



Shaping Narratives & Activation

 Duration: 90 minutes

 Sticky notes, Pens

This exercise helps define key messaging, storytelling elements, and communication formats to engage different stakeholders. The focus is on crafting narratives that resonate with various groups and identifying the best channels to reach them.

- What you need before this exercise**
- You have identified who you would like to reach and activate.

- This exercise will be more impactful if...**
- You have done a stakeholder mapping exercise that gives you a good overview of your local ecosystem.
 - You have created an overview of existing engagement channels for different stakeholder groups (close stakeholders, wider ecosystem, vulnerable groups, deniers, etc.).
 - You do this exercise in a diverse group, ideally with people you would like to reach or those who work with or are close to these groups.

- Outcomes**
- Core storytelling elements and **tailored key messages** for different personas.
 - Identification of **effective channels and formats** for engaging stakeholders

- How to run this exercise**
- 10'** Describe your challenge as a group. Ensure that you align as a group.
 - 20'** Decide on a target group you would like to focus on. Brainstorm their barriers, motivations, needs, and existing commitments.
 - 50'** Go through each of the five elements one by one, starting with 1. You may choose to brainstorm individually first and then harvest as a group, or discuss the questions together and assign a note-taker.
 - 10'** After completing the canvas, take 10 minutes for personal reflection. Use this time to review the canvas and mark notes you find particularly strong.
 - 10'** Discuss the results and identify action points and responsibilities.

Your Challenge
Describe the specific challenge or opportunity where engagement is needed.

Why is this relevant?
What are the current barriers to action?
What success looks like in terms of engagement? (WHAT are concrete Desired outcomes for defined timespan?)

Understanding Target Group(s)
Look at your identified personas/target groups and answer the following questions:

Barriers
What might worry this persona/target group about your intended actions?

Motivations
What might motivate this persona/target group about your intended actions?

Needs
What conditions or supports need to be in place for this persona/target group to engage meaningfully?

2. Channels
Identify 3 effective channels to reach your target group

What are the most trusted or frequented channels for this audience? e.g. TikTok, neighborhood events, school workshops?
Which types of media and formats do they engage with most and how do they prefer to receive information? Fast and visual, printed, interactive, word of mouth?
What types of events or spaces do they already attend? Cultural festivals, music events, sports tournaments, local hangouts? Cafes, gyms, co-working spaces, barbershops, food delivery platforms?
Which digital platforms are most popular among them? Consider age, location, subculture.

3. Allies and Connectors
Identify trusted intermediaries who already have credibility, access, or relationships with the target persona.

Who already has strong relationships with this persona? Teachers, youth workers, sports coaches, musicians, activists, religious leaders?
Are there “unusual suspects” or community figures who could become allies? DJs, barbers, graffiti artists, librarians, micro- influencers?
Are there networks with access to your target audience? NGOs, community centers, student unions, neighborhood associations?
What value can you offer these allies in return? Visibility, funding, content, shared mission, audience building?

4. Actions & Engagement Methods
Brainstorm a min of 6 actions that can engage, activate, and inspire this persona.

Which formats or actions might work best for your target group?
What feels relevant, familiar, or exciting to them?
Examples: pop-ups, social dinners, collective mindmapping, street art, urban games, tactical urbanism, citizen juries, podcasts, TikTok challenges.
How can you offer different levels of participation?
From light engagement to deeper involvement: Observe, Contribute, Co-create, Lead
How do you promote shared ownership?
Can people shape the activity itself? Are their ideas visible and celebrated in a way?
How can the action spark imagination or emotion?
Can it inspire, surprise, or move people toward a desirable future?

5. Resources & Enablers
Identify what’s needed to make the actions possible.

What financial resources are required?
budget, funding streams
What skills and knowledge are needed? facilitation, design, social media
What human resources or allies do you need?
volunteers, staff, artists, connectors
What existing tools or infrastructure can you leverage?
What networks can help amplify or sustain the work?

Can part of these resources be leveraged from your allies or closest stakeholders?

