Implementing a tracking system can help set action priorities.

Some tools to help you :

- **Carbon Trust:** this tool helps organizations assess their emissions by providing a framework to analyze energy sources, travel, and waste.
- **Global Footprint Network:** offers an ecological footprint calculator that allows users to understand their impact on the planet based on their lifestyle.
- **My Carbon Footprint:** a mobile application that guides users through a questionnaire to estimate their personal carbon footprint and suggest ways to reduce it.

Interpreting the results:

after calculating the carbon footprint, it's crucial to identify major emission sources, implement a tracking system, and establish clear reduction objectives

Strategies for sustainable organizations

Importance of a systemic approach

- Adopting a systemic perspective allows understanding how different actions interact and influence the environment. This includes resource management, waste reduction, and community engagement.

Energy efficiency

- **Green technologies:** investing in energy-efficient equipment (LED bulbs, certified appliances) can significantly reduce energy consumption. A study showed that using LED lighting can reduce energy consumption by up to 75%.
- **Awareness:** train members in eco-friendly daily habits.

Strategies for sustainable organizations

Sustainable mobility

- **Encouraging alternative transport:** implement incentives for carpooling or cycling. According to a WHO study, promoting active transport can reduce carbon emissions.
- **Virtual meetings:** favor videoconferences to reduce travel

Responsible purchasing

- **Sustainable Purchasing Policy:** favor local and eco-labeled products. Research shows that responsible purchasing can enhance customer loyalty and brand image.
- **Plastic Reduction:** limit the use of non-recyclable packaging at events

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Strategies for sustainable organizations

Waste management

- **Selective Sorting:** install sorting points in your premises. Studies show that effective sorting can increase recycling rates by up to 30%.
- **Composting:** encourage composting of organic waste.
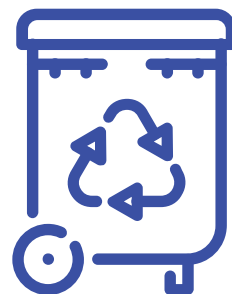
Engaging youth in sustainability

Young people are often at the forefront of ecological initiatives. Organizations can leverage this dynamic by:

Environmental education

- **Workshops and training:** offer educational sessions on climate change and biodiversity.
- **Participatory projects:** involve young people in concrete projects like clean-ups or creating community gardens.

Advocacy and civic engagement

- **Support local initiatives:** help young people engage in climate actions within their community.
- **Create exchange platforms:** facilitate sharing ideas and initiatives among young people.

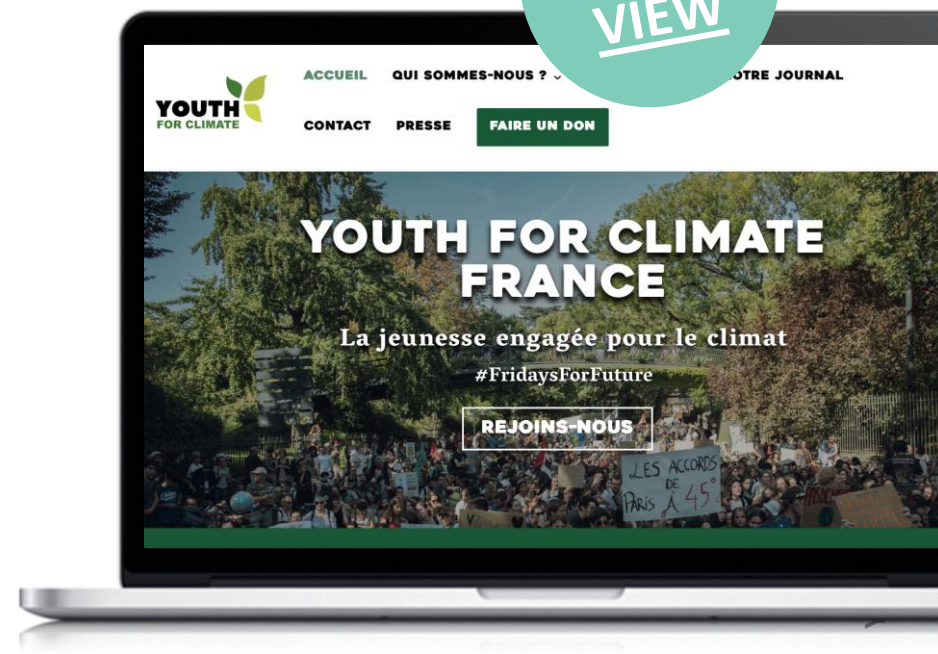# Examples and case studies of initiatives:

01   Youth for Climate

Actions:
- Organized demonstrations and awareness campaigns on climate change

Results:
- Achieved massive youth mobilization
- Influenced local policies regarding sustainability

CLICK TO VIEW

02

Green Youth Network

Actions:
- Created community projects such as urban gardens and cleanup initiatives

Results:
- Strengthened community bonds
- Increased awareness of environmental issues

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GYN GREEN YOUTH NETWORK

03

Young Reporters for the Environment (YRE)
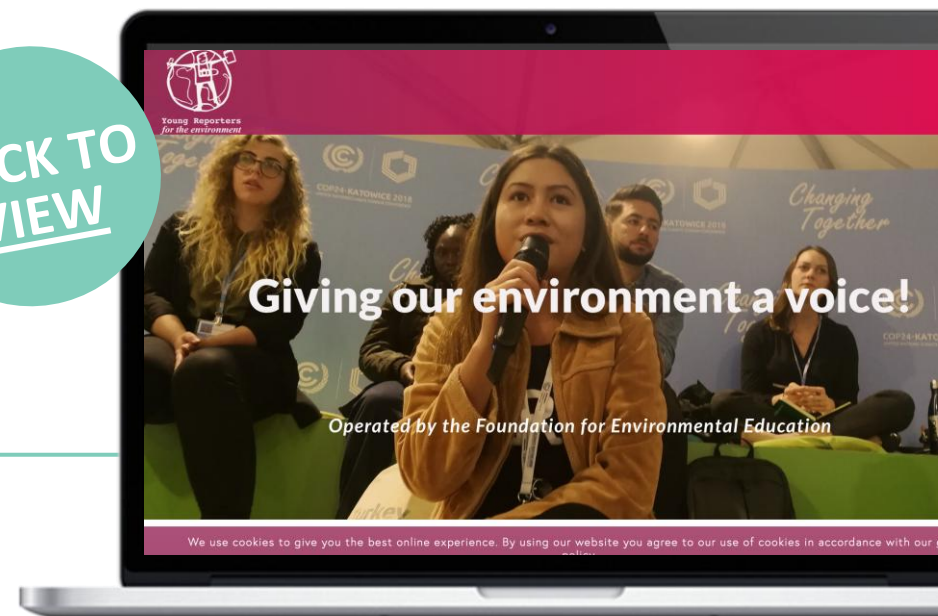
Actions:
- Created an international network and platform for young people to investigate, research, and share solutions to global environmental issues.
- Equipped youth with skills to leverage media and advocate for positive change in their communities.

Results:
- Empowered young individuals aged 11-25 to become effective advocates for sustainability.
- Fostered a generation actively shaping a sustainable future through community engagement and media influence.

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Funding and partnerships

To support these initiatives, it is crucial to explore various funding sources:

- **Public and European grants:** look for opportunities like Erasmus+ or the European Solidarity Corps.
- **Private sector partnerships:** collaborate with companies engaged in CSR for material or financial support.

Measuring and communicating progress

- Tracking your actions is essential to demonstrate impact. Regularly assess your organization's environmental impact and set specific goals for improvement.
- **Key indicators:** define measures to track your energy consumption, emissions, etc.
- **Transparent communication:** share your results with your community to inspire other initiatives.
- **DMAIC Methodology:** Use the Define, Measure, Analyze, Improve, and Control framework to systematically improve environmental performance.

Activities ideas - Our organization's carbon footprint in action

Objective:
To help youth organization staff understand their collective environmental impact and develop skills to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions

Workshop Structure

01 — **Calculate the Organization's Carbon Footprint**

- Use an online calculator tailored for organizations (see previous slides)
- Complete a questionnaire about the organization's daily operations
- Compare results with similar-sized organizations

02 Analysis and reflection

- Use an online calculator tailored for organizations (see previous slides)
- Complete a questionnaire about the organization's daily operations
- Compare results with similar-sized organizations

03 Action plan development

- Set a carbon reduction challenge for the organization
- Establish a monitoring and motivation system
- Create a reward structure for collective and departmental progress

Skills Developed

- Environmental awareness
- Critical thinking
- Collaborative problem-solving
- Adaptability in organizational practices

This activity engages staff members in an interactive and positive way to drive the organization's ecological transition.

 It aligns with the learning objectives outlined in the environmental strategies module, particularly in assessing organizational impact and implementing sustainable strategies.

Resources

Graphic novel:

- "Understanding almost everything about climate", BONPOTE, ANNE BRÈS, CLAIRE MARC - CNRS Editions, 2024
- https://www.calameo.com/books/0064605871f75f8b9ee81

Podcasts:

- Sustainability defined (85 episodes) https://sustainabilitydefined.com/all-episodes
- The climate reality project (5 episodes) https://www.climaterealityproject.org/blog/5-podcasts-inspire-you-climate

Conclusions

By implementing these environmental best practices, you can significantly reduce your ecological footprint while empowering young people to become active agents of change

Remember that sustainability is an ongoing journey that requires continuous effort, innovation, and engagement from all stakeholders.

Through a combination of strategic planning, practical actions, and youth engagement, you can create a positive ripple effect, inspiring sustainable practices beyond their immediate sphere of influence. As youth leaders, you have the power to shape a more sustainable future, one action at a time.

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You have completed Module 5

Next up: **Module 6**
Leadership &
Strategic Management

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