

19 November 2019, ENS

# How to better involve your target groups

## Practical tips from peer projects

In order to have a successful project and get your project outputs in use, you need to involve organisations and people who use them – your target groups – already during the project. Success implies that you reach out to stakeholders outside the project partnership and ensure that they will use the outputs after the project implementation.

During a Workshop on Target Groups involvement on 12 November 2019 in Tallinn, people working in projects funded by Interreg Baltic Sea Region exchanged ideas on how to involve target groups more successfully. The discussions focused on three target groups, namely national authorities, local and regional authorities as well as business sector.

We collected a set of tips for you to get some ideas and inspiration to make your daily work easier.

Interreg Baltic Sea Region  
Managing Authority/Joint Secretariat

## Tips to successfully involve officials from **NATIONAL AUTHORITIES**

### ○ **INVOLVE OFFICIALS FROM NATIONAL AUTHORITIES FROM THE BEGINNING.**

Involve them when you just start developing your project, and do your best to convince them to join as partners of your project or at least as associated organisations. Such an approach will help create a feeling of co-development and co-ownership of the project results, leading to their stronger durability.

### ○ **EXPLAIN THE BENEFITS YOUR PROJECT DELIVERS IN IMPLEMENTING NATIONAL STRATEGIES AND PRIORITIES.**

Show how your project fits into the framework of national interests. Explain your project results as an example within the national context that would help national authorities achieve their goals. Showcase your pilot activities to authorities as real life experience.

### ○ **ANALYSE THEIR COMMUNICATION PATTERNS.**

Examine how (through which means, groups, events, etc.) the officials you need to get on board tend to get the information. The personal approach is a key in reaching national authorities. Think creatively how to frame such contacts: whether you join a working group of national authorities on your project topic, or you engage national authorities into task forces or regular stakeholder meetings set up by your project.

### ○ **INTEGRATE YOUR WORK INTO THEIRS.**

Use the project outputs to prepare briefings or short checklists in simple language for quick use by authorities. Think how to internalise your project (and the solutions you develop) to national authorities, so that they consider it as their own idea.

### ○ **THINK ABOUT HOW TO CONTINUE THE COMMUNICATION AFTER THE PROJECT.**

Set up an informal forum involving national authorities, develop digital tools and introduce them into use (an online platform of your own on a wider topic or a group in a social media channel). Do not limit interaction to your project topic – let it be wider and in line with the goals of national authorities.

## Tips to successfully involve officials from

# LOCAL & REGIONAL AUTHORITIES

### ○ BE IN TOUCH TO IDENTIFY THE ACTUAL NEEDS.

Speak to your selected officials of local and regional authorities as early as possible to understand what they really need from your project. This will help you produce outputs that they will want to use. Stay in touch on a regular basis, because the needs might change and the responsibilities, too.

### ○ USE EXISTING NETWORKS FOR EVENTS.

Try to make your event fit into the framework of an existing network rather than organising a stand-alone event. You could also run a survey through the network beforehand to identify the needs and requirements of local and regional authorities you need to involve. Want to exchange with a peer? Contact Jürgen Krempin (platform ResQU2): [juergen.krempin@feuerwehr.hamburg.de](mailto:juergen.krempin@feuerwehr.hamburg.de)

### ○ CONSIDER THE WHOLE PROCESS OF PILOTS.

Involve representatives of local and regional authorities during planning and implementation of pilot activities, as well as after their finalisation. Pilots can be strong experience the results of their efforts. By including authorities in the whole process, they are more likely to sustain the results. Want to exchange with a peer? Contact Azat Ismailogullari (project Sohjoa Baltic): [azat.ismailogullari@metropolia.fi](mailto:azat.ismailogullari@metropolia.fi)

### ○ TRAIN THE TRAINERS.

Make it part of your project to train partners in each country who will later on, after the project, pass on their knowledge in trainings in their respective country, e.g. towards local and regional authorities. Want to exchange with a peer? Contact Jürgen Krempin (platform ResQU2): [juergen.krempin@feuerwehr.hamburg.de](mailto:juergen.krempin@feuerwehr.hamburg.de) )

### ○ COMPILE BOTH SUCCESSFUL AND NOT SUCCESSFUL TEST RESULTS.

When you test different approaches to a certain problem in your project, compile practical examples of what worked and what did not, so that officials from local and regional authorities can easily look up and learn from other municipalities. This will make them gain time and ease their work. Want to exchange with a peer? Contact Kai Klein (project NonHazCity): [kai.klein@bef.ee](mailto:kai.klein@bef.ee)

## Tips to successfully involve **BUSINESSES**

### ○ **MAKE IT PERSONAL.**

Building personal relationships and trust is an important starting point. Activate all possible networks: personal, your partners', your associated organisations', intermediary bodies' (e.g. business support organisations). Make sure that the most relevant person or channel is used to send e.g. invitations or questionnaires. Contact these persons as directly as possible: call them or meet them face-to-face.

### ○ **PRIORITISE AND ADJUST.**

Be realistic and think of your goals in manageable steps within the time you have. Develop your main outputs early enough; otherwise, it will be challenging to communicate them to the key stakeholders. Besides, differentiate your strategy when addressing e.g. business support organisations or SMEs. They have different needs.

### ○ **USE THE SERVICES OF BUSINESS SUPPORT ORGANISATIONS.**

These organisations have numerous contacts. This will allow you to “multiply” your relations. They often provide lists of companies, which in certain cases can be bought from them. Want to exchange with a peer? Contact Marina Weck (project OSIRIS): [marina.weck@hamk.fi](mailto:marina.weck@hamk.fi)

### ○ **INCLUDE BUSINESSES IN YOUR PILOT ACTIVITIES.**

A good opportunity to involve businesses is via your pilots/tests, as they are often more practical than other project activities and are more likely to attract them. Besides the pilots, you may also include your target group in your steering / advisory group. Want to exchange with a peer? Contact Jesper Bredmose (project BIC): [j.bredmose@rn.dk](mailto:j.bredmose@rn.dk)

### ○ **INVITE RENOWNED EXPERTS TO SPEAK AT YOUR EVENTS.**

Inviting experts who have a good reputation in your sector (e.g. CEOs of large companies or policy makers from the local/regional levels) is likely to attract businesses. During the events, shorten the general presentation of the project as much as possible. There should be a clear benefit for businesses to attend your event. Want to exchange with a peer? Contact Caroline Oxley (project CAROTS): [caroline.oxley@hzg.de](mailto:caroline.oxley@hzg.de)

### ○ **PRESENT AN OUTPUT THAT WILL LAST.**

Show companies that they will be able to use the outputs on the long-term (beyond your project). If your project develops e.g. a platform, a business model or a network, demonstrate how it will ease their future work. A long-lasting cooperation with the research sector (for example through a platform) could also be seen as an asset by companies. Want to exchange with a peer? Contact Vitalija Kolisova (project BalticLSC): [v.kolisova@lic.lt](mailto:v.kolisova@lic.lt)