

Guidelines

for participatory mobilization
process to set up a RENCOP

R.EN.CO.P

Renewable ENergy COoperative Partnership



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Co2mmunity

Co-producing and co-financing renewable community energy projects

HEINRICH BÖLL STIFTUNG
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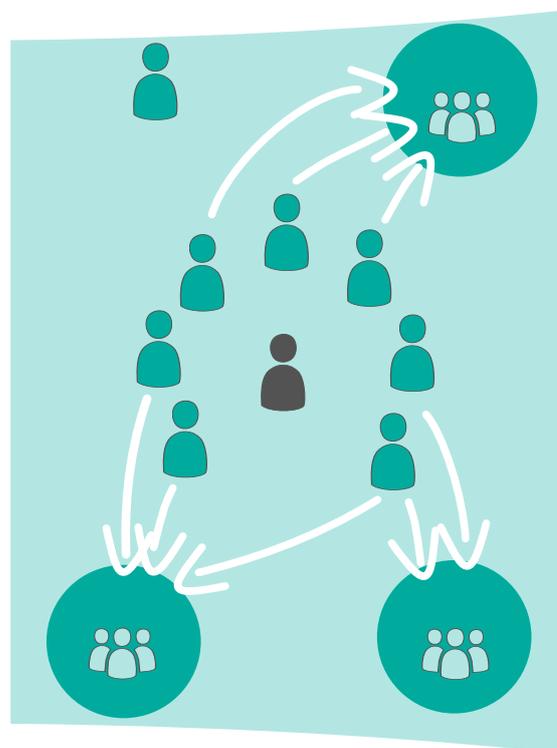
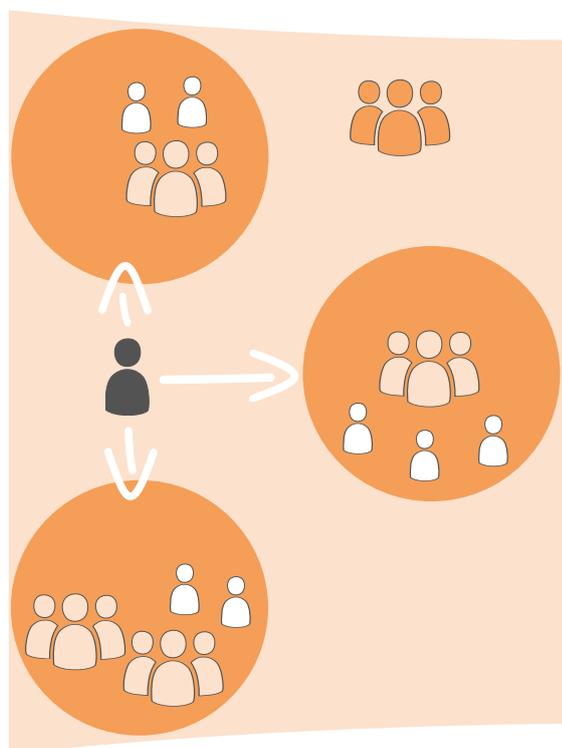
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1 Framework and aim of the guidelines

To tackle the effects of climate change, a worldwide energy transition is necessary. The energy-related greenhouse gas emissions have to be reduced. Thus, the challenge is to transform the global energy sector from fossil-based to zero-carbon by the second half of this century. Although there is a need for a global energy transition and international agreements, there is the possibility to independently trigger change on a local and regional level. Renewable energy and energy efficiency measures can potentially achieve 90% of the required carbon reductions – a major task requiring collective efforts.

To foster these collective actions, we (in the Co2mmunity project) have established the notion of RENCOPs - Renewable ENergy COoperation Partnerships. These RENCOPs are groups of people (organisations) that work together to support the knowledge, creation and spreading of citizen or community energy (CE) (<http://co2mmunity.eu/outputs/rencop-developments>). The Networks can be either community-driven or expert-driven, or even a mix of both. They can emerge in urban or rural settings.

In Figure 1 a schematic description of a RENCOP is provided, where the role of a RENCOP Coordinator (RC) is described. In the project setting a RC acts as a contact point between the initiator(s) of the RENCOP and the partners, leading the establishment and managing of Regional RENCOP activities. The RC can be you, the reader of this report, one of your colleagues, a supporting organisation or it can even be a joint body.



These guidelines are a description of key steps which we suggest a person/organisation or institutions should take to develop a strategy for building a mobilization process to initiate and establish a RENCOP. Although it will be context specific, it is thought that following these guidelines will help the reader to develop a conscious strategy. In practice, the result of these guidelines will be an internal document containing information to help structure a discussion on your RENCOP, out of which external communication material can be developed. Hence this report will provide:

- the guidelines: The steps to follow when you want to develop a strategy/ an action plan for building a mobilization process to initiate and establish a RENCOP.
- elements to consider for the external communication of the project.
- a short description of Baltic Sea Region (BSR) specific experiences using the guidelines.
- a lists of campaign materials which can be used for developing the external communication.

Although these guidelines are developed to be generic, the actual implementation will be context dependent, driven by the regional and local settings and knowledge which will affect the RENCOPs. We will give you the do's and don'ts of RENCOP work, and some of the experiences gathered while testing the guidelines. Within the Co2mmunity project several regional RENCOPs were established (responsible organisation in parenthesis).

GERMANY

SCHLESWIG-HOLSTEIN (HEINRICH-BÖLL FOUNDATION SCHLESWIG-HOLSTEIN E.V.)

DENMARK

MIDDELFART (MUNICIPALITY OF MIDDELFART)

ESTONIA

TARTU (TARTU REGIONAL ENERGY AGENCY TREA)

FINLAND

UUSIMAA (GNF) AND SOUTH OSTROBOTHNIA (ENERGY AGENCY OF SOUTH OSTROBOTHNIA THERMOPOLIS LTD. AND REGIONAL COUNCIL OF SOUTH OSTROBOTHNIA)

LATVIA

RIGA REGION (RIGA PLANNING REGION)

LITHUANIA

KAUNAS REGIONAL ENERGY AGENCY (KREA) & LITHUANIAN ENERGY INSTITUTE

POLAND

WHOLE COUNTRY (FOUNDATION FOR SUSTAINABLE ENERGY)

SWEDEN

SOUTHEAST SWEDEN (ENERGY AGENCY FOR SOUTHEAST SWEDEN)



2 The guidelines for a participatory mobilization process to set up a RENCOP.

“You need to find the one person from that group who will be the driving force, the champion, the heart of the project. A person that people trust and listen to. If you get him/her excited the process/project will be most likely to happen. If you don’t find that person, it is also ok. It just means more work and convincing needed from you. But it can happen of course. The attitude towards the project will change. It will get more exciting when one people at a time joins in.” Experiences from one of the Co2mmunity partners while setting up a RENCOP

In order to promote community energy projects bringing about change in your community, it will need a lot of hard work and persistence. Often it takes more time to build participatory processes than initially thought of. It can therefore be easy to get demotivated when your efforts run into barriers, like a lack of interest from citizens or a lack of political will. That’s why it is so important to have a clear roadmap for reaching your goals and be realistic in your planning, so you’ll be able to keep track of your progress and stay focused on what you want to achieve.

This ten-step guide is to help you establish your action plan. We realised in the course of the project that to develop a strategic process we need a flexible approach, however providing the reader/user with certain steps to pursue. In the discussions with the various RENCOPs it also become clear that the status of the energy transition, and the awareness in society in the various countries is strongly affecting the way in which RENCOPs can establish community energy (CE) projects. There are a number of contextual factors which need to be considered, be it geographical, historical or political. These are decisive for the approach to follow for establishing RENCOPs as catalysts for CE projects.

Additionally, as the RENCOPs are coordinated by different types of organisations this will also affect the approach taken to enable the CE projects. Therefore, it is important for the user of the guidelines to reflect upon what their role and self-understanding is. The action plan developed through the guidelines is to be used as a “living” working document. This means that it is a reference document, which should be further developed through the building up of the RENCOP.

The guidelines can be used for example as:

1. an internal tool to develop an action plan with a strategy for developing a participatory mobilization process to set up a RENCOP.
2. a learning tool. The questions to be answered should stimulate thinking and a discussion between those who want to build up the RENCOP.

2.1 Where to start from

In this chapter we take a look on how you can build up a RENCOP with the aim to promote community renewable energy in your locality. The main issues to be aware of are: Focus on the things you have influence on, think of engaging with multipliers, and not only key individuals, and last but not least develop a strategy and a complete action plan for how you want to go about it. There are three phases in which there are different steps to be taken (in order to have an open, transparent and democratic communityenergy (CE) project, which will benefit the local people).

I.

PLAN

II.

**TAKE
ACTION**

III.

REFLECT

PLAN

PLAN: The tasks that come up at the start of a RENCOP can sometimes seem overwhelming. However, the more thorough you are in this first planning phase (see 1-8 in Figure 2) and the more strategic you are in your planning using these guidelines, the better you will understand how to engage with your stakeholders and to implement a RENCOP which will become one little, but important, part in the (global) energy transition.

TAKE ACTION: Second, there is the implementation phase (see 9, Figure 2), in which you set up and run the RENCOP. Depending on your strategy of establishing the RENCOP, this phase can already result in concrete community renewable energy projects. In other strategies your RENCOP might generate Sub-RENCOPs, which then will develop concrete CE projects (the German RENCOP example described in chapter 4 would be an example of the latter approach, the Danish or Finnish approach would be an example of the former).

TAKE ACTION

REFLECT: Third, there is the phase after the CE project is completed. How to sustain the momentum of the established RENCOP? Again, here it depends on the strategy you have decided to take. The key is that you reflect and evaluate, before initiating a new RENCOP or reviewing continuing your “old” RENCOP.

REFLECT

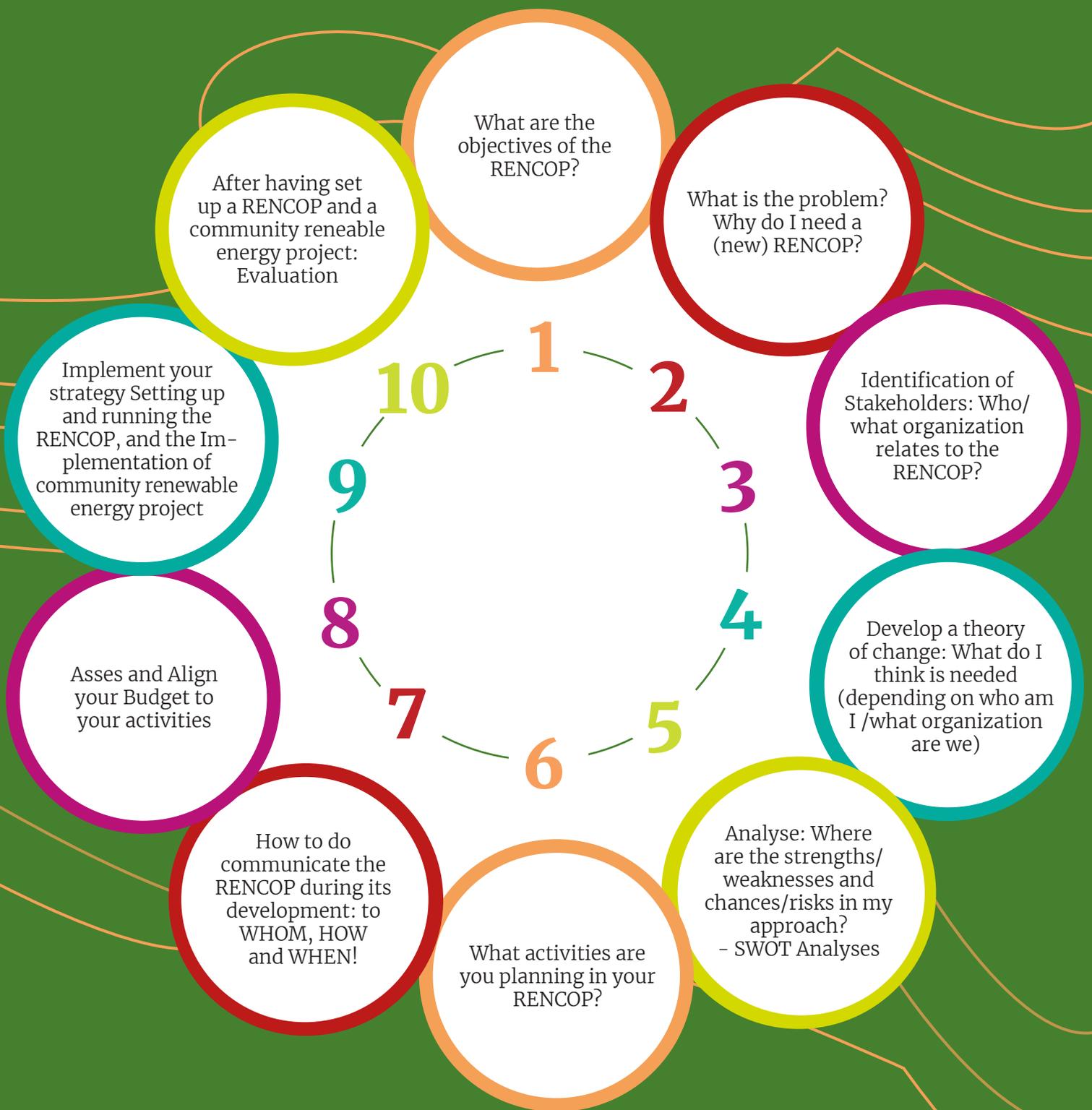


Figure 2: The elements used in developing a strategy for implementing a participatory mobilization process to set up a RENCOP

2.2 The action plan: Developing a strategy for a participatory mobilization process

These guidelines should enable a strategic approach to build up longer-term RENCOPs that promote the energy transition. However, they are also usable if you think of setting up a short term RENCOP.

We suggest you think of the establishment of a RENCOP very much like initiating a campaign, which also needs a robust action plan to start with. Each of the 10 steps are described, and you can structure your thoughts in a document for your internal use. Each step described, will give you a rough indication what type of output, and approximate length of what you should write down.

STEP 1

What are the objectives of the RENCOP?

STEP 1: What is the problem your RENCOP wants to focus on?

► Problem statement

Narrow down bigger picture problems into more manageable parts. What part of the problem are you trying to solve? How does resolving this issue address the underlying problem.

Output: ~ 250 words

► Situational analysis

Identify, and specify, the context in which you want to develop your RENCOP

- What is the context? What is the current narrative and frame for the issue?
- What political, economic, cultural or other factors are creating or maintaining the problem?
- What is the national/regional political situation relating to policies towards renewable energies + community building/citizenships?

What are civil society groups doing about the situation? LEARN FROM OTHERS (Successes & failures → field trips, CE experts telling you.)

Output: ~ 1 page description

► Campaign/RENCOP focus – what is your suggested solution?

Do you want to focus on a specific technology? Do you want to have a specific outcome of the RENCOP or do you want to use it for creating a broad coalition for the energy transition?

It might be helpful to frame your RENCOP as an enabler to implement the solution (or a part of the solution). Name the FOCUS AREAS of your RENCOP.

- Read local newspapers & keep an eye on news about people being interested in community energy (e.g. common purchase of solar panels).
- Local people have a pretty good idea what they want locally: be aware of local history, people's interests in certain community energy projects etc. → EMPOWER local PEOPLE

-
- and support local ideas!
- Gather information on what is needed to implement your suggested solution (technical information on the site, financing, permits etc.).
 - Think of how you would like to organise the RENCOP. This will of course depend on the purpose of your RENCOP and the type of community energy project you want to promote. Do you see your RENCOP as a strategic partnership and enabler of CE in general, or has your RENCOP a specific goal, such as a short-termed activity like a common purchase for i.e. solar panels?

Output: ~ 250 words

STEP 2



What is the problem?
Why do I need a
(new) RENCOP?

STEP TWO: What shall the RENCOP achieve? What are the objectives and/or dreams of the RENCOP

RENCOPS based upon citizen engagement often grow out of an idea, a vision, or a dream to do “something”. To identify this can take some time. However, as a RENCOP initiator you can decide upon whom you want to engage with to develop the objectives for the RENCOP.

►RENCOP goal

What should the RENCOP achieve (scope)? Every step forward in the campaign must be taken with the achievement of your goal in mind. Limiting your campaign to one or two goals will allow for a more focused and powerful effort.

If possible, your goals should be strategic, measurable, achievable, realistic and time-specific (SMART).

Output: 1-2 sentences to justify each goal.

►Long-term considerations

How will the campaign continue to have impact after your planned work ends? How will you build up other groups’ capacity, strengthen institutions and increase local ownership?

It is key to think of

- continued cooperation and community empowerment.
- maintenance and operation of community renewable energy.
- continued community spirit & ownership.

Output: ~ 250 words

STEP 3

Identification of Stakeholders: Who/ what organization relates to the RENCOOP?

STEP THREE: Who is your target?

Who can change the situation? Who is your target? Identify key individuals and groups that have an effect/influence. Learn more about their level of interest in issue; the group or party they belong to and their position on the issue.

You need to identify three categories of people:

1. List **potential allies**. Who are they? Select important and less important ones. Non-governmental organizations, political parties, politicians, university professors, trade unions, private companies, ...?
2. List **opponents**. Who opposes your solution? Political parties, politicians, businessmen, farmers, ...? Why? What arguments are they using? Who are their allies? Why are they supporting your opponents?
3. Your **communication target group** is the group of people you want to motivate to join you in the efforts to foster CE projects. If your goal, for example, is to develop a RENCOOP which is promoting a community heat system, then your target will be the people who will use and benefit from that local system. Furthermore, organizations, institutions, politicians or businesses can be part of your target group if your goal is in their interest or there is a shared purpose. For example, a local NGO can be a helpful ally in moving your target to act on your goal.

Identify networks in which you can share your ideas: a housing company, village events, social media, birthday parties, the development company of the municipality.

Contact and visit motivated people. Think of how to engage with the stakeholders. How can you cooperate? See section on external communication.

► Key players: allies, opponents, supporters, targets

- Who are the stakeholders?
- Your stakeholders have a name and a face. For example, key for establishing your RENCOOP might not be the city council, it might be the chairman of the city council and perhaps a specific council member.
- A key stakeholder can be a champion (someone who is a strong supporter), an opponent (someone who may block your efforts), or something in between. You can build up your champion to take a stand on your goal, or you can convince your opponent that your goal is worth supporting. So, think thoroughly of who (and what institution) is important for you.
- Identify community personalities and convince them of your CE efforts.
- Engage with experts (within & outside the community). It is especially important that there are people who have the technical, legal and financial skills to support your efforts.

- Inside your community: There can be all kinds of experts within a community (people with different professions: engineers, electricians etc.) which are valuable in setting up and running community energy. They can give advice during the project, do voluntary work for it etc.
- o Outside your RENCOP: Are there other networks of regional organisations engaged in energy guidance (energy agencies & others → list of organisations)? Often, you can get expert advice from them for free.

Output: Dynamic stakeholder map: co2mmunity.eu/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/Dynamic-Stakeholder-Mapping-Tool.xlsx

STEP 4

Develop a theory of change: What do I think is needed (depending on who am I / what organization are we)

STEP FOUR: Develop a Theory of Change (ToC)

What do you think is needed (depending on who you are/what organisation you are in) to develop a participatory approach? Theory of Change (ToC) is a specific type of methodology for planning, participation and evaluation that is used in companies, philanthropy, not-for-profit and government sectors to promote social change. It defines long-term goals and then maps backward to identify necessary preconditions. It is a forecast, a hypothesis, a model that shows what conditions we believe must exist for other conditions to come into being. It can be used to discuss and develop your STRATEGY for setting up the RENCOP and making it run. There is much information on the internet on the approach. A primer is:

http://www.theoryofchange.org/wp-content/uploads/toco_library/pdf/ToCBasics.pdf

Output: Diagram and Text 1-2 pages

STEP 5

Analyse: Where are the strengths/weaknesses and chances/risks in my approach? - SWOT Analyses

STEP FIVE: Analyse and assess your organizational capacity to set up your RENCOP and your mobilization process (internal and external factors)

What organizational and contextual considerations do you need to bear in mind? What are your philosophies and policies? What experience do you bring to the table? How much time do you have to dedicate to this campaign? Are there skills that you would like to develop like writing, public speaking, or making videos? What additional capacity you may need to build i.e. do you have technical, financial etc. expertise within the community? Do you need help from outside experts? Who should be contacted?

Conduct a SWOT analysis for your plan. A SWOT analysis is an incredibly simple, yet powerful tool to help you develop your strategy for your RENCOP. **SWOT** stands for Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats.

Strengths and weaknesses are internal to your organization or your community team – things that you have some control over and can change e.g. who is on your team, your internal skills and knowledge, and your location.

Opportunities and threats are external – things that are going on outside your organization/team, in society at large. You can take advantage of opportunities and protect against threats, but you can't change them (directly). Examples include (EU) legislation, prices of CO₂, the general awareness of climate change, or movements like Friday's for Future.

A SWOT analysis organizes your top strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats into an organized list and is usually presented in a simple two-by-two grid. An example is: <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S0195925519300125>.

Output: SWOT analysis-Chart

STEP 6

What activities are you planning in your RENCOP?

STEP SIX: Description of activities

▷ This element in the guidelines is the actual part of thinking of what you want to do (and when) based on your capacity. Brainstorm and make a list of your planned activities (with a schedule) to develop your RENCOP.

Think of the activities in the three phases of establishing a RENCOP:

1. Before the RENCOP
2. The first months of the RENCOP
3. The first year of the RENCOP

▷ **LEARN FROM OTHERS:** Showing the benefits of CE, and that it is working in reality, is the best way of conveying the message that the energy transition is possible.

- Organise and support meetings, seminars, workshops, fairs etc. to show and discuss successes (& failures).
- Invite CE experts to share information at your meeting / event. (Tip: make sure that there is something to eat and drink for free.)
- Organise Film events.
- Organise field trips: e.g: to pilot sites, ecovillages...
- Start regional CE campaigns to raise awareness and acceptance for CE and to mobilize

-
- stakeholders to become RENCOP members (including events/information about CE in general e.g. by roll-ups presented on regional fairs).

Output: Table or short description of activities including a timeline with key dates (including internal and external events, planned activities, milestones and ‘take-off’ or trigger events)

STEP 7

How to do communicate the RENCOP during its development: to WHOM, HOW and WHEN!

STEP SEVEN: Motivate & gather interested people, communicate & campaign

Communication: Think of HOW you want to communicate the RENCOP during its development to WHOM, and WHEN!

- How do you plan to communicate the goals of the Co2mmunity project to relevant stakeholders, and what tool will you use?
- See Chapter 3

Output: Table/description of the communication strategies you plan to use in the regional CE campaigns

STEP 8

Asses and Align your Budget to your activities

STEP EIGHT: Develop your Budget

Make a rough calculation how much your activities around the RENCOP might cost. Try to be realistic and adjust your activities. Include financial and pro bono contributions. Also think of the financial implications for people/organisations joining in and financing possibilities for citizens: crowdsourcing, loan, funding from leader groups, voluntary work, own money, subsidies, support from governmental institutions...

Output: Table with cost forecast

STEP 9

Implement your strategy Setting up and running the RENCOP, and the implementation of community renewable energy project

STEP NINE: Implement your plan

The timing is often key if the implementation of your action plan will be successful or not. So, think of when you launch your RENCOP and start the different related activities.

STEP 10

After having set up a RENCOP and a community renewable energy project: Evaluation

STEP TEN: Evaluate

How will you know if your RENCOP strategy has been successful? Based on what indicators?

To evaluate the outcome of your efforts can be rather tricky, depending on what outcome you want to measure. Developing and implementing a campaign is a learning experience, with the key question: Did your assumptions fit the reality?

1. **Campaign activity implementation:** in most cases easy to measure: all aspects that indicate activities have been undertaken, such as the number of events held, advertisements placed, publications produced, press releases issues, radio interviewed given etc.
2. **Media and online monitoring (software or manual):** counting mentions in media and/or on websites, visitor statistics on websites, content analysis etc.
3. **Change in knowledge, attitude and behaviour:** tricky to assess, most commonly this can be done through interviews/surveys before, during and after your activities to see if the desires changes have occurred. (To see how many people register for a newsletter, send an email of support etc. can be a useful proxy or direct measure of behavioural change.)
4. **Change to politics, activities and practices of targeted institutions:** Case studies, monitoring of support and changes of targeted institutions (private and public sector). See changes in public statements, or directly in policy.

Output: Description (1-2 pages)

3 The elements of the external communication

Although the action plan, and the strategy from it, is the core of your efforts to set up your RENCOP, you need to consider how to develop the momentum for a participatory mobilization process. If you want to succeed here, you need to engage in external communication, and think of how to engage with multipliers who spread the word. Knowledge alone does not change behaviour. With some limited exceptions, people often know what they should be doing, so simply telling them what to do rarely creates change. This is the paradox which environmental campaigns often face and what makes a mobilization campaign so complex.

Given that communication is greatly affected by the cultural context, this section provides you with some basics and general approaches, while chapter 4 will provide you with more specific experiences and lessons learned in the BSR region.

3.1 Two types of campaigns

When looking at the issues you might tackle with your RENCOPs, there are two main types of campaigns: either an individual behavioural change campaign or a public will campaign. The former tries to change individual behaviour and promotes pro-environmental behaviour, e.g. having people putting solar panels on their roofs. The latter attempts to raise the importance of a problem in the public eye as the motivation for policy action or change (Coffman, 2002). When you engage in a campaign it is useful to think of its framing. This means how the campaign is perceived – as an individual behavioural issue, or where you want to change policy (or both) – and overall communicated. A frame is the rhetoric “packaging” of a fact in a way that encourages certain interpretations and discourages others. A specific framing can make a solution, or a specific action appear engaging or not.

Figure 3 illustrates the different importance of the variables: attitudes, awareness, social norms and public will for the two main types of campaigns. The activities that can influence these variables can often be used for both campaign types. Read more about important activities in step six of the guidelines.



Figure 3: Continuum of Campaign Types According to Purpose. (Source: Coffman, 2002)

The difference in a campaign’s primary purpose (individual behaviour versus policy change) is a key factor in decisions about what kind of strategy you want to pursue for your campaign (see table 1). Many campaigns include several variables and have elements of both a behavioural- and policy change campaigns. However, crucial is, to always bear in mind, what is driving your campaign’s theory of change. What is it you ultimately want to achieve and how do you want to achieve it? So, what are the root causes and what keeps the unwanted behaviour going?

CAMPAIGN TYPE/ GOAL OBJECTIVES	INDIVIDUAL BEHAVIOUR CHANGE	PUBLIC WILL
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Influence beliefs and knowledge about a behaviour and its consequences • Affect attitudes in support of behaviour and persuade to change • Affect perceived social norms about the acceptability of a behaviour among one’s peers • Affect intentions to perform the behaviour • Produce behavioural change (and support) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase visibility of an issue and its importance • Affect perceptions of social issues and who is seen as responsible • Increase knowledge about solutions based on who is seen as responsible • Affect criteria used to judge policies and policymakers • Determine bureaucratic barriers • Reach and mobilise your target group
Target audience	Parts of the population whose behaviour needs to change	Parts of the local population to be mobilized and policy makers
Strategies	Social marketing with the aim to promote sustainable behavior	Media advocacy, community mobilization
Media/Communication Vehicles	Print, television, radio, social media, Gaming	Print, television, radio, social media
Examples (see Appendix for more)	Photo voltaic/ solar campaigns, electricity reduction campaigns, car sharing etc.	Support campaigns for district heating, Fridays for futures, demand for implementation of regional climate plans etc.

Table 1: Individual behaviour change campaign in comparison to public will behaviour campaign adapted to climate change.¹

¹ Public Awareness Campaigns, 2015, Supporting Military Families Through Research and Outreach, <https://reachmilitaryfamilies.umn.edu/sites/default/files/rdoc/Public%20Awareness%20Campaigns.pdf>

3.2 What makes a mobilization campaign so complex?

As previously mentioned, often, people already know what they should be doing. So just telling them what to do won't bring about change, as behaviour is shaped by factors such as:

- available range of choices
- rules (laws and policies)
- cost (economic and otherwise)
- social reinforcement and approval (norms)
- ease/difficulty (benefits and barriers)

The sequence of **awareness – alignment – engagement – action** is generally perceived as a prerequisite for creating a change in behaviour. The assumption is that there is an underlying psychological driver which campaigns need to address to be successful in causing behavioural change (Rose, 2011).

A value-based approach building on Maslows's hierarchy of needs would try to divide people into value groups when constructing campaign messages. This approach, which is widely used in marketing, is built on the belief that people based on their values and perception have a specific view of the world and that this view can be altered over time. There are mainly three dominant value attitudes: people looking for ideas, often seen as the pioneers for change who are driven by inner values or ethical arguments; outer-directed prospectors who are looking for success or esteem; and more security driven people, so-called settlers who are looking for safety and more traditional values.

When thinking of a common action for these different types of people, for example the installation of solar panels, you will have to address the issue differently, depending on your target audiences. For example, a pioneer would possibly engage in the activity based on the argument that it is the right thing to do for the environment (when there are no major constraining legal or financial factors). Prospectors might do it when it is fashionable, to make it visible to their neighbours and use it as a status symbol. Settlers on the other hand might have the motivation to put solar panels on their roof because it will make them independent from external energy deliveries. Hence, the task when you plan your activities and develop the communication for your RENCOP is to always have your target audience in mind.

If you want to better understand the context in which you want to trigger change, the data from The World Values Survey (WVS), which can be found online ², might be useful. In Germany there is the SINUS Institute, which researches the change in values and people's everyday lives as well as their preferences in terms of aesthetics and campaign messages ³. Comparable institutions exist in many countries. Although these are very specific institutions, the key message you should take with you is: think about who you want your campaign to reach and what makes these people tick (Rose, 2011).

² <http://www.worldvaluessurvey.org/wvs.jsp>

³ <https://www.sinus-institut.de/en/>

3.3 How to make outreach and communication easier

You don't need a specific communication department when engaging in external communication. Foremost it is important to integrate your assumption about what you think will lead to change in your overall project strategy. As a general rule of thumb effective campaigns are usually better done by *showing* rather than *arguing*, by *motivation* rather than *education*, and by *mobilization* rather than *accumulation of knowledge* (Rose, 2010).

A communication strategy is about planning and knowing what you communicate. It's essence can be condensed to Lasswell's communication model (Lasswell, 1948): **Who** - says **what** - in **which channel** - **to whom** - with **what effect**. In addition, your strategy is highly dependent on what type of organisation you are. Campaigns maximize their chances of success through the coordination of different outreach efforts with a mix of direct and indirect communication channels.

There are several things you should consider, but most important is:

- keep it short and simple
- be visual
- create events
- tell stories about real people
- think of the timing: plan your activities so that they resonate with ongoing issues in the "outside world". Are external events taking place, to which you can link your activities? Such events are good opportunities to communicate your campaign.
- think of your audience: communicate in the language (also visually) of your target audience.

Attracting the attention of the general public to your project on your own costs a lot of work. Figure 4 shows schematically your efforts when you alone try to communicate your project i.e. RENCOP. First it takes a lot of efforts to reach out to the public, symbolised by the small dots, and second your project might not be as newsworthy as if you work together with other groups or institutions (Figure 5). When it comes to tackling climate change, the more diverse the groups are who work together the stronger the momentum into civil society (and to politics) will be.

Hence, try to build alliances and cooperate with key multipliers (see Figure 5) who will spread the word in their channels and to the audiences in which they are the influencers (see Figure 6). At this point, as mentioned above, it is important to "*find the one person from that group who will be the driving force, the champion, the heart of the project. A person that people trust and listen to...*".

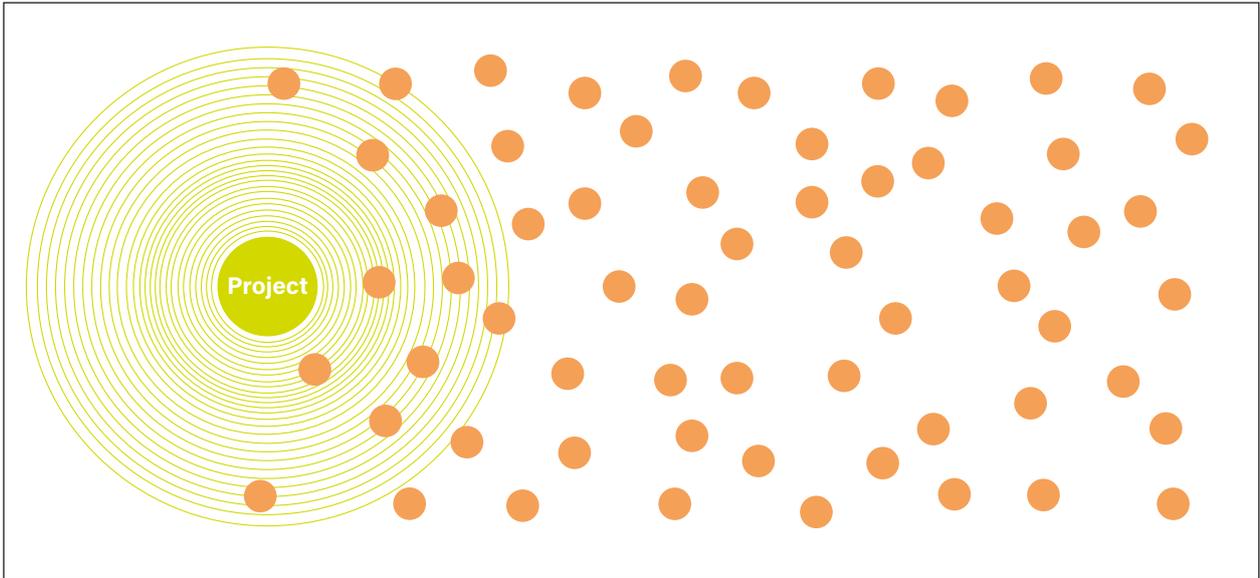


Figure 4

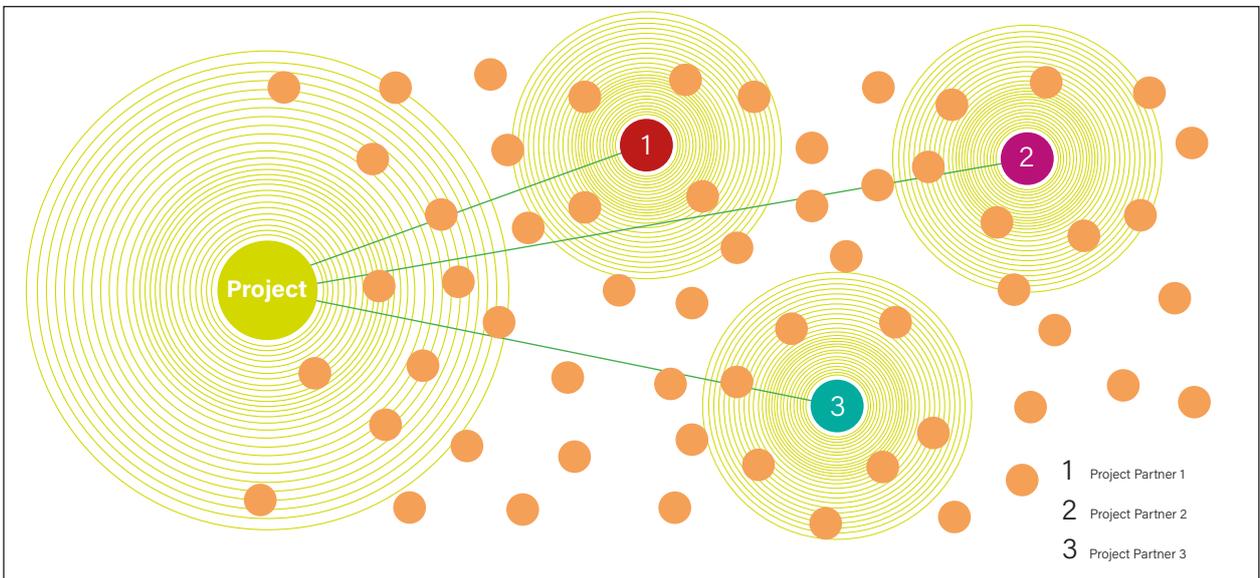


Figure 5

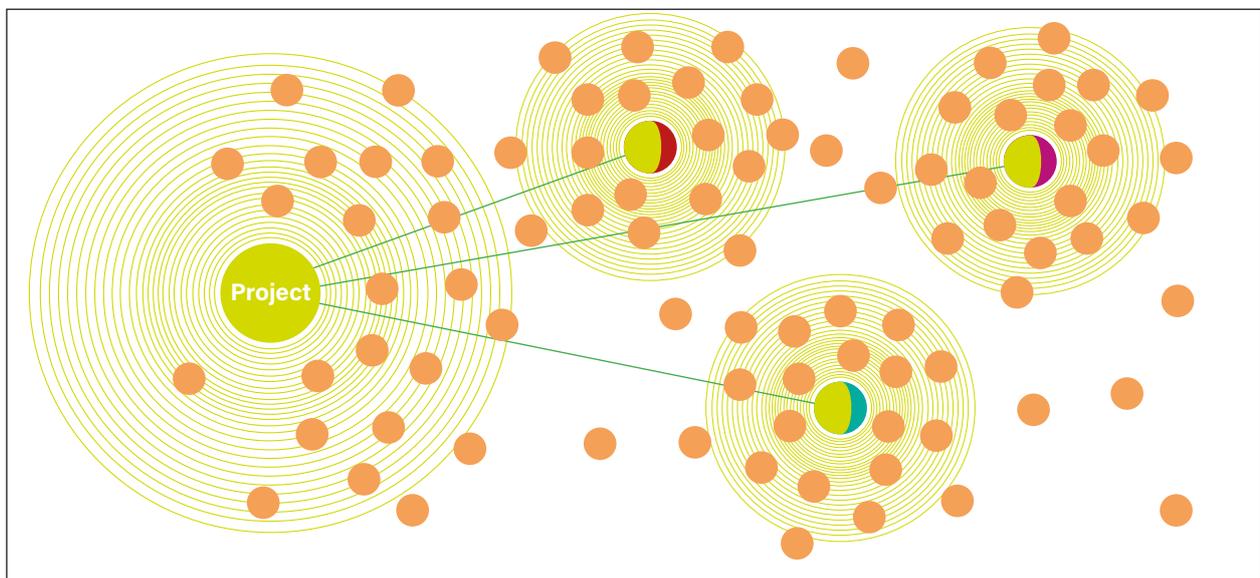


Figure 6

AND: No matter who your message is intended to reach, your communication must be authentic for your organization.

Independently of what your campaign goals are, you can make your campaign stronger by thinking of the framing you use. The issue of energy transition can be seen through various lenses, which will affect how the transformation process is being perceived. This is of course dependent on who the audience is that you want to communicate with. The communication approach storytelling can be a strategy to connect to your audience and to convey your message.

Storytelling which has been the most profound way of sharing narratives for centuries has become the new buzzword in modern communication. In essence, it is about telling a convincing story about your project and its results. Hence, the advice is to tell true stories of how your project can help real people in real places. Although your project might seem small, a good story can draw the attention of relevant multipliers, for example journalists, that can share it further. If you have developed a thorough campaign plan, it will help you to tell your project story.

It might help you as well to:

- a) think of your project in the context of an elevator pitch. Imagine a one-minute talk to a newly met person, which aims at attracting his/her attention. Use this format to practice explaining the core of your project – what is the purpose of your RENCOP?
- b) extend the pitch into a more comprehensive structure, leading through the context of the project: challenges to tackle – solution – how the solution works – proof it works – vision and positioning of your organisation.

There are several inspiring tools such as the INTERREG communication seminar (<https://www.interreg-baltic.eu/event-detail/event/save-the-date-quality-workshop-communication-seminar.html>), or the online guide on Storytelling (<https://www.musestorytelling.com/>).

3.4 How do you want to reach out to your audience and spread the information on community energy?

Capture the attention of the right audience: define the target audience, select channels to generate enough attention.

In campaigns you can distinguish between indirect and direct communication and the use of social media. The former is a one-way communication in which you often reach a larger number of people, but tend to be less engaging than a direct communication in which you are in face-to-face interaction with your audience. Then there are the social media, which are not a panacea and are only relevant if they are used by your target audience. In most cases, depending on your strategy, you will have a combination of different approaches.

Think of using a storytelling approach, it will help to convey your message. Although you might be eager to start communicating about your RENCOP early, it is useful to think of the whole story you want to transport in advance, since you don't get too many chances to get your message across. So, your strategy may involve a conventional mix of brochures, posters, advertisements and commercials or a different array of communication methods to achieve certain objectives.

- **Indirect communication/traditional media:** local newspapers, radio and television, a media partnership (or several methods?), advertising (if you can fund it), develop games
- **Direct communication:** examples are workshops in schools, panel debates in universities, periodic newsletters, lectures, a public debate in a café or an open space, street activities...
- **Social media:** Facebook, Twitter, blogs, YouTube, etc.
- Website

Sometimes it can be useful to engage with **public figures and celebrities**. Depending on your audience this might be famous bloggers or online activists, music bands, artists, actors, intellectuals, writers, academics etc. However, you need to be sure that their engagement is authentic, otherwise it might undermine your efforts.

Deliver an understandable and credible message

Be aware of: source credibility, comprehensibility of the message matches the previous knowledge, duration of exposure.

- **The message you want to communicate:** one sentence (also useful for the elevator pitch). The message is directly linked to the solution your campaign is offering.
- **Campaign slogan(s):** You might like to have a slogan which is conveying your goal in an easy and understandable way.

Provide information, direct attention, trigger norms, change underlying values and preferences.

- **Images = emotions** (images of the problem, images of the solution, your image: What is the image you want your organization to have?). Be visible and use the aesthetics you think will attract your target audiences.
- **Create events** which you think would be attractive for your target audience.

Ideas for of campaign materials which can be used for developing the external communication

There is a great number of campaigning ideas on the web sharing good practices and providing inspiration for future communications and outreach effort. Below is a list which brings together some important information on how to utilize effective communication avenues to reach out to predetermined target audiences.

Some general guidelines

- ICLEI Outreach and Communications Guide: https://climate-adapt.eea.europa.eu/metadata/tools/climate-change-outreach-and-communication-guide/04_iclei-cap-outreach-communications-guide_0.pdf
- <http://www.activetrans.org/sites/files/BikeWalkEveryTownOutreachandCommunicationsTipSheet.pdf>
- https://www.interreg-baltic.eu/fileadmin/user_upload/News/2019_all_news/2019.11_all/TG_WS_Comms_Sem/2019.11.18_Practical_tips_HowToInvolveTargetGroups_FINAL.pdf
- <https://www.interreg-baltic.eu/news-detail/news/tips-how-to-involve-your-target-groups-successfully.html>
- Can climate change games boost public understanding? Since and Culture <https://www.pnas.org/content/pnas/116/16/7602.full.pdf>

Some Storytelling Resources

- For a written story: OEDb's writing resources (<https://oedb.org/ilibrarian/150-writing-resources/>)
- For a spoken story: The TEDx Speaker Guide (http://storage.ted.com/tedx/manuals/tedx_speaker_guide.pdf)
- For an audio story: <https://blogging.com/podcasting/>
- For the digital story: <https://vimeo.com/blog/category/video-school/>

4 Experiences and lessons learned in using the guidelines by project partners

These guidelines were developed in parallel with the planning and implementation of several RENCOPS. However, a first draft of the guidelines was already available to the RENCOPS at this early stage. This chapter therefore provides some insights into the experiences of the partners. These are reflections from different countries, different types of organisations and of RENCOPS with different scope and aims. You can read more about each RENCOP on the Co2mmunity website: <http://co2mmunity.eu/outputs/rencop-developments>.

4.1 Middelfart Municipality RENCOP, Denmark (Middelfart Municipality)

Middelfart Municipality has been responsible for the establishment of the RENCOPs and the political interest in sustainable development has encouraged the council to work with citizens. Middelfart Municipality has identified different community energy projects, such as “Common purchase of heat pumps” which was fixed in advance while other such as “Sol over Brenderup” evolved more spontaneously through sharing of ideas and discussions. The experiences are following:

- Before starting up a RENCOP it is a good idea to have something to help you to structure the task ahead. When you just start without a plan you could end up going in two directions. To make sure something like that does not happen, Middelfart Municipality used the “participatory guidelines” for help.
- The first step is to make sure you are aware of what the problem is and what you want to achieve. In this way it ensures that everyone in the project is on the same page to begin with and all project members are working for the same goal. After we defined what and why, we had to define the “WHO” where we used the “Dynamic stakeholder mapping tool” developed during this project. This tool illustrated who the stakeholders are and how they could influence the project, both in negative and positive ways. This helped defining who we could include in the project and how to work with them.
- The next step was to make a strategy for setting up the RENCOP and making it run. This step helped structuring the different RENCOP meetings; where to start, what topics to talk about and whom to invite. Even though the content of the meetings could vary, depending on what kind of RENCOP you are working with, the guideline gave a starting point/ a baseline. From Middelfart Municipality experience, the structure for the meetings recommended in the guidelines work best for planned meetings for longer types of RENCOPS.
- To make sure you know the strength and weaknesses of your RENCOP, the guidelines recommend the use of a SWOT analysis, which always is a good idea if you want to make sure you know your project and to avoid unexpected issues. In the fourth step the guidelines recommend to form tactics for what to do and to use tools like brainstorming. It recommends starting in a smaller group, which helps to keep it structured and manageable after that the group can be widened and seminars and other types of meetings can be used. By doing so we could start to specify what to do and after that make sure the rest of the community is on board with the idea and thereby avoid a big and messy meeting without useful output.
- A big part of a successful RENCOP is the communication part and the guideline of course includes that too. The guideline encourages you to make a plan on how to communicate and both internal and external communication is important. And of course if a project has to work, we can't forget the budget part. You have to know the financial aspects of the project and the guideline ensures that you don't forget this part.
- The last step in the guideline is to evaluate the project. It is always a good idea to evaluate, not just for your own benefit but also if others want to start a RENCOP, especially

if you RENCOP was a success. The evaluation also helps to see if we actually achieved our goal and if solved the problem we wanted to solve. During the work with our RENCOP we continuously tried to evaluate on how it is going in order to catch a problem or a wrong turn before it is too late. We evaluated at meetings and discussed issues and other things, which showed how important ongoing communication is.



4.2 Schleswig-Holstein RENCOP, Germany (Energiebürger.SH)

Within the Co2mmunity project Energiebürger.SH has initiated the RENCOP i.e. Klimanetzwerk – Rendsburg-Eckerförde, which is a regional strategic (community renewable energy) network to foster the energy transition. It now entails key regional civil society organisations like the Church (evang. Luth Kirchengemeinde), Heimatbund Schleswig-Holstein, Naturfreunde Ortsgruppe Büdelsdorf, KreisLandFrauenVerband Rendsburg-Eckernförde, Volkshochschule Rendsburger Ring E.V., the climate management of the regional authorities (Kreis Rendsburg-Eckernförde), as well as a number of various CE Experts. The participatory guidelines we developed, and tested, while setting up the RENCOP.

- We first sensed that we needed to clarify our role: Energiebürger.SH („Energy citizens Schleswig-Holstein) has the aim to enhance civic involvement: to inform citizens and honorary politicians about climate change, regional impacts and opportunities relating to renewable energies, as well as to engages people to actively participate in the German Energy Transition. As the main conclusion of the climate concept of the county of Rendsburg-Eckernförde is the call for establishing local structures in which citizens can participate to shape the transition, we saw our role as being a facilitator and enabler of collaboration among key stakeholders (incl. citizens). Our goal as initiators of

a RENCOP is therefore to contribute to the transformative competence in the district of Rendsburg-Eckernförde by trying to achieve a broader consensus on the need for an energy transition and empowering citizens to actively participate in this transition.

- A crucial discussion has been **what do we want to achieve with the RENCOP**, to make sure that we don't build duplicate structures in the region, but are complementing the efforts of existing structures. The aim is to create added value for the region through our RENCOP for a period exceeding the time frame of the actual Co2mmunity project. Our overall aim is that through a new alliance we want to reach groups in society who have not been active within the CE movement until now and motivate them to become a part of the energy transition. Hence we build new alliances with various multipliers to reach out in the key civil society organisations in the region, and which is sustained for a time period longer than the project.
- We developed a hypothesis how we thought we could reach our goals and visualised our strategy in a **Theory of change**, outlining what we thought would be the necessary steps in reaching our goal, using this as a frame when developing our (campaign) activities.
- We thought of different activities which would enable us to reach the steps outlined in our Theory of Change i.e. we developed a double-tracked strategy – to disseminate information from technical CE experts, and to engage in a broader debate on the energy transition.

We organised a workshop looking at various scenarios on possible futures (see images below) relating to the energy transition in Schleswig-Holstein. This RENCOP workshop was held in cooperation with the county of Rendsburg and various civil society groups from the region. A great number of participants – young and old discussed about possible futures and actions needed to hamper climate change.



In the Fall 2019 we organised a series of various climate events, which we called Rendsburger Klima-Herbst: For example in the cinema in Rendsburg, we initiated movie evenings with facilitated discussion on the topic of the energy transition. We also in Rendsburg hosted Community Energy seminars where experts were invited to share their knowledge on community energy. Various renewable energy sources: wind, biomass, solar and heat were discussed or also discussion fora at NORLA, the regional agricultural and consumer fair.

A key issue has also been disseminating information on the possibility to **strengthen Regional Value Chains**, turning the transformation into an opportunity for the region.

In December, in parallel to the international climate negotiations in Madrid we organised, together with our RENCOP partners, at the Christmas fair a market stall focusing on climate friendly – do it your self- christmas gifts.

An Energy citizen course was initiated together with the Volkshochschule (VHS) in Rendsburg, which is a course designed to enable citizens to jointly develop and implement their own community energy projects.

The image displays a collection of promotional materials for the 'RENSBURGER KLIMA-HERBST' event series. The central poster features a globe on a clock face with the text 'RENSBURGER KLIMA-HERBST ALLE EINSTEIGEN, JETZT GEHT'S LOS!' and 'VERANSTALTUNGSREIHE'. To the left is a flyer with logos for 'www.energiebuerger.sh', 'Naturfreunde', 'HEIMAT BUND', and 'VHS RENDSBURG'. To the right are three smaller flyers: 'ÖFFENTLICHES FORUM „ESSEN GUT, KLIMA GUT?!“', 'FILMREIHE IM KOMMUNALEN KINO RENDSBURG', and 'VORTRAGSREIHE „WIND – SONNE – BIOENERGIEN“'. Each flyer provides details on dates, times, and topics related to energy transition and climate action.

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- Thinking of what will happen to the RENCOP in the long term: We already from the beginning were thinking how to initiate the RENCOP so that the partners can take over. The idea we pursue, is that each RENCOP partner organisation will develop and implement concrete ideas in how to engage, and being a multiplier in their own networks. It is planned that each partner will host a series of CE related events in their networks during 2020. Also joint events are planned. Hence, we want the already motivated RENCOP partners to be able to engage with CE energy experts from the network and to disseminate the information into their networks.
 - Aligned our communication to the target audiences: As we were engaging with organisations routed within a more conservative, security driven segment of society, we for example named the scenario workshop “Heimat & Schöpfung bewahren“ i.e. “protect homeland and creation”. We also tried to place information about the RENCOP and affiliated events, not only in daily newspapers but also in specialised media outlets such as the “Bauernblatt”, which is focusing on farmers /country side residencies. We also developed and branded our activities under the Motto “Rendburger Herbst” in a coherent way, trying to place the seminars in a way that they timely met with either external relevant events, such as regional planning processes for wind power plants, or seasonal topics such as highlighting discussions around biomass during autumn harvest.

4.3 South Ostrobothnia RENCOP, Finland (By the Thermopolis Ltd. – Energy Agency of South Ostrobothnia and Regional Council of South Ostrobothnia)

In South Ostrobothnia, an expert driven RENCOP has been formed in the beginning of 2018 to further the development of renewable energy projects in the area. The responsibility for the management of the South Ostrobothnia RENCOPs is divided between the regional partner organisations Thermopolis Ltd. – Energy Agency of South Ostrobothnia and Regional Council of South Ostrobothnia. The large amount of active local communities, such as village associations around the region, form an attractive environment for developing CE projects together with the experts.

- In South Ostrobothnia the strategy was to capture the attention of the right audience, which for us where the ordinary citizens interested in setting up renewable energy. This was done by engaging in street working activities right from the start. The shared responsibility of the RENCOP coordination in the area has been between two organisations, namely Thermopolis Ltd. – Energy Agency of South Ostrobothnia and the Regional Council of South Ostrobothnia. We made community energy visible in the area, by communicating and campaigning it at local events, such as fairs and village events. For communicating and campaigning purposes we produced material to promote CE in the area, a leaflet and a rollup. We followed the leads we had internally available in Thermopolis Ltd. – Energy Agency of South Ostrobothnia on renewable energy initiatives or interested people in our area, contacted them and visited them to start possible CE processes. Also, we talked to the local press about CE, RE and in specific solar energy, for which there has been great interest in our area.

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- We have organised RENCOP meetings and processes around solar energy and more broadly on renewable energy. To the meetings we have invited as speakers, local renewable energy companies (technology providers), grid operators and community energy experts. We have provided both technical information for those participants who are keen on that side of renewable community energy. We have also presented non-technical information on the things common citizens can do (common purchases etc.) to make the meetings interesting for those participants who are not technically oriented and interested in depth technical knowledge than rather information on citizen activation. Also, the expertise of Thermopolis Ltd. has been provided to support CE projects, such as common purchases of solar panels and presentations at meetings. This expertise has included technical and financial knowledge, information on needed permits and taking care of the tendering process of common purchases. Thermopolis as a non-profit company is quite neutral deliverer of the information of renewable energy as we do not sell anything, and we support all forms of renewable energy not just one form of it. Also, Thermopolis just executes the core function, which is to promote renewable energy, energy efficiency and saving of energy in our area and thereby is the provider of neutral and non-partial information.
 - Our work in South Ostrobothnia started promptly as an expert led RENCOP process as we early on initiated the expert-RENCOP meetings in the Co2mmunity -project. However, during the efforts done in the area for the promotion of community energy, we realised that best approach is to approach interested citizens in the community level and take their interest further. In the end we had a double-tracked strategy between expert-led RENCOP processes and community-led RENCOP processes. We have wanted to creatively use both approaches as necessary to create best possible outcomes to our region. Therefore, we have first wanted to get the benefit of the local experts view on possible community energy projects and how they could be supported. Second, we have wanted to support local citizens and their interest, not to give the advice 'from above' and embrace the community-led approach as well, which seems to work well in the rural environments of South Ostrobothnia.



4.4 A regional RENCOP in Estonia RENCOP (Tartu Regional Energy Agency (TREA))

In Estonia, the development of the community energy is still at a relatively early stage compared to countries such as Denmark or Germany. Currently, the Tartu Regional Energy Agency organises local RENCOP activities in Estonia. In Estonia we have tried to use the guidance and tools provided in “draft participatory guidelines” when we developed the strategy for main objectives and core activities in our expert driven RENCOP.

Since the community energy topic was in very early stage and basically there has been only a few previous activities and initiatives (so also no data, statistics, research or other materials/experiences) before we had to start from the very beginning with mapping the community energy position and situation in Estonia.

After the clarification of context and situation we were able to identify main problems, key issues and bottlenecks that need to be overcome to facilitate community development in society.

The next step was to set the first RENCOPs main objectives in order to beat the main barriers that had emerged and further facilitate the development of CE projects in Estonia. It was discussed that there are 2 main objectives: 1) since the whole CE topic was in very early stage when we started with RENCOPs, we had then (and must continue) to take into account that the overall context is that we first needed to raise general awareness and motivation, to make the CE topic visible in society and that this is still a continuing and ongoing task for our RENCOP now and in the future; 2) in parallel we search, select and work with some specific CE projects – advising, mapping the stakeholders, providing expertise etc. 3) provide more CE specific advice and expertise (problem identified earlier: citizens who are aware and would like to initiate CE project (to be a leader or manager), do not know where and how to start - need for specific expertise).

At the same time, we were working with finding and determine the target group – who would be most likely to be interested in developing community energy projects in Estonia? Who would be the stakeholders who should be involved in RENCOP – both for raising awareness and for initiate a real project? Who should we approach in order to raise awareness most effectively etc.? At the first stage we were more focused on some special target groups like apartment associations, eco-communities, island communities as the most potential initiators but later by now more interested citizens have emerged from different target groups. Involvement of a suitable and influential stakeholders (for example municipalities or very well-known and popular expert) we thought could be crucial to the success of a project.

We have realised that one of the key actors is a local leader, who believes in community energy and whose existence is strongly needed for the project to succeed - find a key person(s), leaders;

When objectives, target groups and stakeholders were identified, we moved on to more specific approach or activity plan – how do we plan to reach our objectives and how do we do that? Our main approach consists of following activities:

- public RENCOP meetings – regional, mainly for information, awareness rising, if successful than some potential initiatives might get the start or idea.
- participation in different events as social hackathon, annual meetings of eco-villages etc. representing EC topic and RENCOP approach as much as possible.

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- focused RENCOP meetings with specific CE project involving the initiative, experts.
 - Working meetings with specific CE project – updating the situation, providing the needed advise.

Expert RENCOP meetings – gathering relevant experts, discussing specific problems, both generally CE related or related to specific community energy projects.

In our current stage we have realised that development and running a RENCOP is a complicated task and we have to consider continuously some facts in our daily work (the list is not exhaustive): 1) that the awareness and motivation is still low and the cultural and social background is not favourable; 2) we need to explain the benefits of CE to communities in order to create more motivation in parallel with awareness raising. Especially financial, ecological and social; 3) we need to bear in mind that generally there are always limited financial possibilities, so if possible all kind of funding schemes should be considered; 4) It is very hard and might take very long time and energy to convince citizens or communities to initiate, be involved or contribute to the CE project; 5) but on the other hand we have seen that if the initiative already is interested and contacted us, then at least the leader(s) are very motivated and active.



4.5 A national RENCOP in Poland (The Foundation for Sustainable Energy (FNEZ))

The Co2mmunity partner implementing the Polish RENCOP activities is the Foundation for Sustainable Energy (FNEZ). The work of the RENCOP is focused on the opportunities for the development of energy clusters, energy cooperatives and housing associations as

forms of community energy. Due to the current stage of the energy transformation in Poland, where CE projects are not very common and their possible benefits are not very well known, it was decided to adopt an expert driven model of a RENCOP. It is an open group established on September 2018, bringing together experts from various fields and practitioners with their own unique experience in implementing CE projects. In Poland, at present, civic energy is beginning to develop mainly based on prosumer and distributed energy.

At the time of establishing R.EN.CO.P., civil energy projects in Poland were not very popular, so the know-how and practical experience was also limited. Initially, R.EN.CO.P. focused on the possibilities of development of CE projects based on the experience from the functioning of energy clusters, as examples of local energy initiatives. Therefore, based on the analysis of national conditions and on the basis and suggestions contained in the „draft participatory guidelines“ the following steps were taken:

- the general objectives and objectives of R.EN.CO.P. were defined,
- identification of stakeholders in civil energy projects was carried out,
- stakeholder surveys were carried out in terms of their scope of activities in connection to the implementation of energy projects, identification of industry needs and directions for future development to define R.EN.CO.P. action plan, the analysis of barriers and drivers for CE project development was carried out within R.EN.CO.P.,
- constant contact (phone, e-mail, during meetings) of the members of R.EN.CO.P. was maintained for a continuous exchange of knowledge and experience between practitioners and experts,
- recommendations for legislative and structural changes enabling the development of RES in Poland in the interest of energy producers and consumers are developed, meetings dedicated to R.EN.CO.P. group were organized and actions were taken to popularize CE projects (e.g. conferences, symposia, workshops, meetings with representatives from public administration and financial institutions),
- the original assumptions of R.EN.CO.P.'s activity were verified and actions were taken to extend the group's membership by housing cooperatives implementing RES projects.



4.6 A regional RENCOP in Southeast Sweden (Energy Agency for Southeast Sweden)

Energikontor Sydost, the Energy Agency for Southeast Sweden, is working to support small community-driven projects in the counties of Blekinge, Kalmar, and Kronoberg. The strategy is to provide expert inputs from companies and experienced communities to housing cooperatives. We are a NGO owned by municipalities and regions in Kalmar, Kronoberg and Blekinge county is responsible for the Swedish RENCOP. When developing the strategy for the work within Co2mmunity the draft process described in the project application was used as inspiration for the process developed. The fact that the guidelines (this document) did not exist early in the project also played a part in the direction chosen for the work. A future project based on the experience from Co2mmunity (and these guidelines) could get a different approach.

In the beginning it was discussed what a RENCOP is and what variant that can work best in southeast Sweden. It was clear that using existing networks in the region with a focus on renewable energy could be a shortcut compared to involve and gather people not familiar with energy at all. It was also judged that a general campaign for citizen mobilisation around energy would not work as well compared to focused campaigns (for example on solar-PV).

- Campaign focus: Electricity production in Sweden is to a large extent climate friendly (low Co2 emissions). A foreseen decommission of existing nuclear within the next 20 years will however call for much new renewable electricity production facilities. Citizens can be involved in this by investing in private and cooperative solutions. These solutions must be profitable, accepted by society and technically feasible. They also must be feasible from permit, regulation and support system perspectives. Historically many wind turbines has been owned by different types of cooperatives (farmers etc). In 2012 electricity prices fell significantly causing economic problems for many wind cooperatives. This and the fact that most new wind turbines today are built by large utilities in large wind farms have reduce the interest in wind cooperatives. Reduced cost in combination with a generous governmental support system has created a high growth of Solar PV in Sweden. The potential is high and the Swedish RENCOP is therefore focusing on supporting BRFs to install Solar-PVs.
- RENCOP Experts: Initial idea for RENCOP was to use an existing network Small scale renewable energy in southeast (SMALL). This consist of a group of people with various expertise in energy and was started 2015 mainly with the aim of supporting small scale hydro plants.
In April 2018 the first open RENCOP-meeting (RM) was held with representatives from SMALL present. At this first meeting there were also representatives from three BRFs, the municipality (the energy adviser), a countryside association, some community centers and a group of people considering a larger solar plant.
Since none of SMALL members were interested in a deeper engagement in setting up CE (not as an owner or driving force) the plan changed to use the members of SMALL as an expert RENCOP supporting other initiatives. At this stage it was also decided to focus on BRFs (as described above).

After the first three RM Energikontoret evaluated the outcome so far and concluded regarding the composition of the RENCOP expert group:

- It was difficult to get persons engaged in solar energy if their expertise is within other energy sources such as bioenergy.
- The concept of cooperative ownership is different from setting up for example a municipality owned facility and require a certain mindset.
- It was difficult to make the RENCOP experts travel to other locations than Växjö. Energikontoret want to cover all its working area (Kalmar, Kronoberg and Blekinge counties)
- The SMALL members have great knowledge and many contacts and can be used sometimes, but a different approach must be defined.
- The SMALL network had been ongoing for some years and the initial enthusiasm was partly gone. The idea to renew the network with Co2mmunity did not work.

After internal discussions at Energikontoret it was decided to approach the energy advisers in all municipalities in southeast (24 municipalities, 16 persons) and let them form the base for the expert RENCOP. These advisers are coordinating some of their activities and adding work for Co2mmunity as experts was not so difficult. When organizing open RENCOP meetings over the regions one or more advisers could assist with preparations and also attend the meetings. During spring 2019 the advisers also jointly organized a set of open seminars on solar energy with a leading expert in the field as speaker.



4.7 Regional RENCOP in Lithuania (Kaunas Regional Energy Agency (KREA))

The key factors of community energy project development are: - the social responsibility of citizens / community members (nature conservation), economic and practical benefits (independence), and the need for direct communication.

One of the tools to encourage this process is RENCOP, a cooperative partnership for renewable energy. During the course of the project, it was found that such partnership initiatives could emerge in civic communities, as well as be proposed by experts in a particular field. In any case, the goal is the same - to start and develop a renewable energy project in a community which would be the main beneficiary and manager. Each community, whether urban or rural, can initiate a renewable energy project that benefits the community as a whole and each member individually. Information on the intention to set up a RENCOP type partnership can be publicized through various channels of communication or directly through experts or consultants. During the project, such consultants are project partners. In Lithuania, such partners are Kaunas Regional Energy Agency and Lithuanian Energy Institute.

The following four basic steps can be used in developing RENCOP and preparing a renewable energy project:

1) Initiation - Identify interested parties and create a working group of their representatives. The main tasks at this stage are: to come up with an idea, to identify the target group and areas, to engage citizens (neighbors) and the municipality, to use existing expertise (consultation), to motivate interested parties, to publicize and disseminate information (local events, social media, community project benefits).

2) Preparation - to evaluate the local / regional energy situation, municipal spatial planning aspects and risk level, to get acquainted with good practice. Involve all relevant parties in the planning process. If the community is involved in planning, there is an increased likelihood that decisions will be implemented in a timely manner and produce better results. Prior to implementing specific activities, analysis of strengths, weaknesses, threats and opportunities and cost-benefit ratio should be undertaken. It is important to properly share responsibility of decision implementation and to calculate the resources required.

At this stage, the accuracy and reliability of the information received is crucial. This avoids misunderstandings or suggestive interpretations of information and provides a basis for further work. "Soft" activities play an important role here - organizing and support of meetings, use of experience of others, stimulating motivation and interest (promoting local ideas), assessing needs and planning.

3) Project preparation and implementation - setting of strategic goals, choice of technology, setting of implementation deadlines and evaluation indicators, evaluation of financial resources, realization of the project, meeting deadlines, ensuring broad public support. Implementing of community energy project means involving local and external experts; collection of information (technical, legal, financial); targeted activity participation, financial participation; volunteering and personal initiative.

4) Monitoring - to monitor progress and operational efficiency in relation to the objectives set, to evaluate new information and the situation. Other activities at this stage are also very important: publicizing the results, encouraging and motivating of participants, continuing collaboration, strengthening of community, disseminating experience, adjusting the community energy project, and continue to uphold the spirit of community.

The use of energy from renewable sources is limited by a number of factors (barriers, which may be related to climate, market and physical conditions, technological development and availability, economic situation, responsible authorities, etc.), which can be grouped into the following areas:

- Political (government interference in market relations, lack of citizenship and responsibility in society),
- Legal-administrative (lack of legislation and regulations, too little or lack of power of authorities, bureaucratic barriers, legislative limitations),
- Financial-economic (lack of funding and support programs, low funding intensity, insufficient market opportunities and investment conditions),
- Representation (inadequate media coverage of RES benefits, inefficient actions of responsible authorities, hostile behavior of conventional energy sources' representatives, inactive self-government position),
- Technical (lack of technical regulation, lack of infrastructure, supply of technical experts does not match the demand, insufficient technological education of the community),
- Information and education (insufficient public awareness and education, disinclined response of educational institutions to changing needs, conservative community attitude to innovation).

One more very important obstacle in the Lithuania is the traditionally sluggish integration of the population of cities and regions into community. In such a context, it may be difficult to find consensus for support at a community-level investment and benefit-sharing. However, trust in the community and maintaining its vision is main requirement for the development of the energy project.



5 SUMMARY

The German Advisory Council on Global Change (WBGU) in their special report, “Development and justice through transformation: The Four Big ‘I’s” stressed, that an overall success towards an Energy Transition can only be secured with re-balancing the state, markets and civil society. The EU has taken a progressive step to foster Community Energy in the “EU Clean energy for all Europeans package” (2019), while national governments now have to fulfil their obligations to secure the frames and conditions for its implementation to enable a sustainable energy transformation.

This handbook provides guidelines for those who want to embark on the journey of being a part of the energy transition and to already act now. Although this report is developed in the context of the Baltic Sea region, as one of the outcomes in the Co2mmunity project (INTERREG Baltic Sea Region programme), the approach is generic and can be used in all geographical areas. The aim of this report is to provide municipalities, individual citizens and/or citizens’ associations knowledge, how to develop participatory processes for stimulating community energy projects on regional/local level.

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