



C.H.A.N.G.E.R.S. - 2.0

Toolkit #1.

A toolkit for trainers
organising workshops for
rural seniors on
sustainable and green
household topics.

A project outcome of the "Change Household Attitudes for a Non-wasteful, Green environment and Energy-consciousness addressing Rural Seniors" (CHANGERS-2.0) project.

<https://changers2.eu>

Date: 20/06/2024

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Project No:

2022-1-HU01-KA220-ADU-000089052

Version: 2.0



Funded by
the European Union



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Welcome to the C.H.A.N.G.E.R.S.-2.0 Toolkit #1

Organising workshops for rural seniors
on sustainable and green household topics.



Image by freepik.



Glossary - Clarifying some important terms and concepts

The list below contains the main concepts to be used in these guidelines:

- **Energy** - an abstract physical quantity that relates to the capacity to produce action and/or movement, which can be expressed in many forms: kinetic, chemical, potential, etc.
- **Energy poverty** - is the inability of households to maintain adequate levels of energy services at an affordable cost.
- **Climate Change** – refers to global climate variation or regional climate changes that occur over decades and affect the balance of ecosystems.
- **Sustainable Development** - a global development model that incorporates aspects of a system of mass consumption in which the concern with nature, via the extraction of raw materials, is maximum.
- **Intergenerational Commitment** - the environment as a consequence of the involvement of all living beings with the planet and the defence of a healthy environment as a duty and inalienable right of current and future generations.
- **Intergenerational learning** - the way that people of all ages can learn together and from each other; working together to gain skills, values and knowledge, foster reciprocal learning relationships and help develop social capital and social cohesion in our ageing societies.
- **Climate Change** - refers to global climate variation or regional climate changes that occur over decades and affect the balance of ecosystems.
- **Sustainable Development** - a global development model that incorporates aspects of a system of mass consumption in which the concern with nature, via the extraction of raw materials, is maximum.
- **Intergenerational Commitment** - the environment as a consequence of the involvement of all living beings with the planet and the defence of a healthy environment as a duty and inalienable right of current and future generations.

- **Green economy** - when growth in employment and income are driven by public and private investment into economic activities, infrastructure and assets that allow reduced carbon emissions and pollution, enhanced energy and resource efficiency, and prevention of the loss of biodiversity and ecosystem services.
- **Biodiversity** - the different kinds of life you'll find in one area—the variety of animals, plants, fungi, and even microorganisms like bacteria that make up our natural world.
- **Whole foods** – are those that closely resemble their natural state at the time of purchase, either being minimally processed or unprocessed entirely. Not all whole foods are ethically produced, neither can be guarantee organic and sustainable forms of production.
- **Organic farming** – an integrated farming system that strives for sustainability, the enhancement of soil fertility and biological diversity. Organic farming is not to be misunderstood with sustainable farming as it still considers pesticides derived from natural resources in the production of the food. Sustainability looks at farming practices in a holistic manner, aiming at preserving soil and water.
- **Food waste management** – pertains to the phases of prevention, recovery, recycling, or disposal of food waste that ensue. Most recently, food waste management looks closely to circular economy. Here, waste is an organic resource, devoid of contaminants and can be safely be reintegrated into the soil as organic fertilizer.

1. About the CHANGERS-2.0 TOOLKIT #1.

1. About the C.H.A.N.G.E.R.S.–2.0 TOOLKIT #1



Image by pikisuperstar on Freepik.

Welcome to the first C.H.A.N.G.E.R.S.–2.0 Toolkit, which will guide you through building adult learning opportunities, workshops and training events aimed at seniors. You are at the beginning of a journey to reflect on the social transformation that is required for improved sustainability in the community.

‘Toolkit #1’ intends to provide adult learning stakeholders who guide and educate mostly in sustainability to senior cohorts (65+), and which are interested in introducing an intergenerational element with the younger generation. These guidelines and teaching materials should be useful, at different stages and with different purposes and target groups, to guide seniors and young people towards greener and more sustainable skills.

1.1 About C.H.A.N.G.E.R.S.–2.0

The C.H.A.N.G.E.R.S.–2.0 project has developed targeted training materials for rural seniors to improve their access to adult learning opportunities on specific topics which can help them fight against climate change and energy poverty, and

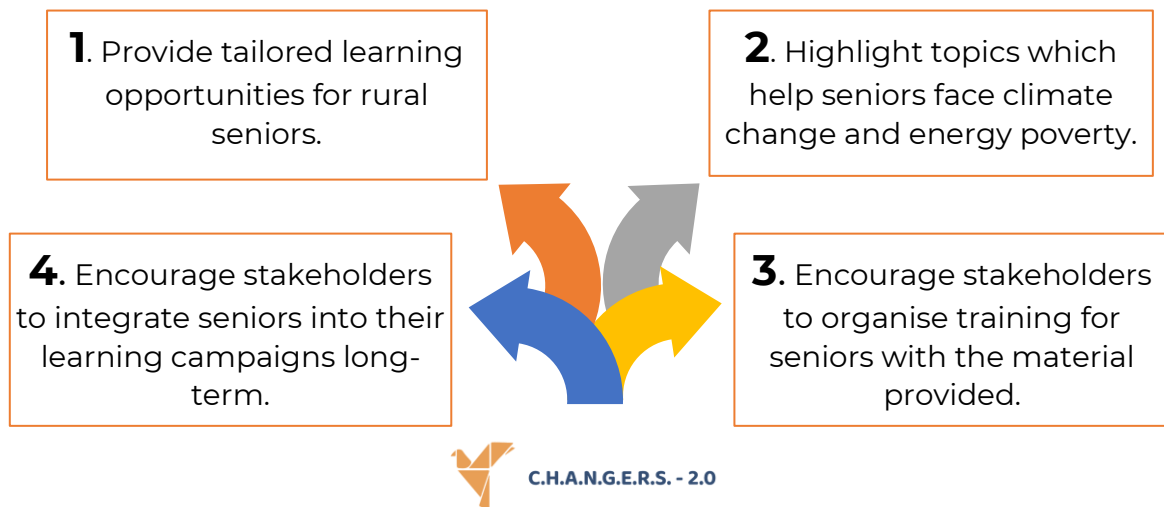
contribute to sustainability such as energy efficiency, sustainability in households and adaptation to climate change.

The main objective of C.H.A.N.G.E.R.S.–2.0 is to develop targeted training materials for educators teaching rural seniors in order to improve adult learning opportunities on specific environmental topics; which can help them mitigate climate change and energy poverty, while contributing to sustainability. The purpose of the present document is to provide and valorise useful teaching material on sustainable and green household topics.

The C.H.A.N.G.E.R.S.–2.0 partnership is committed to increase the impact of the project and knowledge gained amongst the partners, by providing a collection of teaching material and helping toolkits for interested stakeholders.

This toolkit addresses those stakeholders who can reach rural seniors easily due to their profile and/or daily activities, e.g., local and regional municipalities as well as NGOs working with and for seniors, especially in rural areas.

By reaching out to the abovementioned stakeholders directly, we would like to:



1.2 The C.H.A.N.G.E.R.S.–2.0 partnership

The C.H.A.N.G.E.R.S.-2.0 partnership includes the following European organisations:

CAM, the lead partner, is a Hungarian company specialised in education and development of professional awareness-raising material on energy-related issues, has great experiences in the field of energy efficiency, renewable energy sources, sustainability, climate change, VET and adult education, and in international cooperation.

www.camconsulting.eu

info@camconsulting.eu



Projects in Motion Ltd. (PiM) is a Malta-based SME. As a multidisciplinary research organisation, it believes in the power of human and technology-centred approaches. Its aim is to promote renewable energy sources, energy efficiency and the intelligent use or reduction of energy requirements in Europe through partnerships, awareness-raising, innovation and strategic actions.

www.pim.com.mt

brian.restall@pim.com.mt



KMOP, founded in 1977, is one of the oldest civil society organizations in Greece. It is dedicated to making a positive social impact through research and innovative initiatives that address critical social issues, inform public debate and help shape policy, nationally and internationally.

<https://www.kmop.gr/>



Falco & Associati is a consulting and training company based in Milan, Italy. Its mission is to improve the competitiveness of the European society, through business development, training and creation of transnational partnerships.

<https://www.falcoeassociati.it/>



BSC is the Regional Development Agency of Gorenjska in Slovenia, which promotes the development of the Gorenjska region and unites 18 municipalities under its auspices. BSC is a connecting link between the regional and national level, cooperating with municipalities, companies and chambers of crafts and entrepreneurship, non-governmental organizations, ministries, and other state bodies.



<https://www.bsc-kranj.si/>
info@bsc-kranj.si

Nyugdíjasok Egyesülete is a Hungarian association in Pécs representing senior people at local and regional level.

<https://nyugegy.hu/>



Associação de Melhoramentos e Ben Estar Scial de Pias is a Private non-profit whose main objectives are to provide a social support service to families, the elderly and children, working directly with the community, or through partnerships with other entities and projects.



1.3 C.H.A.N.G.E.R.S.–2.0 outputs

WP4-A2 offers two sets of **toolkits** as outputs, which include additional information and supporting tools. Before the finalisation of the C.H.A.N.G.E.R.S.–2.0 outputs, a partnership-level evaluation was undertaken during training pilots implemented in Greece, Portugal, Hungary and Slovenia. These pilots undertaken at the end of 2024 enabled the consortium to obtain clear feedback on the training material and toolkits developed, highlighting concrete changes and improvements from trainers and students on the ground.

Partners' comments and recommendations were taken into consideration collectively during a physical workshop in Malta, the finalisation is based on the feedback received via pilot testing.

Consequently, following the methodology development and pilot testing phases, the intended outputs published by the C.H.A.N.G.E.R.S.–2.0 project under Work Package 4 (WP4) include:

Output 1.

The WP4-A1 output provides a **Training material Compendium** for teaching seniors on sustainable and green household topics, specifically adapted to the needs of rural seniors. The teaching material is open to anyone with an interest in understanding these topics. The material is of a self-paced nature which allows trainers or senior learners to engage with the material according to their own interests and schedules, making it an ideal option for motivated seniors and trainers alike. The framework and topics covered by the training material for Output WP4-A1 centres around the following topics.

- 1) sustainability in households
- 2) mitigation and adaptation to climate change
- 3) energy efficiency
- 4) energy poverty
- 5) renewable energy
- 6) e-mobility

Output 2.

Toolkit #1. A toolkit for trainers organising workshops for rural seniors on sustainable and green household topics is intended to support stakeholders and trainers with recommendations and tools for organising local events with rural seniors. It includes event structures and plans,



evaluation templates and questionnaires, guidance on how to interact with seniors and how to use the teaching material developed in WP4.1 for workshop activities.

Output 3.

Toolkit #2. A toolkit for trainers organising intergenerational workshops for rural seniors on sustainable and green household topics is intended to support trainers interested in teaching rural seniors via intergenerational learning opportunities, while offering a structured curriculum approach and a set of intergenerational family co-education materials and games suitable for self-learning/distance learning. The second toolkit is also directly aimed at the final target group, rural seniors and their families, friends and neighbours. As part of self-learning, they are encouraged to get familiar with the project results and try out the developed tools.



Visit the final WP4 outputs on the project website to explore and download the related output documents:

<https://changers2.eu/results/>

1.4 Goal of TOOLKIT #1

This toolkit, titled “**A toolkit for trainers organising workshops for rural seniors on sustainable and green household topics**” serves as a user guide for the C.H.A.N.G.E.R.S.–2.0 project outcomes and is titled “Toolkit #1. A toolkit for trainers organising workshops for rural seniors on sustainable and green household topics”. It explains in simple terms potential approaches to conducting adult training on green topics produced by project partners and which can be adapted and delivered to rural seniors effectively.

Toolkit 1 is prepared for trainers and presents specific characteristics of seniors that should be taken into account when training them. In this section of the Toolkit, the aim is to explore:

- the impact of ageing on seniors,
- social changes in old age,
- the role of environmental education with rural seniors,
- how best to organise environmental engagement events for rural seniors.

The aim of this toolkit is to help partners, senior organisations, and municipalities organise learning events and trainings for rural seniors as an output for Work Package 4 of the C.H.A.N.G.E.R.S.–2.0 project, titled “*Development of training material for teaching seniors on sustainable and green household topics*”.

The C.H.A.N.G.E.R.S.–2.0 partnership is committed to increase the impact of the project and knowledge gained amongst the partners, by providing a collection of teaching material and helping toolkits for interested stakeholders. Topics covered in the training material developed include:

- 1) Green ABC, sustainability in households,
- 2) House performance and energy efficiency
- 3) House renovations
- 4) Waste
- 5) Sustainable mobility
- 6) Sustainable food
- 7) Biodiversity and zero pollution
- 8) Renewable energy and energy poverty
- 9) Mitigation and adaptation to climate change

The materials developed are designed to be self-explanatory and self-contained learning material, that includes real-life examples, diagrams, tables, and figures to augment the learning for at home learners. This teaching material can be found online on the project results page, and in different languages.

Training material on sustainable and green domestic topics

1. Green ABC (Introduction)	2. House performance	3. House renovations	4. Waste	5. Sustainable mobility
6. Sustainable food	7. Biodiversity and zero pollution			

English Italian Greek Hungarian Slovenian Portuguese

Sets of tools to support the training material

Pilot events

https://changers2.eu/?page_id=52

Rural seniors and families can also refer to the self-learning roadmap posters to the teaching material and topics, presented overleaf.



TRY OUR TOOLS:

- Comics
- Memory Game
- Word Search
- Green Board Game for All
- Board Game Pro



ABOUT THE PROJECT

The project **“Change Household Attitudes for a Non-wasteful, Green environment and Energy-consciousness addressing Rural Seniors”** aims to develop targeted training materials for rural seniors on specific topics which can help them fight against climate change and energy poverty, and contribute to sustainability such as energy efficiency, sustainability in households and adaptation to climate change.



FAMILY ROADMAP

FOR USING C.H.A.N.G.E.R.S.-2.0 MATERIALS

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FAMILY ROADMAP

FOR USING C.H.A.N.G.E.R.S.-2.0 MATERIALS





Module 1: Green ABC

climate change; adaptation; neutrality; sustainability; green economy; intergenerational responsibility

Module 2: House performance

energy performance; energy poverty; behaviour changes; energy and water-saving tools and tips

Module 3: House renovations

energy efficiency; energy sources; renewables



Module 4: Waste

recycling; circular economy; sustainable products; greenwashing

DISCOVER SUSTAINABILITY



Module 5: Sustainable mobility

alternative fuels; human-powered mobility; public transport



Module 6: Sustainable food

eat ethically; organic farming; circular economy in food chain; sustainable food consumption; food waste

Module 7: Biodiversity and zero pollution

green economy, green community; zero pollution; environmentally responsible behaviours



2. Introducing seniors to green and sustainable topics.

2. Introducing seniors to green and sustainable topics



Image by Freepik.

With the increase in the number of elderly people across Europe, the consequent increase in natural resource use and a changing climate, an opportunity to increase awareness and reflection around energy, climate change, and sustainability is necessary.

The C.H.A.N.G.E.R.S.–2.0 partnership identified the urgent need for training material which is adapted for rural seniors who have limited learning opportunities on green topics. This is typically due to poorer digital skills amongst older generations, today's fast pace, physical disabilities, as well as a lack of infrastructure and internet access, and local training events in rural areas; by which stakeholders (adult educators, municipalities or NGOs) could help this vulnerable and growing cohort, while raising awareness and empowering them to participate in lifelong learning.

Partners of C.H.A.N.G.E.R.S.–2.0 have been developing and exchanging training material and toolkits during workshops,



in order to extend their internal knowledge on energy efficiency, renewable energy sources and sustainability. This also provided the opportunity to adapt training materials at the organisational level thanks to input from our NGO partners.

2.1 The European backdrop and justification

The European Union's 2030 climate and energy framework includes EU-wide targets for the period from 2021 to 2030, such as the following:

- At least 55% cuts in greenhouse gas emissions (from 1990 levels),
- At least 42.5% share for renewable energy, and
- At least 11.7% improvement in energy efficiency¹.

To reach these targets, the EU and its member states aim to reduce the residential sector's energy consumption and boost its use of renewables. The C.H.A.N.G.E.R.S. – 2.0 project addresses elderly people, especially those living in the countryside, who have less opportunities to learn about these topics, although their impact on the environment and climate is inevitable. European households represent one quarter of the final energy consumption, while around 20% of the population is above 65 years. It is essential not to leave this social group out of the learning opportunities. Seniors are also vulnerable to economic and societal changes, such as inflation, price changes of energy, utilities or basic food products, and they are more likely to be affected by energy poverty.

2.2 The ageing process

Old age is referred to as the period of the third age, with the first age meaning childhood and adolescence and the second age, the period of adulthood. At present, we also encounter the designation of the fourth age, which results from the need to divide old age into two periods with regard to their different characteristics. The elderly, aged 60-74, usually do not yet suffer from serious diseases, are active, integrated into society, able to travel; this active part of life is called the third age.

The fourth age usually begins after the age of 75 in a period of deteriorating health. Aging is a slow and smooth process, during which changes occur in the body and

¹ Renewable Energy Directive EU/2023/2413. The directive entered into force in all EU countries on 20 November 2023. https://energy.ec.europa.eu/topics/renewable-energy/renewable-energy-directive-targets-and-rules/renewable-energy-targets_en

the human psyche. Furthermore, aging is also uneven and its impact varies largely between individuals.



Image by freepik.

2.2.1 Cognitive and social changes in old age

Psychosocial aging like loneliness, memory problems and reduced mobility significantly affects seniors' ability to adapt to the changes that old age brings. Besides physical changes, related social adjustments also tend to occur, like retirement, economic decrease, change of residence or the death of a life partner. So, while retirement, on one hand gives the retirees an opportunity to rest and frees them from certain social pressures, it also reduces the number of people with whom they have maintained contact. On the other hand, retirement also gives space for new activities, voluntary services, and various hobbies, that could also bring new contacts and networks.

Slow or insufficient adaptation to aging challenges can manifest itself in feelings of inferiority, uselessness and social isolation. Although seniors need less money for clothing, entertainment, and work or housing, their living costs are still rising, (e.g., medicines and rents increase with diseases), and often cause problems for the elderly. Many people have to change residence in old age precisely for economic reasons. Their apartment is too large and expensive for them, due to reduced mobility or mental health problems, they are unable to maintain a household or take care of themselves. In old age, a very strong marital bond develops between

spouses, which facilitates their aging and encourages each other. After the death of a partner, he/she experiences the feeling of loss, emptiness, and abandonment. Many get used to living alone, but become dependent on other, younger members of the family. However, there are also those who will remarry. Widowhood leads to abandonment and an increase in the feeling of personal insignificance. Women (widows) compensate for their feelings of loneliness by creating social communities such as groups of elderly women who meet regularly. Regular meetings with other cohorts can help participants to deepen existing social relationships or make new contacts. Joint participation in teaching activities is particularly beneficial since these new relationships will take on a broader international dimension. Organising an art exhibition can also help boost the self-confidence of seniors, and in turn, stimulate creativity and the development of their artistic and social life.

Old age is often referred to as a period of wisdom, a time in which the elder is revered and held in universal esteem. However, these 'old' value systems and rules are now giving way to various clichés and pseudo-values of a rapidly developing 21st-century society – increasing demographic disparities. Consequently, it is important to offer seniors the opportunity to actively develop their interests and spend their time productively. Arts education appears to be an excellent, low-cost option. Art academies of the third age, which are mostly subsidised by city budgets, help their students to develop in arts and culture, and to meet regularly and integrate socially. At the Senior University in Portugal, seniors are taught the disciplines of music, art, dance, literature, psychology, health and it usually promotes various workshops regarding green environmental issues. The artistic process can promote more positive self-awareness and self-confidence amongst seniors.

Practical environmental training developed with the elderly can also help increase social interaction and knowledge sharing, besides the environmental education that they can benefit from or contribute towards. The elderly have experienced a history of environmental changes and transformations over time that should be valorised. The elderly can teach younger peers their past mistakes and successes, and together they can co-create alternatives to overcome problems in order to improve the population's quality of life (MACHADO et. al., 2006). The activities to be carried out with the elderly will help solve environmental problems by working with the exchange of experience and knowledge, so that the participants become aware and generate attitude on the subject and multiply the information to their children, grandchildren, and acquaintances.

The material developed under the C.H.A.N.G.E.R.S.-2.0 project emphasises the significance of several key aspects, such as:



- the importance of motivating the group of elderly people to learn, recognise and value their past experiences,
- foster their creativity, and
- spark their interest in environmental care.

It is crucial to expand and enhance similar initiatives nationwide to ensure that the elderly are appreciated and actively engaged in environmental education activities. Such programmes promote the sharing of life experiences and the generation of knowledge among this demographic group, who may not have had prior exposure to environmental education due to their different upbringing and concerns.

2.3 Addressing challenges in the learning process

In order to facilitate the training of seniors, trainers/senior organisations/municipalities need to overcome the following challenges that seniors may face:²

- Normal age-related decline in information processing capabilities
- Issues concerning physical functionality, such as visual or hearing impairments
- Social engagement abilities and less attentional capacity
- Difficulty in understanding completely unfamiliar concepts

How can you keep seniors' interest during a training on green and sustainable household topics?

It is important with rural seniors that you **take advantage of their experiences** and build learning opportunities around those same experiences and memories. **Getting them to share their life and story** is a great springboard to attract their motivation and attention. "*Getting to know you*" exercises and discussions around common life experiences will also **help people bond more quickly**.

Keep in mind that in most cases seniors tend to be disconnected from modern teaching practices and typically **not used to learning by active participation** in the classroom. Similarly, **keep in mind the potential technological gap** or the digital divide, which refers to a limited exposure to modern technology which may hinder seniors' ability to engage in digital communication effectively.

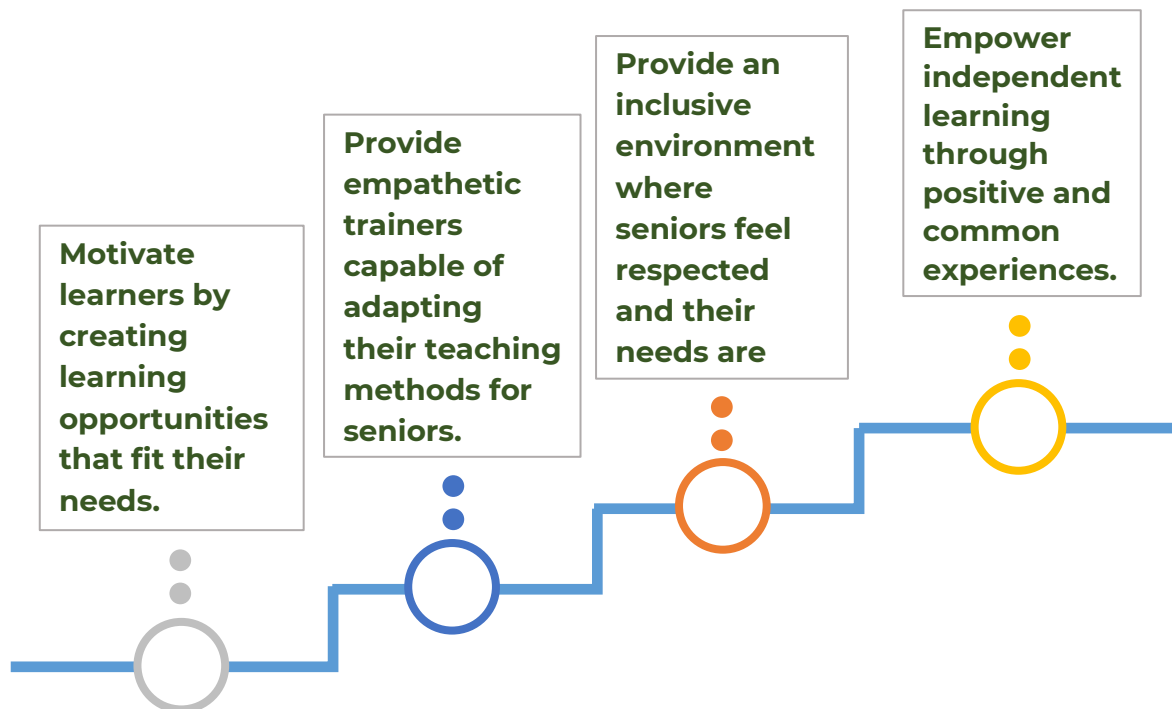
Being flexible and patient with their learning patterns and styles is also important for trainers, in order to give seniors time to adapt to spontaneous sharing and let them find their confidence to interact.

Try and avoid **constant error-correction as a teaching technique**, since older learners are particularly sensitive to making mistakes and often don't take too kindly to public correction.

So, in order to enhance the learning experience of senior learners, the following practical considerations (Figure 1 overleaf) should be ensured to facilitate communication and foster meaningful connections with seniors.

² Sharit, J., & Czaja, S. J. (2020). Overcoming Older Adult Barriers to Learning Through an Understanding of Perspectives on Human Information Processing. *Journal of Applied Gerontology*, 39(3), 233-241.

Figure 1 - Important considerations to enhance communication and foster meaningful connections with seniors.



Other teaching techniques that trainers working with rural seniors should also consider include:

- Cultivate active listening skills to better understand and respond to the elderly's verbal and nonverbal cues.
- Use clear and simple language which avoids jargon, modern expressions or complex terminology to make sure seniors can comprehend the discussions.
- Foster two-way communication and open dialogue so that seniors feel comfortable sharing their ideas and expressing themselves.
- Be patient and allow time for seniors who may need more time to process information and respond.
- Emphasize non-verbal communication cues, such as facial expressions and gestures, to supplement verbal communication.³

Consequently, general tips and tricks for trainers include^{4,5}

³ Communication Barriers with Elderly (2024). <https://www.examples.com/english/communication-barriers-with-elderly.html>

⁴ Sharit, J., & Czaja, S. J. (2018). Overcoming Older Adult Barriers to Learning Through an Understanding of Perspectives on Human Information Processing. *Journal of Applied Gerontology*, 39(3), 233–241. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0733464818794574>

⁵ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2020, January 13). Challenges Developing Material to Match Health Literacy Skills | Health Literacy | CDC. www.cdc.gov.

- Provide analogies to familiar concepts.
- Minimise distracting information, focus on one important task in hand or material that will capture seniors' attention.
- The learning process should be sequential. Trainers should make sure that the prerequisite skills that seniors will acquire after the completion of the activity are identified and understood by them beforehand.
- Use reminders to aid memory and repeat important information.
- Use plain language and speak clearly.
- Make the information easy to see and read by using high contrast, big font sizes, adequate spacing between the lines.
- Avoid the use of shiny paper.

2.4 Dealing with scepticism

Climate change is a crisis requiring long-term educational efforts that should also include strategies to reduce climate scepticism, especially in view of misinformation efforts that also sow doubts in people's minds today. Most communication campaigns on sustainability and climate change are typically designed for the younger demographic since they are deemed directly vulnerable to a changing climate and more receptive to environmental messaging⁶. Furthermore, studies also suggest that older people are more likely to be somewhat conservative and sceptical of climate change causes and impacts; and that sceptics tend to show lower environmental values.⁷

Acknowledging this age-related disposition, and informing older adults about how climate change affects their health directly could help reduce harm by adapting personal behaviours to mitigate climate change, engaging in societal efforts to address climate issues, while learning how to minimise pollution, waste, and conserve energy at home.

However, positive action is more likely if those actions are embedded in a network of social practices, so that it becomes part of seniors' routine and social life. Six strategies for dealing with scepticism can be found in **Table 1** below:

Table 1 - Six strategies for reducing the damaging effects of climate scepticism⁸

⁶ Ojala M, Lakew Y. Young people and climate change communication. *Oxford Research Encyclopaedia of Climate Science*. (2017) Available at: <https://oxfordre.com/climatescience/display/10.1093/acrefore/9780190228620.001.0001/acrefore-9780190228620-e-408>

⁷ McCright A.M., Riley E. Dunlap R.E. (2011). Cool dudes: The denial of climate change among conservative white males in the United States. *Global Environmental Change*. Volume 21, Issue 4, October 2011, Pages 1163-1172. <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S095937801100104X>

⁸ Hornsey MJ, Lewandowsky S. A toolkit for understanding and addressing climate scepticism. *Nat Hum Behav*. 2022 Nov;6(11):1454-1464. doi: 10.1038/s41562-022-01463-y. Epub 2022 Nov 16. PMID: 36385174; PMCID: PMC7615336.

Strategy	Description
Appealing to sceptics through value-based frames	<p>Climate scepticism is particularly strong among conservatives and climate change messaging for behaviour change can be more effective if framed in ways that are affable to conservative values (e.g., to reinforce national energy security, to maintain old way of life, as an expression of individual responsibility).</p>
Appealing to sceptics through co-benefits	<p>Given that disputes are typically whether humans cause climate change, sceptics may not be swayed by traditional messages on the importance of individual action to save the environment. However, arguments that focus on the co-benefits of action in terms of promoting green jobs, stimulating technological innovation, or maintaining public health can be better.</p>
Leveraging climate-friendly actors within the conservative movement	<p>Conservatives are more likely to be persuaded about the reality and urgency of climate change if those messages are presented by respected figures within the conservative movement.</p>
Establishing norms	<p>People are more likely to act in a certain way if they perceive – or are told – that valued others are acting in that way. Because they appeal to our social nature, norms-based interventions can have positive effects independent of political persuasion.</p>
Consensus messaging	<p>97% of climate scientists agree that climate change is happening and is largely caused by humans. Successfully communicating that consensus message has positive downstream influences on climate-friendly attitudes, beliefs, and behaviours.</p>
Embedding climate-friendly actions in social practice	<p>Positive action is more likely if those actions are embedded in a network of social practices, so that it becomes part of the flow of one's day and part of one's social life.</p>

2.5 Study Circles and storytelling to engage seniors.

Within this framework, the Study Circle approach and the Storytelling methodology are being proposed as an effective way to engage seniors in learning about green and sustainable household topics. Both provide opportunities for active participation, knowledge sharing, and personal connections; while also accommodating the specific needs of seniors, such as the need for repetition and explicit explanations.

2.5.1 The Study Circle Methodology with practical examples

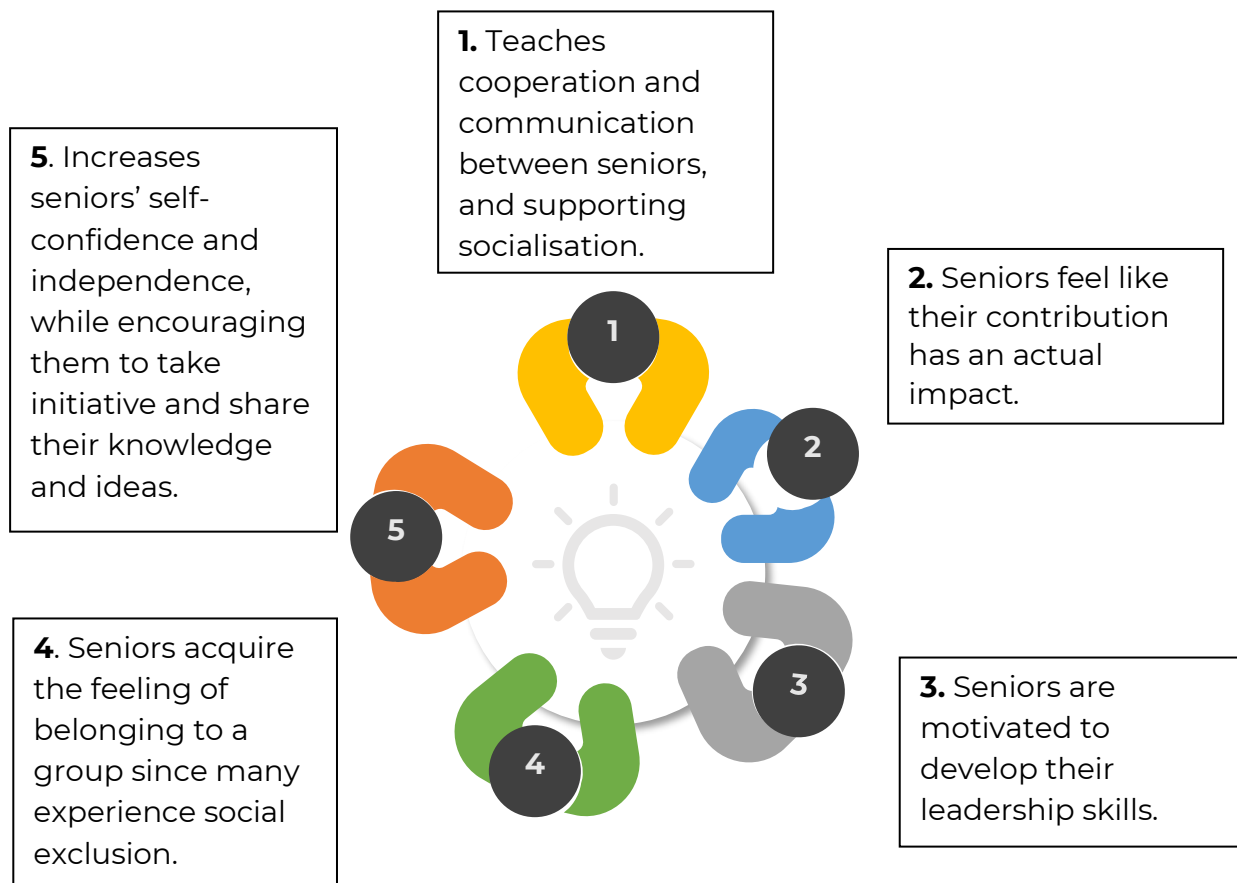
The Study Circle Methodology has proven to be a very effective and appealing way of facilitating the training process, and refers to a small group of people who meet together to learn about something that interests them. It is an activity that is adjusted to the specific needs and interests of the participating group. The main characteristics of Study Circles are the following:



- Forming small groups of seniors in circles so that they are encouraged to share ideas.
- Seniors have the opportunity to choose the topic they want to discuss.
- The group sets the learning goals itself and establishes an action plan and a time frame according to the needs and overall development goals of the participants.
- Every participant shares their knowledge and experience about the chosen topic.
- The trainer can act as the facilitator, but the group is led by a leader who is chosen by the participants through democratic methods (e.g., voting).
- Participants are able to complete tasks through cooperation and communication, taking the role of both learners and teachers.

Figure 2 overleaf provides a snapshot of the benefits of Study Circles.

Figure 2 - Benefits of Study Circles



The following examples are intended to act as a learning guide to quickly introduce the practical steps to help trainers and seniors in using the study circle and storytelling methods, municipalities in their efforts to start analysing and addressing energy poverty regardless of geographical, cultural and economic settings.

Practical example #1 of a Study Circle approach – Energy poverty

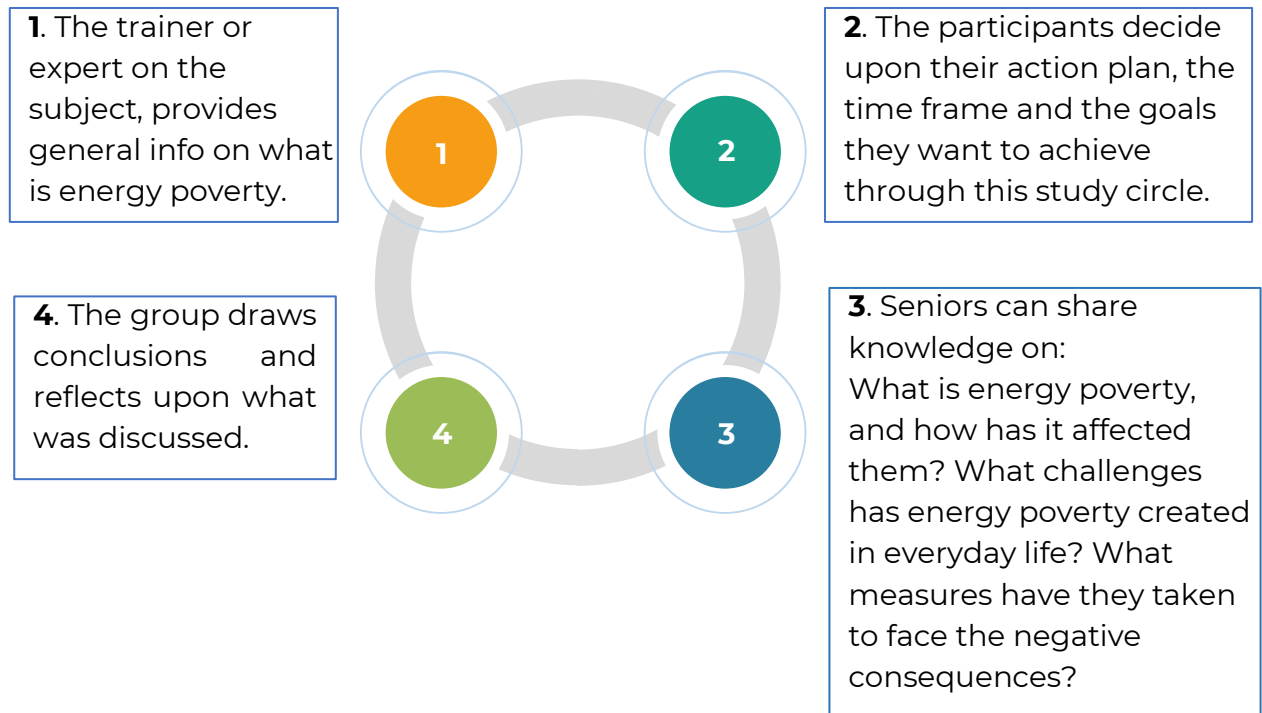
Choose three or four topics related to the impacts of energy poverty that are most relevant to the participants in the study circle, rather than offering all of the topics as options. Make sure there are at least three participants assigned to each topic.

- Do you have any friends or relatives living in energy poverty?
- Can you share your thoughts on energy access, affordability, health disparities, environmental degradation, and potential solutions?

- Can you identify how energy poverty can be mitigated through local actions?

Figure 3 below illustrates a “Study Circle approach about energy poverty and how it affects the elderly”.

Figure 3 - Example of a Study Circle approach on energy poverty



For similar case studies and ideas on how energy poverty can be alleviated at the local level please refer to the following external reading material:

- **“Tackling energy poverty through local actions– Inspiring cases from across Europe”.** (2021). Energy Poverty Advisor Hub. https://energy-poverty.ec.europa.eu/system/files/2021-11/EPAH_inspiring%20cases%20from%20across%20Europe_report_0.pdf
- **Handbook 1 "A Guide to Energy Poverty Diagnosis"** (2023). https://energy-poverty.ec.europa.eu/discover/publications/publications/energy-poverty-advisory-hub-epah-handbook-1-guide-energy-poverty-diagnosis_en
- **Handbook 2 "A Guide to Planning Energy Poverty Mitigation Actions"**. (2023). [https://energy-poverty-](https://energy-poverty.ec.europa.eu/discover/publications/publications/energy-poverty-)



[advisory-hub-epah-handbook-2-guide-planning-energy-poverty-mitigation-actions_en](#)

- **Guideline "7 practical steps to energy poverty diagnosis".** (2023). https://energy-poverty.ec.europa.eu/discover/publications/publications/7-practical-steps-energy-poverty-diagnosis-energy-poverty-advisory-hub-learning-guide_en
- **Extended course "Alleviating energy poverty: How to implement local actions".** https://energy-poverty.ec.europa.eu/about-us/news/new-extended-course-energy-poverty-goes-step-further-2024-06-10_en

Practical example #2 of a study circle approach – Circular Economy in the Food Chain

Study circles have been particularly beneficial in fostering community bonds and social solidarity. In the study circle, work is built around the participants' search for knowledge according to their own needs and interests.

The purpose of this study circle is to help us to better understand how food production, processing, consumerism (choices) and disposal, all contribute towards the consumption of energy. Through this, we will navigate ways of conserving energy sources as well as mitigating environmental impacts. It is important to remain respectful and open at all times. Keep in mind that the Study Circle is about sharing and exploring the topic and inspiring each other rather than 'finding the right answers.'

First of all, ask participants to discuss the following four important questions:

- What is the most important thing we want to learn about this topic?
- What do we need to contribute ourselves to reach the goal?
- What do we want/wish from each other to reach our goal?
- What do we have to do if we cannot realise our goal?

The work in the study circle is expected to proceed from the seniors' own experience and knowledge, encouraging co-operation and discouraging competition; based on helping and cooperating with each other.

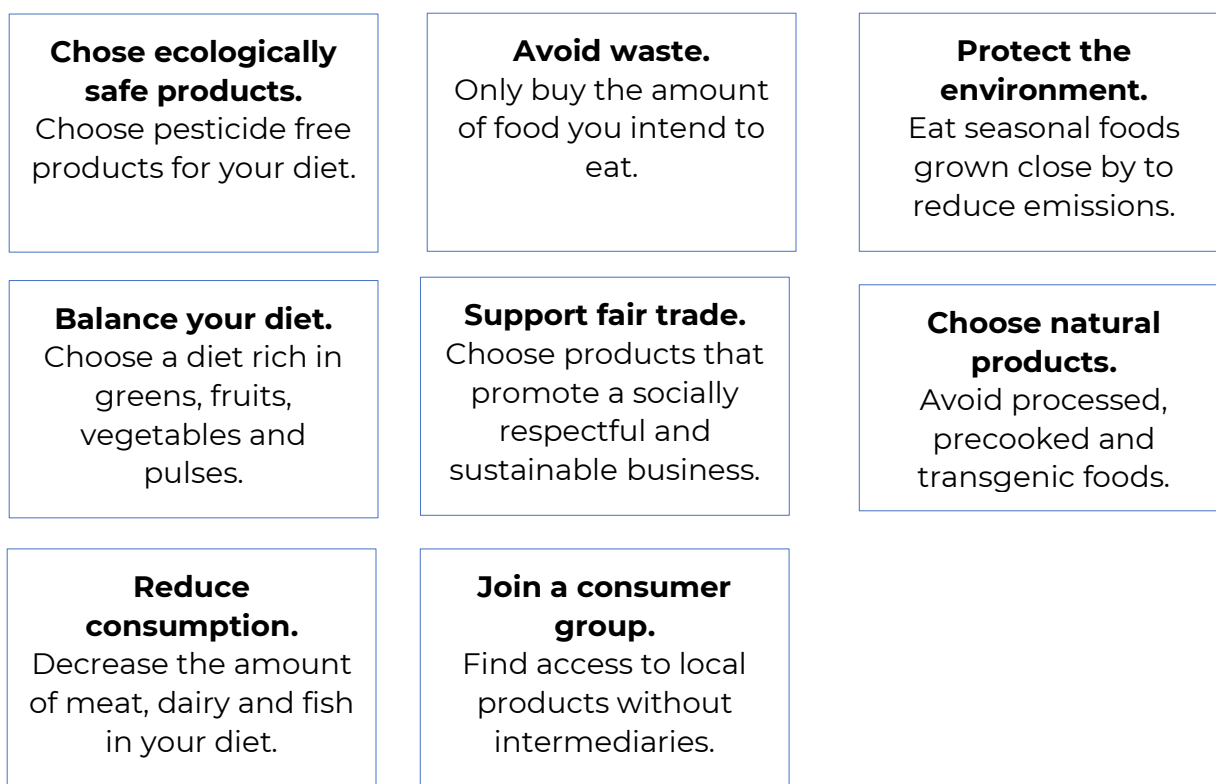
Ask the group to think about and discuss the following:

- How much energy is required for the food we eat on a daily basis?

- Are we aware of the sources of energy used in the various stages of the food supply system?
- Analyse and discuss how you can contribute to a circular economy practice in the food chain industry.
- Do you think our food habits and the product choices we make, have an impact on energy consumption and the environment?

Please refer to the training material (Output WP4-A1) and use simple handouts like the tips in **Figure 4** below to help participants whenever possible.

Figure 4 - Tips for sustainable food⁹



For further examples of study circles, please visit the Study circle Handbook (2020).¹⁰

⁹ Iberdrola (2023). What is sustainable food? Food sustainability, a recipe against pollution.

<https://www.iberdrola.com/sustainability/sustainable-nutrition>

¹⁰ Freedom House (2020). Study circle Handbook https://freedomhouse.org/sites/default/files/2020-05/Study-circle-handbook-Final-Compressed_12_05_2020.pdf

2.5.2 The Storytelling Methodology with practical examples

Storytelling has been used widely as a pedagogical tool, especially in adult education and lifelong learning. Narrating stories to seniors can prove to be very effective in capturing their attention and making them more involved in the process by rendering them as active listeners (Jammal, 2022).

Benefits of storytelling for seniors include:

- Seniors can identify with the experience that is being presented
- Stories provide inspiration to the listeners and capture their attention
- Stories provide a specific timeframe, a sense of direction and options of action
- Stories spark remembrance and empathy (development of empathetical competencies)

When selecting a story, trainers should decide what the purpose of the storytelling session is and how it corresponds to the specific needs of older adults. For instance, the purpose of a story could be to:

- Raise awareness
- Create a sense of belonging
- Spark seniors' critical thinking
- Encourage them to process knowledge
- Acquire new language skills
- Spark creativity and encourage cooperation and communication, etc.

Storytelling can also be used by the seniors themselves, making them active participants during the training session. When seniors have the chance to share their own stories and experiences with their group, they are more quickly immersed in an engaging activity while creating a familiar and safe environment for everyone to share their thoughts.¹¹

Practical example #1 of a storytelling approach – Energy poverty

A very interesting way to spark conversation and begin a storytelling session is by encouraging seniors to bring one of their photo albums or meaningful objects to the training. Each one can tell their own story prompted by one of their own photographs/objects (e.g., from their childhood, marriage, family, special historical events, etc.). The group and the trainer can also ask questions to make the activity even more interactive.

¹¹ Jammal, S. E. (2022, August 29). Storytelling to improve adult education. Epale.ec.europa.eu. <https://epale.ec.europa.eu/en/resource-centre/content/storytelling-improve-adult-education>

Trainers should advise the seniors to relate their stories to sustainability and provide them with guiding questions for their stories, such as:

- Did you take action to protect the environment back in your childhood?
- Did people in your environment talk about the concept of sustainability?
- Were there any environmental catastrophes or incidents back in the day that prompted you to take action to protect the environment?
- Did you use to recycle, etc.?

Figure 5 - Example of a Storytelling implementation approach

A very interesting way to spark conversation and begin a storytelling session is encouraging seniors to bring one of their photo albums or meaningful objects to the training.



Each one can tell their own story prompted by one of their own photographs/objects (e.g., from their childhood, marriage, family, special historical events, etc.).



Trainers should advise the seniors to relate their stories to sustainability and guide their stories, such as: Did you take action to protect the environment back in your childhood? Did people in your environment talk about the concept of sustainability? Were there any environmental catastrophes or incidents back in the day that prompted you to take action to protect the environment? Did you use to recycle?



The group and the trainer can also ask questions to make the activity even more interactive.

Practical example #2 of a storytelling approach – Environmentally Responsible Behaviour and product re-use

Help young people and older adults get to know more about the life experiences of people in other age-groups and stimulate dialogue about intergenerational similarities and differences.

- Ask participants to bring a few items that people of their generation tend to know a lot about, but which might not be familiar to people of other generations. For example, a senior could bring an item from the austere post war years - when making do and mending where a way of life. Ideas would include old milk bottles, an old sewing machine, a button box, metal dustbin, etc. A child might bring a metal straw or share a favourite sustainability podcast or Youtube video symbolic of their generation.
- For each item, let participants guess what it is. (Give hints if needed.)
- Once relatives/friends guess what the item is (or give up guessing), provide additional information about how the item was used, compare childhood memories and reflect on different consumption and waste patterns between yesterday and today.¹²



¹² Penn State College of Agricultural Sciences (2003). Intergenerational Activities Sourcebook. <https://aese.psu.edu/outreach/intergenerational/curricula-and-activities/intergenerational-activities-sourcebook>

3.

**Organising local events
and workshops for rural
seniors on green and
sustainability topics.**



3. Organising local events and workshops for rural seniors on green and sustainability topics.



Image by Freepik.

This Toolkit #1 introduces partners, trainers, senior organisations, and municipalities to a potential approach they can follow in order to communicate with seniors and increase their willingness to participate in training events. The aim is to present specific channels, and tactics that they can choose in order to reach out seniors and motivate them to participate, as it is often a difficult task and requires more effort.

This chapter focuses on the learning process that partners, senior organisations, and municipalities could follow to engage seniors on green and sustainable household topics actively, taking into account their needs. The aim is to offer flexible learning patterns, as seniors may take some time to adapt to spontaneous oral discussions and request many more repetitions and explicit explanations. Therefore, it includes steps to be followed in order to keep seniors motivated during training events, considering at the same time the issue of memory and engagement.

How can you make seniors feel comfortable when participating in local training events?

This section is devoted to helping senior participants in local events feel safe and comfortable by taking into account any difficulties they may have and reducing the stress factors that may exist. The aim is to provide solutions to partners, senior organisations, and municipalities in order to build confidence at the local trainings, and also adapt to their challenges.

Organising Age-Friendly local events

Creating age-friendly local events and trainings that are in sync with the specific needs of seniors requires the cooperation of the community, local governments, and citizens' group's local agencies. There are a few steps that trainers and the community can follow to ensure that a local event is inclusive and runs smoothly:

Step 1: Involvement of Multiple Stakeholders

The engagement of public and private stakeholders can prove to be very helpful in the process of reaching out seniors and ensuring their participation in the training. Stakeholders can be elected officials and local government representatives, representatives from senior-serving organisations, or volunteers. Stakeholders can create an Age-Friendly Committee (hereinafter Committee) that will be responsible for coordinating the efforts of making the community age-friendly.

Step 2: Creation of Assessment Criteria

Trainers should put emphasis on the evaluation of how age-friendly the community really is. There are a few criteria that trainers can consider when organising local events, by receiving:

- Input on the matter from the local authorities
- Input and suggestions of the community itself (via focus groups, interviews, questionnaires, etc.)

Step 3: SWOT Analysis

After completing the evaluation of the previous step, the facilitators and the Committee should be able to pinpoint the main challenges that can obstruct the process and identify the main weaknesses of the community that can be in the way of achieving the goal of age-friendliness and inclusivity. But at the same time, it is essential to identify and highlight the strengths and opportunities of the community that prove to be helpful and practical when organizing the local event.

Step 4: Implementation and Monitoring

During the events, facilitators should take into account the resources available, both financial, logistical and human. At the same time, keeping a check on the

progress that is being made is crucial, as it is a way to understand whether the goals of the event are being met or not.

Annex 1 presents a checklist related to five criteria that should be considered when organising age-friendly local events, namely:

1. Accessibility and Physiological Needs,
2. Transportation;
3. Communication and Social Participation;
4. Community Support and Encouragement and;
5. Privacy and Consent.

Use this checklist when you are preparing a local event in order to consider the needs of seniors thoroughly.

In **Annex 2**, you can find a **pre and post training assessment template** that can be used by trainers in learning activities they organise with seniors. Feel free to modify the questions or rating scale as per your training requirements.

3.1 Tips on organising events for rural seniors

Planning a successful training event for seniors requires some thoughtfulness and depends on a number of factors that can really improve the experience for those taking part. To help prevent this from happening, it's important to be prepared. Please refer to the tips in **Figure 6** overleaf.¹³

¹³ C.H.A.N.G.E.R.S. (2022). Recommendations for adapting best practices in changing household attitudes towards sustainability for rural seniors A project outcome of the C.H.A.N.G.E.R.S. project – Exchanging good practices to Change Household Attitudes for a Non-wasteful, Green environment and Energy-consciousness addressing Rural Seniors. Project number: 2020-1-HU01-KA204-078710

Figure 6 - Tips for organising events for rural seniors.

1. TRANSLATE AND UPDATE THE MATERIALS

As language barriers are typical among seniors, education materials for seniors are more effective if they are in the national languages.



2. USE LOCAL NEWSPAPERS TO SHARE CONTENT

Based on the translated materials, we recommend to reach out rural seniors via local printed media which is still popular among senior citizens.

3. CREATE PHYSICAL TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES

As older people have lower digital skills in general compared to younger generations, we recommend organising local physical events.

4. PLAN SHORT-TERM PROGRAMMES

It is recommended to plan shorter programmes for seniors. According to studies, adults can keep their attention at events, trainings for about 20-30 minutes.



5. APPLY VISUALS SUITABLE FOR SENIORS

Seniors might have visual impairments which should be considered at the training. Transparent layouts, large font sizes, simple and contrasting colours, less text, more illustrations can all help.

6. CHOOSE AN ADEQUATE VENUE

Seniors might need special attention while preparing for the event. The venue should be in a well-connected and easily reachable location with facilities.



7. ADVERTISE YOUR EVENTS LOCALLY

Choose the most popular communication channels where rural seniors can be reached: for example, bingo clubs, printed local newspapers or the message board in community buildings.

8. USE THE PRESENTED TOOLS AS ADDITIONAL MATERIALS

Use our toolkits during group activities and with family members.



9. PLAN INTERACTIVE AND INCLUSIVE EVENTS

In order to help keep seniors' attention, prepare group activities or other gamified tasks. Always ensure the programme is inclusive, and caters for poorer literacy skills.



10. MAKE THE TRAININGS PERSONAL

Asking seniors to share their experiences and opinion will contribute to a higher rate of participation and a deeper connection to the topics. Peer-to-peer learning is also encouraged.



11. PREPARE PRINTED HANDOUTS FOR THE SENIOR PARTICIPANTS

Printed materials can help better understand presented topics, the acquisition of new knowledge and the implementation of new ideas and best practices.

12. AVOID SCIENTIFIC TERMINOLOGY IN YOUR TRAININGS AND MATERIALS

Using simple language without complex and complicated sentences is encouraged.



13. ASK PARTICIPANTS TO EVALUATE YOUR EVENT

At the end, ask the attendees to evaluate the event and its content in order to improve and address their interests.



3.2 Recommended channels to reach seniors

In order to recognise and meet the needs of older persons in rural and remote areas, outreach efforts need to be flexible and sensitive to local variations in cultural and physical realities. The list below suggests some of the more feasible options to reach seniors.

- Flyers: create flyers and distribute them in senior centres or other locations where seniors gather (e.g., parks, places of worship, retirement communities, community centres and groups, seniors' homes).
- Social media: use social media platforms such as Facebook or Twitter to promote the local training events and create event pages to share more information.
- Phone calls: make phone calls to seniors who have expressed interest in training events, which can help build relationships with them as well.
- Local newspapers: include information about upcoming training events and the topics to be covered.
- Networks: contact other organisations/municipalities that are willing to share information about your training (or even co-host it).
- Emails: send an invitation through personal emails to seniors who have expressed interest in training events.
- Newsletters: is also a good way to keep seniors informed about upcoming events.
- Promotion during council events for seniors like tombola parties, fund raisers, etc.

3.3 Creating invitations

The invitations to local training events should be customised based on the training and target audience. Particular emphasis has to be given to the design elements, such as the use of:

- warm colour palette to evoke a welcoming and inviting atmosphere
- images of seniors or old photos of the locality to inspire participation



- clear and legible font for all text elements
- visually appealing borders or decorative elements related to the training theme.


Living sustainably: How to reduce your waste

Free Training Session
for people 65+



Monday 29th of April 2024
12:00 - 13:30

KMOP Education and Innovation Hub
(Sourpi 4, 145 62, Kifisia, Athens, Greece)



KMOP invites you to the free training session on the topic of **“Living sustainably: How to reduce your waste”** for people 65+, which will take place on **Monday 29th of April 2024**, at **12.00 - 13.30** at KMOP Offices (Sourpi 4, 145 62, Kifisia, Athens). At the training, we will discuss the following:

- 12:00 -12:30** The impact of waste generation on the environment and society.
- 12:30 -13:00** The life cycle of different consumer goods.
- 13:00 -13:30** Ways to incorporate responsible consumption practices.

In order to register for the training, send an email to changers-project@kmop.org or call +302103637547.

The training is addressed to people 65+, and **no fee or prior knowledge is required**. Find more about KMOP at <http://www.kmop.org/>.



4. Further reading and Resources



4. Further Reading and Resources



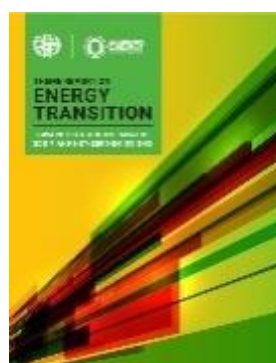
Image by Wirestock on Freepik.

Do you want to learn more about organising learning activities for seniors related to environmental topics?

- Federal/Provincial/Territorial Ministers Responsible for Seniors. (n.d.). Age-Friendly Rural and Remote Communities: A Guide. https://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/seniors-aines/alt-formats/pdf/publications/public/healthy-sante/age_friendly_rural/AFRRRC_en.pdf
- Jammal, S. E. (2022, August 29). Storytelling to improve adult education. Epale.ec.europa.eu. <https://epale.ec.europa.eu/en/resource-centre/content/storytelling-improve-adult-education>
- Imperial College London (2022). Decarbonising Buildings: Insights from across Europe. <https://www.imperial.ac.uk/grantham/publications/decarbonising-buildings-insights-from-across-europe.php>
- British Council (2022). Climate action in language education: Activities for low resource classrooms.

https://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/sites/teacheng/files/2022-08/CALE_activities_low_resource_contexts.pdf

- Energy Poverty Advisory Hub (2021). Tackling energy poverty through local actions - Inspiring cases from across Europe. https://energy-poverty.ec.europa.eu/system/files/2021-11/EPAH_inspiring%20cases%20from%20across%20Europe_report_0.pdf
- United Nations (2021). Towards the achievement of SDG 7 and net-zero emissions. https://www.un.org/sites/un2.un.org/files/2021-twg_2-062321.pdf
- UNESCO (2013). Climate change in the classroom: UNESCO course for secondary teachers on climate change education for sustainable development. <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000219752>





Annex 1: Criteria for Organising Age-Friendly local events

Use this complex checklist when you are preparing a local event in order to consider the needs of seniors thoroughly

1. Accessibility and Physiological Needs

- Public washrooms are accessible and can accommodate people with a variety of disabilities (wide doors, handrails, etc.).
- Benches are accessible (and in the appropriate height for seniors).
- Buildings are accessible, having ramps, fewer stairs, non-slip flooring, and parking near the venue of the event.
- There is thermal comfort (warm environment during the winter and cool during the summer).
- Visual comfort is provided, such as calming colours in residential rooms, bright colours and natural light in hallways to help with orientation.

2. Transportation

- Affordable and accessible community transport services (including shuttle vans) are available.
- Public transportation (buses, ferries, etc.) is accessible throughout the day and evening, and affordable.
- There are volunteer and/or an informal network of drivers.
- Information is provided to seniors about the range of transportation services (public and private).
- Events and activities are held in locations that are served by affordable and accessible transportation.

3. Communication and Social Participation

- Events and activities are intergenerational and designed to appeal to people of different ages and backgrounds and promote cooperation and communication between generations.
- There is regular and reliable distribution of information about events and programmes (including contact information) through local channels of communication.
- There is a central directory where older adults can find information about the activities and services available as well as contact information of the trainers/facilitators.
- Information to older adults who are socially isolated is delivered by phone or through personal visits.
- Access to computers and the internet is available in the place of the event (if necessary).



4. Community Support and Encouragement

- Older adults are encouraged to volunteer and be engaged in the community by being provided with flexible opportunities.
- Physicians are available in the community.
- Facilitators are equipped with first aid kits, or physicians are present at the event in the case of an emergency.

5. Privacy and Consent

- All activities comply with age-appropriate guidelines and legal requirements.
- Consent from seniors and parents/guardians of children is received for any photographs or videos taken.
- Information related to how photos will be used and stored is communicated.
- Privacy and personal boundaries of all participants are respected.
- Photos shared on social media do not include sensitive information.
- Capturing images of participants' face is avoided.



Annex 2: Pre and Post Training Assessment Template

Date:

.....

Location:

.....

Title of the event:

.....

Age:

<20

20-29

30-39

40-49

50-59

60-69

>70

1. How would you rate your knowledge of the topic *before* the training?

Not at all knowledgeable

Slightly knowledgeable

Moderately knowledgeable

Very knowledgeable

Extremely knowledgeable



2. How would you rate your knowledge of the topic *after* the training?

- Not at all knowledgeable
- Slightly knowledgeable
- Moderately knowledgeable
- Very knowledgeable
- Extremely knowledgeable

3. Will you use what you learned in this training in your daily life?

- Definitely not
- Probably not
- Possibly
- Probably yes
- Definitely yes

4. What is your opinion of the balance of lecture and interactivity in this training?

- Too much lecture and not enough interactive learning
- Right amount of both lecture and interactive learning
- Too much interactive learning and not enough lecture

5. How could this training be improved to make it a more effective learning experience? (open-ended)

.....

.....

.....



6. What part of this training was most helpful to your learning? (open-ended)

.....

.....

.....

7. Please add comments, if any, regarding the organisation of the local event (open-ended, e.g., challenges you may have)

.....

.....

.....



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