



Co-funded by
the European Union



Project: 101049682 — WISEs4Youth — ERASMUS-YOUTH-2021-PCOOP-ENGO

D 7.2 – SUSTAINABILITY ROADMAP

Era Sherifaj, Partners Albania for Change and Development



ACTGRUPA





TABLE OF CONTENTS

1.	INTRODUCTION.....	3
2.	METHODOLOGY.....	4
3.	OVERVIEW OF QUESTIONNAIRES ADMINISTRATION AND FINDINGS.....	5
4.	SUSTAINABILITY ROADMAP OF SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP.....	7
4.1	Understand the Concept of Social Entrepreneurship.....	8
4.2	Identify Social Issues.....	10
4.3	Thoroughly Analyse and Research the Identified Social Issue.....	12
4.4	Define Mission, Vision and Objectives.....	13
4.5	Build Sustainable Business Model for Social Enterprises.....	14
4.6	Identify and Define the Social Impact Goals.....	14
4.7	Develop a Clear Value Proposition for Social Enterprises.....	15
4.8	Assess Market Opportunities and Target Audience.....	16
4.9	Understand Legal & Regulatory Frameworks, and Ethical Considerations.....	18
4.10	Build a Good Team – Prioritize Human Resources and Leadership.....	19
4.11	Self-prepare, Capacity Building – Special Focus on Finance Knowledge.....	20
4.12	Diversify Funding and Revenue Streams for SEs Financial Sustainability.....	21
4.13	Balance Profitability and Social Impact.....	23
4.14	Implement Effective Marketing, Branding and Communication Strategies.....	24
4.15	Create Network, Build Partnerships, Collaborate and Engage with the Stakeholders and the Community.....	25
4.16	Measure and Evaluate Social Impact: Metrics and Indicators.....	27
4.17	Define and Understand the importance of Long-term Sustainability.....	28
4.18	Foster Innovation, Creativity and Adaptability.....	30
4.19	Learn and Improve Continuously.....	32
5.	RECOMMENDATIONS TO YOUNG POTENTIAL SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURS.....	33
6.	RECOMMENDATIONS TO SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP STAKEHOLDERS AND ECOSYSTEM.....	36
7.	CONCLUSION.....	41
8.	ANNEX.....	42



Co-funded by
the European Union



Project: 101049682 — WISEs4Youth — ERASMUS-YOUTH-2021-PCOOP-ENGO

1. INTRODUCTION

The general objective of the WISEs4Youth project is to develop mobility and training activities for social entrepreneurial skills development, targeting potential young social entrepreneurs in Western Balkans. In pursuit of this goal, over its two years of implementation, the project conducted various activities including trainings, study visits, peer-to-peer event, and produced essential resources such as a comprehensive toolkit, and a sustainability roadmap tailored to equip young potential entrepreneurs with essential guidance for their entrepreneurial endeavours.

The Sustainability Roadmap of Social Entrepreneurship among Youth is one of the main results of the Work Package 7 (WP7) within the WISEs4Youth project and serves as a guide for young entrepreneurs to build sustainable social enterprises, that are resilient and successfully operate in the long term.

The roadmap provides a guide with simple steps on how to build sustainable social entrepreneurship, alongside integrating a collection of best practices of social enterprises in WB6 and EU to be tackled as models for replication.

Two questionnaires were disseminated and utilized to collect insights from (young) social entrepreneurs regarding their experiences in establishing sustainable social enterprises, particularly within the realm of Work Integration Social Enterprises (WISEs). These questionnaires aimed to gather firsthand accounts of the challenges, successes, and best practices encountered during the process of building and maintaining sustainable ventures. The data gathered from these surveys not only provided valuable insights into the strategies and approaches employed by successful social enterprises but also served as a repository of best practices that can be replicated and adapted by aspiring entrepreneurs seeking to make a positive impact in their communities.

The goal of the Sustainability Roadmap of Social Entrepreneurship is to be used for future ecosystem approach towards Social Entrepreneurship. This comprehensive guide not only aims to assist potential young entrepreneurs in building and maintaining sustainable social enterprises but also seeks to influence the broader environment in which social entrepreneurship operates. The roadmap seeks to drive systemic change, empowering young entrepreneurs to create lasting impact through their sustainable social enterprises



Co-funded by
the European Union



Project: 101049682 — WISEs4Youth — ERASMUS-YOUTH-2021-PCOOP-ENGO

while shaping a conducive environment that supports and sustains their efforts in the long term.

2. METHODOLOGY

The methodology employed for developing the Sustainability Roadmap involves a collaborative, multifaceted and qualitative approach aimed at gathering insights, experiences, and best practices from various stakeholders.

Firstly, collaborative sessions with project partners served as a platform for in-depth discussions, allowing for the structuring and determination of the roadmap's content. These sessions facilitated the sharing of expertise and perspectives, ensuring a holistic approach to addressing the needs of young entrepreneurs in the social entrepreneurship space and preparing the Sustainability Roadmap.

Following this, research and analysis were conducted, encompassing a review of existing materials on social entrepreneurship and sustainability, as well as an examination and reference to the experiences and work of project partners and stakeholders in the field of social entrepreneurship. This comprehensive exploration provided valuable insights into the key challenges, opportunities, and success factors in building sustainable social enterprises.

The development of **two comprehensive questionnaires** was a pivotal step in gathering targeted feedback and insights from key stakeholders in the field of social entrepreneurship. **The first questionnaire** focused on capturing best practices from sustainable WISEs/Social Enterprises. Participants were asked to provide detailed information about their strategies and model for sustainability which was used to craft the profiles or fiches highlighting successful sustainable WISEs/Social Enterprises. These best practice profiles aim to serve as replicable models for emerging young social entrepreneurs, offering inspiration and guidance to successfully establish sustainable social endeavours. Meanwhile, **the second questionnaire** gathered insights, experience, and expertise of these existing sustainable social enterprises related to establishing and operating sustainable ventures. By soliciting feedback, suggestions, recommendations from established enterprises, the questionnaire enriched the content of the roadmap, providing practical guidance and real word perspectives for young entrepreneurs.

The culmination of these efforts was the synthesis of all gathered information and insights to prepare the final Sustainability Roadmap. This roadmap serves as a comprehensive guide, offering practical advice, tools, and resources for aspiring entrepreneurs looking to



Co-funded by
the European Union



Project: 101049682 — WISEs4Youth — ERASMUS-YOUTH-2021-PCOOP-ENGO

establish and sustain impactful ventures in the social entrepreneurship sphere. Collaboration, tapping into collective expertise, and stakeholder engagement were fundamental elements of this methodology, ensuring that the roadmap is both relevant and effective in supporting the journey of young social entrepreneurs.

The template structure with the questions of the two questionnaires utilized to gather insights are appended in the Annex of this document.

3. OVERVIEW OF QUESTIONNAIRES ADMINISTRATION AND FINDINGS

The questionnaire results reflect a comprehensive effort to gather insights from a diverse range of successful and sustainable WISEs/Social enterprises across the project's target countries.

Through collaboration with project partners, the questionnaires were meticulously administered to ensure broad representation and participation. The provision of the questionnaires in both Google Forms and Word formats offered flexibility and convenience for respondents, facilitating their engagement in the survey process. With a generous timeframe provided for completion, respondents were afforded ample opportunity to provide detailed and thoughtful responses. All the completed questionnaires were integrated into Google Forms to streamline the data collection process, enabling to consolidate and analyse the results efficiently.

The results indicate that a total of 17 WISEs/SEs completed the questionnaires, demonstrating a significant level of engagement with the survey, underscoring the importance and relevance of the topic within the social entrepreneurship community. Among the surveyed social enterprises, there are also newly established ones embarking on creating sustainable social initiatives. In their answers they highlight the challenges of entering the market and underscore the importance of adaptability and innovation to achieve success, suggesting that merely being in business is not enough; rather, SEs must continuously adapt, learn, sustain and introduce new or similar products and services to thrive.

Furthermore, the distribution of respondents across various countries—4 from North Macedonia, Serbia and Slovenia each, 3 from Croatia, and 2 from Albania—reflects a

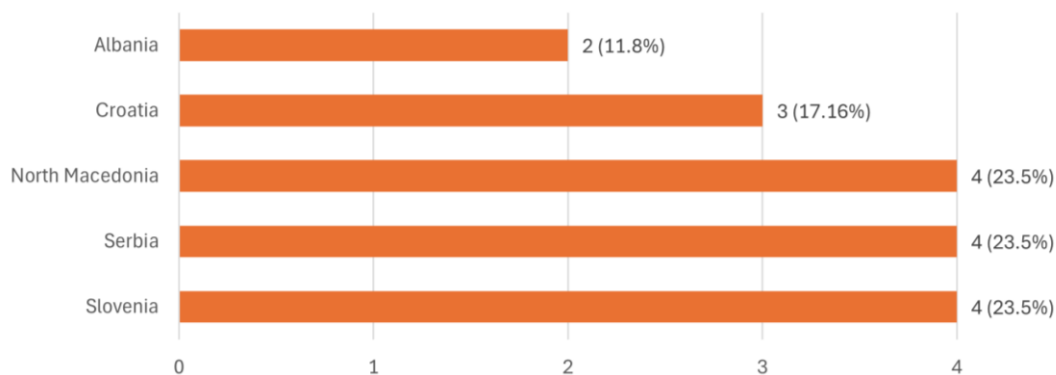


Project: 101049682 — WISEs4Youth — ERASMUS-YOUTH-2021-PCOOP-ENGO

geographically diverse sample, enhancing the representativeness of the findings. This diversity enables a more nuanced understanding of the challenges, strategies, and best practices in sustainable social entrepreneurship across different contexts.

This distribution is illustrated in the picture below:

7. Country of Operation: Indicate the country where your Social Enterprise is actively operating
17 responses



Overall, the questionnaire results provided valuable insights that supported the development of the Sustainability Roadmap and contribute to the collective knowledge base on building and sustaining impactful social enterprises (SEs) in the region.

For each of the social enterprises that participated in the questionnaire a profile in a form of a fiche or template is provided and integrated within this roadmap including important information on SEs activity, target group, approach, and sustainability model. These profiles can serve as models for replication by young individuals aspiring to embark on similar ventures.

Additionally, the insights and feedback gathered from these sustainable and successful enterprises on how to build and sustain social endeavours have been intricately integrated into the steps of the roadmap. This practical insights from existing social enterprises make the roadmap more comprehensible and credible for young entrepreneurs. By incorporating real-world experiences and perspectives, the roadmap becomes a valuable tool for guiding aspiring social entrepreneurs towards building sustainable ventures with greater confidence and understanding.



4. SUSTAINABILITY ROADMAP OF SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP

This section provides a comprehensive guide outlining the steps and considerations necessary for young potential social entrepreneurs to establish and maintain sustainable social enterprises. This roadmap aims to provide aspiring entrepreneurs with guidance on various aspects of building and sustaining ventures that not only generate economic value but also create positive social and environmental impact.

The guide provides a series of crucial steps, delving into their importance and rationale for being carefully considered and assessed by young aspirants prior to starting their social enterprises. The goal is to inspire thoughtful reflection among young entrepreneurs, offering direction on key areas to follow and focus on while establishing impactful social ventures.

Through the questionnaire process, survey participants – also representatives of thriving sustainable social enterprises were involved in expressing their insights on the essential components of a successful sustainability roadmap designed for young social entrepreneurs. Their valuable perspectives and recommendations regarding key steps to embed within the roadmap were thoughtfully analysed and incorporated into the roadmap main aspects, offering young individuals practical guidance and considerations to contemplate. Below, in the blue boxes, are presented their precise remarks pertaining to each relevant step of the sustainability roadmap. Furthermore, within the roadmap, you'll discover their integrated perspectives on various steps and topics concerning sustainability, as well as the establishment and management of successful social enterprises.

The main steps of the Sustainability Roadmap:

- Understand the Concept of Social Entrepreneurship
- Identify Social Issues
- Thoroughly Analyse and Research the Identified Social Issue
- Define Mission, Vision and Objectives
- Build Sustainable Business Model for Social Enterprises
- Identify and Define the Social Impact Goals
- Develop a Clear Value Proposition for Social Enterprises
- Assess Market Opportunities and Target Audience
- Understand Legal & Regulatory Frameworks, and Ethical Considerations



Project: 101049682 — WISEs4Youth — ERASMUS-YOUTH-2021-PCOOP-ENGO

- Build a Good Team – Emphasise HR and Leadership
- Self-prepare, Capacity Building – Special Focus on Finance Knowledge
- Diversify Funding and Revenue Streams for SEs Financial Sustainability
- Balance Profitability and Social Impact
- Implement Effective Marketing, Branding and Communication Strategies
- Create Network, Build Partnerships, Collaborate and Engage with the Stakeholders and the Community
- Measure and Evaluate Social Impact: Metrics and Indicators
- Understand the importance of Long-term Sustainability
- Foster Innovation, Creativity and Adaptability
- Learn and Improve Continuously

4.1 Understand the Concept of Social Entrepreneurship

In the initial phase of embarking on a social entrepreneurship journey, it is essential for young individuals to gain a comprehensive understanding of the concept of social entrepreneurship and assess both their personal potential and the ecosystem's viability for nurturing such initiatives within their community.

Below, we offer a short overview of social entrepreneurship concept encompassing the definition, aim, diverse types and forms, as well as the significance of social enterprises. This information is crucial for young entrepreneurs to be taken into account when deciding on starting a social enterprise.

Social enterprises have gained significant attention in recent years due to their unique approach to business. Unlike traditional for-profit companies, social enterprises prioritize social and environmental goals over maximizing profits. These organisations focus on achieving wider social, environmental or community objectives and create positive change by utilizing business strategies and models.

A social enterprise is an operator in the social economy that combines entrepreneurial activity with a social purpose. Its main objective is to have a social impact rather than make a profit for their owners or shareholders¹. It operates by providing goods and services for the market in an entrepreneurial and innovative fashion and uses its profits

¹ <https://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=952&intPagId=2914&langId=en>



Co-funded by
the European Union



Project: 101049682 — WISEs4Youth — ERASMUS-YOUTH-2021-PCOOP-ENGO

primarily to achieve social objectives. It is managed in an open and responsible manner and, in particular, involves employees, consumers and stakeholders affected by its commercial activities.

The concept of social enterprises is based on the idea that businesses can be a force for good in society. They strive to tackle pressing problems such as poverty, inequality, environmental degradation, access to education and healthcare, etc. By combining the best practices of both the nonprofit and for-profit sectors, social enterprises aim to create sustainable solutions to these challenges. Businesses providing social services and/or goods and services to vulnerable persons are typical examples of social enterprises.

One key characteristic of social enterprises is their commitment to reinvesting a significant portion of their profits back into their social or environmental mission. This reinvestment helps to ensure the long-term sustainability and impact of the organization. For example, a social enterprise that provides job training to disadvantaged youth may use the profits generated from their training programs to expand their reach and support more individuals in need.

Another distinguishing feature of social enterprises is their innovative approach to problem-solving. These organizations often employ creative business models and strategies to achieve their social or environmental objectives. For instance, a social enterprise focused on reducing plastic waste might develop a product made from recycled materials or implement a circular economy model to minimize waste generation.

There is no single legal form for social enterprises. Social enterprises can take various legal structures, including for-profit companies, non-profit organizations, or hybrid models. The specific legal structure chosen depends on factors such as the organization's mission, funding sources, desired level of financial sustainability and legal framework in each country. Many social enterprises operate in the form of social cooperatives, some are registered as private companies limited by guarantee, some are mutual, and a lot of them are non-profit-distributing organisations like provident societies, associations, voluntary organisations, charities or foundations.

Despite their diversity, social enterprises mainly operate in the following 4 fields:

- Work integration - training and integration of disadvantaged people
- Personal social services - health, well-being and medical care, professional training, education, health services, childcare services, services for elderly people, or aid for disadvantaged people



Co-funded by
the European Union



Project: 101049682 — WISEs4Youth — ERASMUS-YOUTH-2021-PCOOP-ENGO

- Local development of disadvantaged areas - social enterprises in remote rural areas, neighbourhood development/rehabilitation schemes in urban areas, development aid and development cooperation with third countries
- Other - including recycling, environmental protection, sports, arts, culture or historical preservation, science, research and innovation, consumer protection and amateur sports²

It is important to note that social enterprises are not limited to specific industries or sectors. They can operate in a wide range of fields, including healthcare, education, agriculture, technology, and renewable energy. The diversity of social enterprises reflects the breadth of societal challenges they aim to address.

Social entrepreneurship plays an important role in addressing social, economic, and environmental challenges while fostering inclusive growth, shared prosperity, and social inclusion. Moreover, social entrepreneurship contributes to job creation, especially at local level, as well as to democratic participation and improvement of welfare services delivery³.

In conclusion, social enterprises are innovative and purpose-driven organizations that seek to create positive social and environmental change through business. They encompass various models, for whom the social or societal objective of the common good is the driving force behind their commercial activities, often characterized by a high level of social innovation. Additionally, social enterprises prioritize reinvesting their profits to achieve their social objectives, distinguishing them from traditional for-profit entities. Furthermore, their method of organization or ownership system often reflects their mission, utilizing democratic or participatory principles and focusing on social justice. This multifaceted approach, coupled with their commitment to reinvesting profits and to creative problem-solving, underscores the significant impact social enterprises have as a powerful force for sustainable development.

4.2 Identify Social Issues

In the initial steps of establishing a sustainable social enterprise, selecting a social issue or community challenge that aligns with both personal passion and community needs is paramount for long-term viability. It is important to follow a purpose-driven approach,

²https://single-market-economy.ec.europa.eu/sectors/proximity-and-social-economy/social-economy-eu/social-enterprises_en

³ <https://www.oecd.org/cfe/leed/social-entrepreneurship-oecd-ec.htm>



Project: 101049682 — WISEs4Youth — ERASMUS-YOUTH-2021-PCOOP-ENGO

identifying a clear purpose and problem to address, ensuring rational expansion and growth aligned with the community needs.

This process begins with introspection, where young people should assess their personal values, strengths, and interests. By leveraging their competencies and values, young potential entrepreneurs should identify social issues that resonate deeply with them, ensuring alignment between their passions and the chosen topic.

The goal is to meet the community challenges in an innovative way and create social value based upon your passion, personal strengths, and values. Following steps can be helpful:

- **Your personal values, virtues, and personal strengths. What do you have to offer?**
- **Your interests and employment preferences, what would you like to do?**
- **Selecting a social sector or a community you want to explore further to identify social issues and challenges within.**
- **Defining the social issue that you want to explore further, how it relates to your values, strengths, and relevant resources you possess.**

However, it's essential to complement personal inclinations with an understanding of community needs. The selected issue must address a genuine necessity within the community to ensure sustainability. This involves exploring the social circumstances and environmental factors prevalent in the chosen community or sector. Employing methodologies such as Design Thinking can facilitate this exploration, aiding in the identification and research of pertinent social issues. Through this iterative process of self-reflection and community engagement, aspiring social entrepreneurs can refine their understanding of the social issue and its relevance to their values, strengths, and available resources, thereby laying a solid foundation for their sustainable social enterprise.

Statements of the Survey Respondents:

Q. What should a successful sustainability roadmap for future young social entrepreneurs, include?

“Start from the local community issues/needs/challenges”.

“Detect a social issue”.



“First, you must decide on what problem your company will address. Is it unemployment in general? Lack of local products? If you have a purpose in mind, everything else will be much easier.”

4.3 Thoroughly Analyse and Research the Identified Social Issue

Analysing and researching “the identified social issue” is a crucial aspect in the initial phases of establishing a sustainable social enterprise. This process involves investigating the social problems that the enterprise aims to address, understanding their root causes, underlying factors, context surrounding the issue and identifying effective solutions. The purpose of this analysis is to gain a thorough understanding of the problem at hand, its complexities, and its implications for the community or target population.

This phase is crucial in the early stages of establishing a sustainable social enterprise as it allows to: understand better the needs and demands of the stakeholders; make informed decision making and design programs, initiatives, interventions and solutions that are effective and sustainable in creating social change; enables better allocation of the resources including time and human capital; facilitates meaningful engagement with stakeholders ensuring that the initiatives are inclusive, responsive, and culturally appropriate; provides a baseline for measuring impact and evaluating the effectiveness of interventions over time; achieves social sustainability, which involves creating long-term positive impacts on society and developing sustainable solutions that address the root causes of problems.

In essence, the analysis and research of social issues lay the foundation for a sustainable social enterprise by ensuring that the organization's efforts are aligned with the needs of society, stakeholders, and the environment. It enables social entrepreneurs to make informed decisions, develop impactful solutions, and measure their progress towards creating a positive social impact.

Statements of the Survey Respondents:

Q. What should a successful sustainability roadmap for future young social entrepreneurs, include?

“Analysis and research of the social issue”.



4.4 Define Mission, Vision and Objectives

During the establishment of social enterprises, it is essential to precisely articulate the enterprise's purpose and values, aligning them with Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) goals. Within the realm of a social enterprise, the mission, vision, and purpose serve as guiding principles, illuminating the path toward success. They define the core essence of the organization, its strategic direction, and its social impact goals. These foundational elements not only shape the organizational culture but also play a pivotal role in shaping decision-making processes, fostering a culture of excellence among team members.

The mission of a social enterprise defines its core purpose, its reason for being. It describes what the organization does, who it serves, and why it matters, its core activities, target audience, and societal significance. It lays the groundwork for organizational endeavours and provides a framework for evaluating performance and impact.

Similarly, the vision of a social enterprise paints a picture of the future it aspires to create. It describes what the organization aspires to achieve, and it serves as a beacon that guides the organization's efforts. It fuels the passion and drive of the team members, and it motivates them to persevere in the face of challenges and setbacks.

The purpose of a social enterprise reflects its moral and social commitments. It underscores the organization's dedication to making a difference, to creating a positive impact, and to contributing to the greater good. It embodies the organization's values and principles, and it infuses the organization's work with meaning and significance.

Additionally, effective communication of the enterprise's mission, vision, and objectives through its website is paramount, ensuring transparency and alignment with stakeholders.

Furthermore, considering and integrating sustainability into the mission and purpose of the social enterprise, at an early stage, is pivotal for shaping the long-term sustainable development and operation of the social enterprise. As underscored by the unanimous commitment of all 17 surveyed social enterprises, sustainability stands as a foundational pillar and is integrated within their missions, reflecting commitment to lasting social impact in their community.

Statements of the Survey Respondents:

Q. What should a successful sustainability roadmap for future young social entrepreneurs, include?



“It is important to define a mission and a vision that clearly reflects the company's social purpose. Also, we need to know what social or environmental problems you want to solve and what positive impact our idea has on the community. It is important to ask ourselves how we can reduce the negative impact on the environment and whether we can develop processes that are sustainable.”

“Definition of mission and vision...”

4.5 Build Sustainable Business Model for Social Enterprises

A sustainable business model for social enterprises is essential for achieving their social and environmental goals while ensuring financial viability and long-term impact. It serves as the foundation of their strategy, guiding how they generate revenue, produce goods and services, and compete in the market. Developing such a model requires careful planning and research to address societal challenges effectively and ensure sustainability. By aligning their values and mission with their operations, social enterprises can create positive impact while remaining resilient and adaptable.

Utilize collaborative tools like the Sustainable Business Model Canvas⁴ and Social Business Model Canvas⁵ to craft robust business models suited to the unique needs of social enterprises.

Statements of the Survey Respondents:

Q. What should a successful sustainability roadmap for future young social entrepreneurs, include?

“Create a solid and reliable business plan”.

4.6 Identify and Define the Social Impact Goals

Identifying and defining social impact goals is fundamental for social enterprises aiming to build a sustainable business model. This process serves to clarify their mission,

⁴ https://www.case-ka.eu/wp/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/SustainableBusinessModelCanvas_highresolution.jpg

⁵ <https://www.socialbusinessmodelcanvas.com/wp-content/uploads/Social-Business-Model-Canvas.png>



Co-funded by
the European Union



Project: 101049682 — WISEs4Youth — ERASMUS-YOUTH-2021-PCOOP-ENGO

concentrate efforts, and measure success, all while ensuring alignment with desired outcomes and effectively communicating their purpose to stakeholders.

To identify and define social impact goals, social enterprises should start by conducting a comprehensive social impact assessment. This involves evaluating the current social and environmental conditions, identifying the key issues or challenges that need to be addressed, and understanding the potential impact that the organization can have on these issues.

Following the completion of the social impact assessment, social enterprises can proceed setting SMART goals—ones that are specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound. SMART goals ensure that social impact goals are well-defined and can be effectively tracked and evaluated.

Identifying and defining social impact goals should not be done in isolation. It is important for social enterprises to engage their stakeholders, including beneficiaries, employees, partners, and investors, in the goal-setting process. By involving stakeholders, social enterprises can gain diverse perspectives, ensure buy-in, and build a sense of ownership and accountability.

It is imperative that the process of identifying and defining social impact goals is not conducted in isolation. Engaging stakeholders—including beneficiaries, employees, partners, and investors—in the goal-setting process is crucial. By involving stakeholders, social enterprises can gain diverse perspectives, secure buy-in, and foster a sense of ownership and accountability.

In conclusion, identifying and defining social impact goals constitutes a pivotal step in crafting a sustainable business model for social enterprises. Through conducting a thorough social impact assessment, setting SMART goals, engaging stakeholders, and consistently monitoring progress, social enterprises can ensure that their actions are aligned with their desired social outcomes and effectively contribute to positive change.

4.7 Develop a Clear Value Proposition for Social Enterprises

Developing a clear value proposition for social enterprises is essential for effectively communicating the unique value they offer to their stakeholders and target audience. A value proposition encapsulates the benefits and advantages that a social enterprise



Project: 101049682 — WISEs4Youth — ERASMUS-YOUTH-2021-PCOOP-ENGO

provides to its customers or beneficiaries, distinguishing it from competitors and demonstrating its impact. In the context of social enterprises, the value proposition goes beyond financial benefits and encompasses the social, environmental, and community-oriented impact it generates.

To develop a clear value proposition, social enterprises must first understand the needs, challenges, and preferences of their target audience. This requires thorough market research and stakeholder engagement to identify the specific problems or issues the enterprise aims to address. By gaining insights into the pain points and aspirations of their audience, social enterprises can tailor their value proposition to resonate with their target market.

A clear value proposition for a social enterprise articulates the positive change it seeks to create in society or the environment. It highlights the unique solutions, products, or services offered by the enterprise and emphasizes the tangible benefits and outcomes for its beneficiaries or customers. This could include improved quality of life, environmental conservation, empowerment of marginalized communities, or other social impacts aligned with the enterprise's mission and values.

Moreover, a well-defined value proposition enables social enterprises to effectively communicate their story, impact, and value to various stakeholders, including customers, investors, partners, and the broader community. It serves as a guiding principle that informs strategic decisions, marketing initiatives, and partnerships, guiding the enterprise's growth and sustainability.

In summary, developing a clear value proposition for social enterprises involves understanding the needs of their target audience, articulating the social and environmental impact they deliver, and effectively communicating their unique value to stakeholders. A compelling value proposition not only differentiates the enterprise in the market but also reinforces its mission-driven approach and commitment to creating positive change.

4.8 Assess Market Opportunities and Target Audience

Assessing market opportunities and defining the target audience are pivotal stages in crafting a sustainable business model for social enterprises. It involves comprehensively evaluating the current market landscape to pinpoint gaps or unmet needs that the enterprise can address effectively and undertake strategic marketing approaches to effectively reach target audiences.



Co-funded by
the European Union



Project: 101049682 — WISEs4Youth — ERASMUS-YOUTH-2021-PCOOP-ENGO

To assess the market, you should start by conducting thorough market research to gain insights into the needs and preferences of your target audience. This research can involve analysing industry reports, conducting surveys, or even interviewing potential customers to understand their attitudes towards sustainability and purchasing behaviours. Analyse and stay up-to-date with the latest market trends and emerging industries that resonate with your social enterprise's mission and values.

Next, define your target audience. Who are the people or groups that will benefit the most from your social enterprise's products or services? Consider demographics such as age, location, income level, and lifestyle preferences. Once you have identified your target audience, it is essential to segment your target audience into distinct groups based on their specific needs and preferences. This segmentation allows for tailored marketing strategies and offerings to effectively address each segment's requirements.

Assessing your competition is crucial to understanding the market landscape and positioning your social enterprise effectively. Analyze similar businesses or organizations that cater to the same target audience or address similar social issues. Identify their strengths, weaknesses, and unique selling propositions. This analysis can help you differentiate your social enterprise and find your competitive edge.

Before fully diving into the market, test your concept or prototype through pilot programs, focus groups, or limited trial versions of products or services. Gathering feedback and validating your concept ensures alignment with the target audience's needs and preferences.

In conclusion, assessing market opportunities and understanding your target audience is a crucial step in building a sustainable business model for social enterprises. By conducting market research, analysing trends, identifying your target audience, segmenting them, evaluating competition, and testing your concept, you can position your social enterprise for success in addressing societal issues while generating sustainable revenue.

Statements of the Survey Respondents:

Q. What should a successful sustainability roadmap for future young social entrepreneurs, include?

“Understanding the Market Dynamics”.

“Try to keep your customers happy and never stop searching for new ones. You can't rely on a few, even if they place large orders”.



*strategy of development and sales,
quality products*

4.9 Understand Legal & Regulatory Frameworks, and Ethical Considerations

When building a sustainable business model for social enterprises, one of the first challenges that entrepreneurs often face is navigating the complex legal landscape. Social enterprises must first develop a comprehensive understanding of the legal and regulatory landscape within which they operate. This involves familiarizing themselves with relevant laws, regulations, and compliance requirements that govern their industry and activities. By gaining clarity on legal frameworks, such as business registration, taxation, licensing, and intellectual property rights, social enterprises can ensure that their operations are conducted in accordance with the law and avoid potential legal pitfalls.

Social enterprises are often founded with the goal of creating positive social change, and ethical decision-making should be at the core of their operations. This entails adhering to ethical principles and standards that guide their interactions with stakeholders, employees, partners, and the broader community. By upholding integrity, transparency, accountability and fairness in their practices, social enterprises can build trust, credibility, and reputation, which are essential for long-term success and sustainability. This includes being transparent about their social impact, financial practices, and how they allocate resources to fulfil their mission.

To effectively overcome legal, regulatory, and ethical challenges, social enterprises should adopt a proactive approach. This involves staying informed about changes in laws and regulations, seeking legal counsel when necessary, and integrating ethical considerations into their organizational culture and practices. By staying ahead of potential challenges and addressing them proactively, social enterprises can mitigate risks, enhance compliance, and uphold their commitment to social impact and ethical conduct.

In conclusion, building a sustainable business model for social enterprises requires addressing legal, regulatory, and ethical considerations. By understanding and adhering



Co-funded by
the European Union



Project: 101049682 — WISEs4Youth — ERASMUS-YOUTH-2021-PCOOP-ENGO

to the relevant laws, regulations, and ethical principles, social enterprises can navigate these challenges and build a strong foundation for long-term success.

Statements of the Survey Respondents:

Q. What should a successful sustainability roadmap for future young social entrepreneurs, include?

“Grasp legal structures”.

“A good understanding of the legal framework.”

4.10 Build a Good Team – Prioritize Human Resources and Leadership

Building a strong team is foundational to the success of any social enterprise, particularly when it comes to emphasizing human resources (HR) management and ethical leadership. This involves not only recruiting individuals with diverse skills and expertise but also ensuring they share a common vision for creating social impact. HR management encompasses various aspects, including recruitment, training, performance management, and employee well-being. By prioritizing HR, social enterprises can foster a positive work environment where team members feel valued, motivated, and empowered to contribute effectively to the organization's mission. Ethical leadership is equally crucial, as it sets the tone for the organization's culture and guides decision-making processes. Ethical leaders prioritize integrity, transparency, and accountability, inspiring trust and confidence among team members and stakeholders. Nurturing a diverse and skilled team involves recognizing and leveraging the unique talents and perspectives that each individual brings. By fostering inclusivity and promoting continuous learning and development, social enterprises can harness the full potential of their team to drive meaningful social change.

Statements of the Survey Respondents:

Q. What should a successful sustainability roadmap for future young social entrepreneurs, include?

“Maybe to know the target group employed and to be aware of their capacities and what kind of support they will need”.

“Be open about challenges/fears and share with other colleagues so all can find practical solutions”.



Co-funded by
the European Union



Project: 101049682 — WISEs4Youth — ERASMUS-YOUTH-2021-PCOOP-ENGO

“Define clear responsibilities of the employees”.

“Mutual support”

“Learning by doing / learning from each other”

“Good Team of People: Assemble a diverse and skilled team with a shared vision for social impact. This includes hiring individuals who are not only technically proficient but also passionate about the enterprise's mission. Cultivating a culture of collaboration, continuous learning, and adaptability is essential”.

“Heavy emphasis on HR work”.

“Once you establish a company that will address this purpose you'll have to provide pay, material and a number of other things to your employees. If you do that though a loan, there will be a lot of pressure and late nights, be sure not to make your employees suffer because of that. The key here is to try to expand rationally and according to your contracts or sales figures. Don't buy equipment or employ people you can't afford”.

4.11 Self-prepare, Capacity Building – Special Focus on Finance Knowledge

Managing and directing a social enterprise requires a comprehensive set of managerial, leadership, and financial skills. Given that entrepreneurial endeavours typically commence on a modest scale with limited personnel, proficiency across various domains becomes imperative. Therefore, before embarking on the journey of establishing a social enterprise, it's crucial to ensure that you possess a solid foundation of business and financial knowledge. While entrepreneurship often involves learning on the go, having a prior understanding can significantly impact the trajectory of your enterprise. Without adequate preparation, the success and sustainability of your social venture may be compromised. Therefore, it's prudent to assess your current capabilities and identify areas where you may need to enhance your skills and knowledge. This process involves equipping and educating oneself with the necessary knowledge, skills, and mindset to effectively navigate the complexities of entrepreneurship in the social sector and lead your social enterprise toward long-term success. This preparation not only increases your chances of navigating challenges but also strengthens the foundation upon which your venture is built, increasing its resilience and potential for positive impact. Learning about and having a solid grasp of business fundamentals, such as marketing, finance,



Co-funded by
the European Union



Project: 101049682 — WISEs4Youth — ERASMUS-YOUTH-2021-PCOOP-ENGO

operations, and management, is essential. Social entrepreneurs must understand how to develop business plans, create budgets, manage finances, and make strategic decisions to ensure the sustainability of their ventures.

As the social enterprise expands, it becomes vital to recruit and assign responsibilities to professionals with expertise in various aspects of managing the organization. This ensures efficient operations and enables focused attention on specialized areas critical for sustained growth and impact.

Statements of the Survey Respondents:

Q. What should a successful sustainability roadmap for future young social entrepreneurs, include?

“they need to get proper training before starting, especially in finance side of business. Also volunteering first at other social enterprises would give them an insight of the situation”.

“Definitely take business classes-for me, I am a capable social worker but have difficulty being proactive in business”.

4.12 Diversify Funding and Revenue Streams for SEs Financial Sustainability

One of the key strategies for achieving financial sustainability as a social enterprise is to research, identify and diversify your funding sources. Relying on a single source of funding can be risky, as it leaves your organization vulnerable to changes in funding priorities or the loss of a major donor. By diversifying your funding sources, you can spread the risk and ensure a more stable financial future. For example, you can explore government grants and contracts, private foundations, corporate sponsorships, and individual donations. Each of these sources has its own advantages and challenges, but by tapping into multiple funding streams, you can create a more resilient financial foundation for your social enterprise.

Generating earned income is another key aspect of financial sustainability for social enterprises. Instead of solely relying on grants and donations, social enterprises can develop products or services that generate revenue. This not only helps to cover operating costs but also provides a more sustainable funding source. By generating income through



Co-funded by
the European Union



Project: 101049682 — WISEs4Youth — ERASMUS-YOUTH-2021-PCOOP-ENGO

the sale of these products, the social enterprise can reinvest the profits back into its mission and ensure its long-term financial sustainability. Social impact bonds (SIBs) are an innovative financing mechanism that can be utilized by social enterprises to secure funding for their projects. SIBs are essentially contracts between social enterprises, government entities, and private investors. Under this arrangement, private investors provide upfront capital to fund social programs, and if predefined social outcomes are achieved, the government repays the investors with a return on their investment. Building strategic collaborations and partnerships can also contribute to the financial sustainability of social enterprises. By joining forces with other organizations, social enterprises can leverage shared resources, expertise, and networks to achieve their goals more efficiently and effectively.

Ultimately, achieving financial sustainability is crucial for the long-term success of social enterprises. By diversifying funding sources, generating earned income, exploring social impact bonds, and building strategic collaborations, you can ensure a stable and sustainable financial future for your enterprise. These strategies not only support the growth and impact of social enterprises but also contribute to the overall well-being of the communities they serve.

Statements of the Survey Respondents:

Q. What should a successful sustainability roadmap for future young social entrepreneurs, include?

“To make a working plan with all of the risks calculated so they can be aware of any financial difficulties they may have. To involve other concepts and ways of financing since it may be hard in the beginning to cover all the costs”.

Financial Sustainability

“Therefore, it is important to develop a model that enables different sources of financing, and it is necessary to ensure good and proper management of finances and the market”.

“Be aware of what state aids you can access”.

“Access to government funded information points perhaps”.

“Investigate funding options”.



4.13 Balance Profitability and Social Impact

One of the main aspects for the sustainability of social enterprises is finding a balance between profitability and social impact. While the primary goal of a social enterprise is to create positive change in society, it also needs to generate revenue to sustain its operations. Therefore, there is need to prioritize finances to achieve sustainability of the social enterprise, but it is essential to do this without compromising the social mission of the social enterprise.

To achieve this balance, it is crucial to identify a market segment that is not only aligned with the social mission but also has the potential for profitability. Another strategy for balancing profitability and social impact is by developing innovative products or services that address a social or environmental issue. These offerings can attract customers who are not only interested in making a positive impact but also willing to pay a premium for unique solutions.

The feedback received through the questionnaires we shared for the preparation of this Roadmap, highlight various strategies employed by SEs/WISEs to prioritize financial sustainability without compromising their social mission. These strategies include developing various products to increase revenues and involve marginalized groups to maintain their social mission, implementing cost-efficient practices to maximise resources and minimize expenses, setting prices based on social value, forging partnerships, maintaining a long-term perspective, and ensuring alignment of decisions with the social mission. Some organizations navigate the balance between financial sustainability and social impact through innovative business models and seeking diverse funding sources. For others, financial sustainability is seen as a prerequisite to fulfilling their social mission, while some acknowledge the challenges of maintaining sustainability within legal boundaries. Despite the complexities, organizations remain committed to balancing economic and social missions to create positive social change.

Statements of the Survey Respondents:

Q. How do you prioritize financial sustainability without compromising your social mission?

“We do that by producing different types of products in which young people with developmental disabilities participate, and that all earnings are reinvested in improving the quality and quantity of work in the future”.

“Implement cost-efficient strategies and practices to maximize resources and minimize expenses without compromising the quality of products or services. Adopt a long-term perspective that prioritizes sustainability over short-term gains. Ensure that decisions



regarding business operations, investments, and partnerships align with the social mission of the enterprise”.

“Prioritizing financial sustainability without compromising our social mission requires a careful balancing and strategic approach”.

“We are trying to have them side by side. If we cannot have financial sustainability our mission will come to an end also”.

“Social mission is a priority and in order not to compromise it, we are still working with the hybrid model of running NGO and SE activities as mutually complementary initiatives”.

“The organization staff making decisions that prioritize social, economic, and environmental responsibility over short-term profits”.

“One pulls the other. A social mission can hardly exist without financial sustainability. Creating an organizational culture that encourages togetherness, gives meaning to the work being done, contributes to the creation of a higher quality product and service”.

“If we ensure sufficient amounts of work for everyone, create a product that has added value and can place it on the market, the return is not absent. Although it is not large due to low profitability, it is continuously and slowly generated and enables new investments. With good financial management, the social mission is not called into question”.

“To prioritize financial sustainability without compromising our social mission, we carefully balance revenue generation and social impact. By implementing innovative business models and seeking diverse funding sources, we ensure financial stability while remaining steadfast in our commitment to creating positive social change”.

“Financial sustainability is the prerequisite to fulfilling our social mission”.

“I think that maintaining the company is what we need to do to sustain our social mission”.

“We pay equal attention to our both economic and social mission of the SE”.

4.14 Implement Effective Marketing, Branding and Communication Strategies

To build social enterprises that grow sustainably and attract customers or clients, there is need to invest in a strong marketing and branding strategy. This includes effectively telling your story, communicating your mission, highlighting the positive impact you create and unique selling points, therefore building a strong brand identity that resonates with your target audience.



Using social media platforms, content marketing, and storytelling techniques can help reaching a wider audience and engage with potential customers or clients. By building a strong brand and maintaining a positive reputation, social enterprises can attract loyal customers, increase sales, and secure long-term financial stability.

Statements of the Survey Respondents:

Q. What should a successful sustainability roadmap for future young social entrepreneurs, include?

“Strategic Marketing Approaches”.

*“**Market Recognition:** Develop a strong brand and marketing strategy that communicates the social and environmental value of the enterprise to consumers and investors. This involves understanding the target market, communicating the unique value proposition effectively, and building a solid reputation for the social enterprise”.*

“Quality products”

4.15 Create Network, Build Partnerships, Collaborate and Engage with the Stakeholders and the Community

A key factor influencing the sustainable success of a social enterprise during its development is the establishment of strong collaborations and partnerships with key stakeholders, including policy institutions, donors, investors, local organizations, and the community. These actions facilitate the exchange of resources, expertise, and support, enabling social enterprises to amplify their impact, access new opportunities, and address complex social challenges more effectively.

Networking involves establishing and nurturing relationships with individuals, organizations, and institutions within and beyond the social enterprise's immediate sphere. By connecting with like-minded entities, social enterprises can leverage shared values and objectives to foster collaboration and mutual support. Networking also provides access to valuable knowledge, information, and resources that can enhance the enterprise's capacity and capabilities.

Building partnerships entails forging formal relationships with other organizations, businesses, government agencies, and community groups to pursue common goals and initiatives. Collaborative partnerships enable social enterprises to pool resources, share risks and responsibilities, and leverage complementary strengths and expertise. These



Project: 101049682 — WISEs4Youth — ERASMUS-YOUTH-2021-PCOOP-ENGO

partnerships can take various forms, such as joint ventures, strategic alliances, or co-funded projects, depending on the specific objectives and needs of the enterprise.

Engaging with stakeholders and the community involves actively involving and consulting individuals and groups affected by or interested in the social enterprise's activities. This includes beneficiaries, employees, customers, investors, policymakers, and local residents. By soliciting input, feedback, and participation from stakeholders, social enterprises can ensure their initiatives are responsive to community needs, preferences, and concerns. Engaging stakeholders and community cultivate a sense of ownership and empowerment, fosters transparency, accountability, and trust, which are essential for building sustainable relationships and maintaining legitimacy. It also contributes to long-term sustainability by building strong community ties and networks, providing valuable resources and support for growth.

Collaboration and engagement with stakeholders and the community are essential for achieving several objectives within a social enterprise. These include:

1. Identifying and understanding community needs, priorities, and aspirations.
2. Co-designing solutions and initiatives that are contextually relevant and responsive.
3. Mobilizing support, resources, and participation for implementing and scaling interventions.
4. Building awareness, trust, and goodwill among stakeholders, enhancing the enterprise's reputation and credibility.
5. Fostering a sense of ownership, belonging, and empowerment among community members, leading to greater sustainability and impact.

To ensure effective collaboration, it is important to establish clear roles and responsibilities for each stakeholder. This will help avoid confusion and ensure that everyone knows what is expected of them. Effective collaboration and engagement rely on open communication and trust between stakeholders. Create channels for regular communication, such as meetings, email updates, or online collaboration platforms, to keep everyone informed and engaged. Encourage feedback and provide opportunities for stakeholders to share their ideas, concerns, and suggestions.

Overall, creating networks, building partnerships, and engaging with stakeholders and the community are integral strategies for social enterprises to maximize their effectiveness,



relevance, and sustainability in addressing social challenges and creating positive change.

Statements of the Survey Respondents:

Q. What should a successful sustainability roadmap for future young social entrepreneurs, include?

“Engaging with Stakeholders Effectively.”

“Use the power of collaboration to advance your SE/share business ideas with others”.

“Cooperate with institutions”.

*“It is very important to know that we are not alone in the process of creating a social enterprise and that through various **collaborations and partnerships** we can improve our own business model, create added value, develop the market where we will market our products and services. It is not necessary that we immediately see and see the benefit in every collaboration. Sometimes investment (time, resources) is more important in a certain business segment, and the result will be visible only after a certain period of time.”*

“Stable cooperation with other stakeholders”.

“Partnerships and Collaborations”. “Community Engagement”.

“Community engagement and collaboration”.

4.16 Measure and Evaluate Social Impact: Metrics and Indicators

Social impact can be defined as a result of the long-term effects, change that happens to people and the community well-being or the environment as a result of our activities or services. Measuring and managing social impact is crucial for social enterprises to assess their effectiveness and determine the extent to which they are achieving their mission. To do this, social impact metrics and indicators are used to quantify and track the outcomes and changes that result from their activities. These metrics provide tangible evidence of the social impact the organization is making.

The point is not only in measuring, understanding and reporting but also in learning and improving the organization, optimizing to use resources in a smart, sustainable/regenerative way to maximize the delivered values for invested resources.



Co-funded by
the European Union



Project: 101049682 — WISEs4Youth — ERASMUS-YOUTH-2021-PCOOP-ENGO

Measurement, Management and Maximizing, seeks a balance between the perspectives of the stakeholders and the organization that carries out the activities.

When measuring social impact, it is important to consider both quantitative and qualitative indicators. Quantitative indicators provide measurable data that can be easily analyzed, while qualitative indicators provide deeper insights into the personal experiences and stories of individuals affected by the social enterprise.

There are existing different tools and frameworks of measuring and managing social impact of social enterprises. Self-assessment tools⁶ or developing a theory of change can be utilized by social enterprises to define their intended impact and identify the metrics and indicators to measure it. A theory of change outlines the logic behind how an organization's activities and interventions lead to the desired outcomes.

Measuring social impact should involve stakeholders who are directly affected by the social enterprise's activities. Engaging stakeholders in the measurement process not only ensures a comprehensive evaluation but also empowers those who are impacted to have a voice in defining success and identifying areas of improvement.

In conclusion, measuring and evaluating social impact is crucial for social enterprises to assess their effectiveness and drive continuous improvement. By measuring and managing social impact social enterprises can gain valuable insights into their impact and make data-driven decisions to build a sustainable business model.

Statements of the Survey Respondents:

Q. What should a successful sustainability roadmap for future young social entrepreneurs, include?

“Implementing Impact Measurement Practices”.

4.17 Define and Understand the importance of Long-term Sustainability Top of Form

Creating a long-term, sustainable future for social enterprises is crucial for their continued success and impact. While many social enterprises are established with the goal of tackling pressing social or environmental issues, it is equally important to ensure that

⁶ <https://measuringimpact.eu/resources/>



these organizations can sustain their operations and continue delivering positive outcomes in the long run. This means that the enterprise should be able to continue addressing social or environmental issues effectively while also ensuring its own continued existence and growth.

Hence, it's imperative to embed sustainability concepts from the inception of the social enterprise and develop strategies that promote longevity. This entails taking deliberate steps to establish a solid foundation, implement effective management practices, strategic planning, efficient resource management, and adapt to evolving circumstances. By prioritizing sustainability from the outset, social enterprises can position themselves for enduring success and meaningful impact in the communities and causes they serve.

Statements of the Survey Respondents:

Q. How do you define sustainability within the context of your WISE/Social Enterprise?

“The organization's ability to respond to all potential problems and challenges it may encounter in such a way that all involved parties, whether providers or recipients of services, will receive all the necessary results with which they will be satisfied”.

“Minimizing negative environmental impacts through practices such as resource conservation, waste reduction, and adoption of renewable energy sources, focus on promoting social equity, justice, and well-being within the community, promoting education and skills development, Focus on building organizational capacity, resilience, and adaptability to ensure long-term success and impact”.

“In the context of our SE, sustainability could be defined through the basic elements of ESG, i.e., through its impact on Environment, Society, and Governance. Through our business practices, we promote transparency as well as openness towards sustainability and the key elements it represents. We understand that no matter how much we invest in sustainability, there is always room for improvement and adopting new knowledge and activities. As mentioned in the previous response, the key elements we consider important are also integrated into our business and are essential to our overall sustainability”.

“Social entrepreneurs have sustainability as one of the key missions of their business. Thus, by incorporating sustainability, they can work from the ground up to establish their brand while also integrating sustainable practices into their business model”.

“Sustainability in the context of a social enterprise usually refers to a company's ability to contribute to social well-being, environmental preservation, and economic development over the long term in a way that is balanced and responsible. A social enterprise is not exclusively focused on profit but also has a clear social and/or environmental goal. In the



context of Humana Nova, this means that we have set goals aimed at solving social problems, specifically the employment of vulnerable groups and their empowerment. We also take care of the environment through the collection of textiles, their processing and conversion (reuse, recycling, upcycling), and the responsible production of slow fashion products, thereby reducing the negative impact of textiles on the environment. We place great emphasis on working in the market and market diversification, offering top service and quality products, which enables the creation of income and profit. Humana Nova is a non-profit organization that, with transparent financial management, creates economic sustainability, and we invest profits in business development, new jobs, and community development. Humana Nova is a social cooperative, that is guided by democratic principles and enables workers to manage the cooperative, it also takes care of fair working conditions (workers are not at the norm, and wages are higher than in other textile companies in the area), respect for human rights, and it builds an organizational culture on fundamental human values (respect, trust, tolerance and responsibility)”.

“People, planet profit. All of these aspects are integrated into our model. The 3Ps are also applied in the selection of our partners and suppliers”.

“Sustainability can be define as stable development that one enterprise have, based on selling products or services and donations that are just additional help. The point is that enterprise should sustain itself through profit firstly, and secondly through other financial instruments, regulations, donations...”.

“Sustainability in our social enterprise means achieving economic self-sufficiency through the sales of our products, ensuring long-term viability. It encompasses meeting our social goals in a way that's environmentally responsible, ethically grounded, and beneficial to the community”.

“Keeping people employed”.

“Maintaining profitability and keeping our employees”.

“Keeping people employed and the business functioning”.

4.18 Foster Innovation, Creativity and Adaptability

Fostering innovation, creativity, and adaptability is fundamental for building a sustainable and successful social enterprise that effectively addresses societal challenges. Innovation involves the continuous exploration and implementation of new ideas, methods, or technologies to enhance products, services, or processes. By encouraging innovation,



Co-funded by
the European Union



Project: 101049682 — WISEs4Youth — ERASMUS-YOUTH-2021-PCOOP-ENGO

social enterprises can develop novel solutions to complex social problems, improve efficiency, and stay ahead of the curve in a rapidly changing landscape.

Creativity is a cornerstone of innovation, driving the generation of original ideas and approaches. Cultivating a culture of creativity within a social enterprise encourages employees to think outside the box, experiment with new concepts, and find unconventional solutions to persistent challenges. When individuals feel empowered to express their creativity and take calculated risks, it fosters an environment conducive to innovation and growth. This may involve replacing outdated technologies with more cost-effective alternatives, leveraging new enabling technologies to streamline operations or improve impact, or exploring innovative business models to better serve their target communities.

Adaptability is equally crucial for social enterprises to navigate the uncertainties and evolving needs of their target communities. Being adaptable means being open to change, whether it's in response to shifting market dynamics, emerging technologies, or unforeseen challenges. Social enterprises that embrace adaptability can adjust their strategies, pivot when necessary, and seize new opportunities to maximize their impact and sustainability.

To effectively foster innovation, creativity, and adaptability, social enterprises can implement several strategies. These may include creating interdisciplinary teams to encourage diverse perspectives and collaboration, providing resources and support for experimentation and idea generation, and fostering a culture of continuous learning and improvement. Social enterprises should actively seek knowledge and insights from industry experts, peers, and stakeholders, continuously learning and adapting to new developments. Additionally, staying informed about industry trends, conducting regular assessments of community needs, and soliciting feedback from stakeholders can help social enterprises remain agile and responsive to change.

However, amidst these changes, it is also crucial for social enterprises to remain loyal to their core values, mission, and processes that have proven meaningful and effective. Balancing innovation and adaptability with consistency and commitment to impactful practices ensures that social enterprises remain true to their purpose while driving sustainable growth and positive change in society.

Statements of the Survey Respondents:

Q. What should a successful sustainability roadmap for future young social entrepreneurs, include?

“Fostering Innovation and Flexibility”.



“Innovation and adaptability”.

“Innovativeness: Encourage continuous innovation, not only in products or services but also in business models and strategies for engagement. This includes staying abreast of technological advancements, adopting sustainable practices, and thinking creatively to solve problems”.

4.19 Learn and Improve Continuously

At the heart of scaling social change lies the concept of continuous learning and improvement. In today's rapidly evolving world, having a well-designed social impact program or product is not sufficient. To truly make a difference and achieve lasting results, organizations must embrace the concept of continuous growth and improvement. This approach is more than a methodology; it's a mindset that embraces perpetual evolution and adaptation.

Continuous learning and improvement refer to the ongoing process of evaluating and adapting social impact programs and products to achieve the best possible outcomes. It involves constantly seeking feedback, analyzing data, refining strategies and making adjustments to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of social impact efforts.

Social enterprises should prioritize learning from their experiences, whether successes or failures. Reflection on past initiatives allows organizations to identify what worked well and what could be improved, enabling them to refine their strategies and approaches accordingly.

Staying updated on industry trends, best practices, and emerging innovations is vital for social enterprises to remain competitive and innovative, enabling the development of more effective solutions to social challenges.

Fostering a learning culture within the organization encourages staff members to continuously develop their skills and expertise. Investing in professional development opportunities, such as training workshops, seminars, and mentorship programs, empowers employees to enhance their capabilities and contribute more effectively to the organization's mission.



Co-funded by
the European Union



Project: 101049682 — WISEs4Youth — ERASMUS-YOUTH-2021-PCOOP-ENGO

Collaboration and knowledge-sharing with external partners, such as other social enterprises, nonprofits, academic institutions, and industry experts, can also enrich the learning process.

This approach is crucial in the ever-changing landscape of social issues and the diverse needs of communities. By continuously learning and improving, organizations can ensure that their efforts are relevant, impactful, and sustainable.

Statements of the Survey Respondents:

Q. What should a successful sustainability roadmap for future young social entrepreneurs, include?

“Continuous Learning and Improvement.”

“Commitment to Lifelong Learning Planning for Resilient Growth.”

5. RECOMMENDATIONS TO YOUNG POTENTIAL SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURS

Advice And Recommendations from Successful Social Entrepreneurs to Aspiring Young Potential Social Entrepreneurs on Building Sustainable Social Enterprises. Listed below are the precise recommendations as articulated by the statements provided by the social entrepreneurs.

Link Your Passion to Community Needs and Your Social Mission

“My advice to young individuals aspiring to start sustainable social enterprises is to begin with a clear understanding of the social or environmental issue they are passionate about addressing”.

“Start by identifying a social or environmental issue that you are passionate about and deeply committed to addressing”.

“Clearly define the social or environmental mission of your enterprise and integrate it into your business model and operations”.



Co-funded by
the European Union



Project: 101049682 — WISEs4Youth — ERASMUS-YOUTH-2021-PCOOP-ENGO

Network and Collaborate

“Have a support network in place”.

“Make sure you have backing before you attempt to establish a enterprise”.

“Surround yourself with mentors, advisors, and peers who can provide guidance, support, and valuable insights. Building a strong network will also help you access resources, funding, and partnerships”.

Be Bold, Believe in Yourself and in Your Mission

“Do not be afraid to experiment, there will be hard moments, surround yourself with passionate team and ask for the support from as many different stakeholders as possible”.

“Believe in your success in the world of social entrepreneurship, focus on your goal and social impact that you want to achieve and continuous spread your network”.

“Our advice is that you simply need to start developing your SE ideas, even though there are no laws to support you in the initial phases; and it is not always about having money to start your journey, but to deeply believe in your idea, your social mission and social impact that you want to achieve”.

“A lot of effort and don’t give up”.

“Be prepared for a lot of difficulties. Communicate with other people who are already in the sector”.

“You need to be passionate and brave with a pinch of foolishness and a ton of perseverance. Throughout the journey, never forget to learn and share your knowledge, and always strive to give your best. And be fair and honest”.

“Begin with a pilot project or small-scale initiative to test your idea and gather feedback. Building a sustainable social enterprise takes time, patience, and perseverance. Be prepared to face challenges and setbacks along the way and maintain a resilient and persistent mindset”.

Create a Good Team and a Good Leadership



Co-funded by
the European Union



Project: 101049682 — WISEs4Youth — ERASMUS-YOUTH-2021-PCOOP-ENGO

“My advice to aspiring young social entrepreneurs is to be brave and confident in your vision and to ensure a dedicated and capable team surrounds you. Success in sustainable social enterprise hinges on the strength of your collective commitment and the innovative spirit you share”.

Pay Attention to Human Resources Management

“Guarantee fair and honest treatment of employees, considering their support needs, and ensuring proper human resources management”.

“Be aware that employees with support needs need a different approach. Impatience and poor management of human resources will destroy your enterprise very quickly”.

Focus on Providing High-Quality Products and/or Services

“Really think about your product and its cost to produce, supply and other basic business logic. Secure payment for your people and then move forward”.

“Be persistent, develop a quality product and work hard on the market”.

Research, Analyse and Understand the Market and the Ecosystem to explore opportunities for selling products and developing quality products.

“Research and analyse ecosystem and market, to search many source of resources, to search more opportunities for selling products, to network with many stakeholders...”

“They should conduct thorough research, develop a solid business plan, and seek collaborations with like-minded partners”.

Ensure Financial Sustainability

“Diversifying funding sources, generating earned income, exploring social impact bonds, and building strategic collaborations, social enterprises can ensure a stable and sustainable financial future”.

Be Innovative

“Look for innovative and creative ways to address social and environmental challenges. Don't be afraid to think outside the box and experiment with new ideas and approaches”.



Co-funded by
the European Union



Project: 101049682 — WISEs4Youth — ERASMUS-YOUTH-2021-PCOOP-ENGO

“Innovation, adaptability, and financial sustainability are key factors to prioritize, along with measuring and evaluating impact”.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS TO SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP STAKEHOLDERS AND ECOSYSTEM

Recommendations from Social Entrepreneurs to Social Entrepreneurship Ecosystem and Stakeholders to Support Young Entrepreneurs in Building and Developing Sustainable WISEs/SEs. The recommendations below are provided based on the insights and the answers of the survey conducted.

Provide and Enable Access to Resources

Provide access to funding, mentorship, and tailored training programs to meet the specific needs of young entrepreneurs. This includes grants, loans, equity financing, and crowdfunding platforms, along with mentorship, coaching, and guidance from experienced professionals.

Statements of the Survey Respondents:

Q. How the ecosystem, other stakeholders can support young entrepreneurs in building and developing sustainable WISE/SEs?

“In supporting young entrepreneurs building their social enterprises, the ecosystem and stakeholders can provide access to resources like funding, mentorship, and training programs tailored to their needs”.

“They can provide access to funding and financial resources tailored to the needs of young entrepreneurs, including grants, loans, equity financing, and crowdfunding platforms”.

“Funding and financial support by investing in part of their business, finding best financial option”.



Co-funded by
the European Union



Project: 101049682 — WISEs4Youth — ERASMUS-YOUTH-2021-PCOOP-ENGO

Provide Training, Mentorship and Capacity Building for Young Potential Entrepreneurs

Develop capacity-building programs, workshops, and training sessions focused on entrepreneurship skills, sustainable business practices, leadership development, and innovation.

Statements of the Survey Respondents:

Q. How the ecosystem, other stakeholders can support young entrepreneurs in building and developing sustainable WISE/SEs?

“Offer mentorship, coaching, and guidance from experienced professionals, entrepreneurs, and industry experts, develop capacity building programs, workshops, and training sessions focused on entrepreneurship skills, sustainable business practices, leadership development, and innovation, support research and development initiatives focused on innovation, technology transfer, and sustainable solutions...”

“Mentoring and guidance by sharing their knowledge in networking, daily operations, field specifics,...”

“One of the points in which new enterprises would like to be supported would be how they grow logistically”.

“Building entrepreneurship skills and capacities for social entrepreneurship”.

“Mentoring”.

Celebrate and Award the Achievements of Social Enterprise

Recognize and award the achievements of social enterprises to inspire and motivate entrepreneurs, while also raising awareness about their impact. By celebrating successes, these organizations foster a culture of innovation and encourage others to pursue similar initiatives. Use awards and recognition as powerful tools to highlight exemplary practices, attract investment, and build trust and credibility within the community.

Statements of the Survey Respondents:

Q. How the ecosystem, other stakeholders can support young entrepreneurs in building and developing sustainable WISE/SEs?



Co-funded by
the European Union



Project: 101049682 — WISEs4Youth — ERASMUS-YOUTH-2021-PCOOP-ENGO

“Awards and Certificates as a proof of their achievements”.

Foster Networking, Collaboration and Knowledge Share

Foster an environment of collaboration and networking among young entrepreneurs, industry experts, investors, and other stakeholders. This can be facilitated through informal networks, workshops, forums, and online platforms.

Statements of the Survey Respondents:

Q. How the ecosystem, other stakeholders can support young entrepreneurs in building and developing sustainable WISE/SEs?

“The ecosystem and stakeholders can support young entrepreneurs by organizing workshops, hosting forums, and setting up Zoom meetings to facilitate knowledge sharing and skill development.”

“Create informal networks where you can exchange tips and advice, lessons learned etc”.

“Connecting and networking”.

“By transferring knowledge”.

Create a Supportive Regulatory Environment

Work towards establishing supportive regulatory environments for social entrepreneurship, including SE laws, public procurement laws with clauses on reserved contracts, and promotion of national SE strategies.

Statements of the Survey Respondents:

Q. How the ecosystem, other stakeholders can support young entrepreneurs in building and developing sustainable WISE/SEs?

“Advocating for policies that create an enabling environment, facilitating market access and partnerships, and reduce bureaucratic burdens”.

“Building a supportive regulatory environment”.



Co-funded by
the European Union



Project: 101049682 — WISEs4Youth — ERASMUS-YOUTH-2021-PCOOP-ENGO

“In Macedonia, it would be to adopt the SE law, and until the point that the law will be adopted, we need to use the power of collaboration between the WISEs4Youth project partners, and other national and international networks;

“On the community level, start to promote the national SE strategies, if there are any in your country.

Facilitate Local Connection and Collaboration

Emphasize the importance of building strong local connections and ecosystems of support. This includes collaborating with nearby businesses, establishing relationships with local authorities and municipalities, and leveraging local support systems such as free counseling, legal assistance, and seminars.

Statements of the Survey Respondents:

Q. How the ecosystem, other stakeholders can support young entrepreneurs in building and developing sustainable WISE/SEs?

“You should get support from nearby businesses and try to work together”.

“What is most important is to have good connections locally. Working at the EU level or the national level can come once you have a good local ecosystem of support-legal, financial and HR backing. Have a good working relationship with your local authority or municipality”.

“If we talk about citizens, then they can help by buying products and services, by volunteering, promoting its activities and products, participate in events”.

“NGO and CSO can help through networking, organizing events, workshops and trainings, promotional activities, connection with stakeholders, donators, experts...”

“State and municipalities can help through donations, subventions, economic regulations, programs of public procurement...”

Provide Diverse Support Systems

Provide a diverse range of support systems including free counselling, legal assistance, assistance points, seminars, access to investors, funding opportunities, special loans, and



Co-funded by
the European Union



Project: 101049682 — WISEs4Youth — ERASMUS-YOUTH-2021-PCOOP-ENGO

business incubators. Encourage entrepreneurs to define their goals first and then seek appropriate assistance accordingly.

Statements of the Survey Respondents:

Q. How the ecosystem, other stakeholders can support young entrepreneurs in building and developing sustainable WISE/SEs?

“There are a whole host of options available to young entrepreneurs, from free counselling, legal assistance, assistance points, free seminars, investors, funding, projects, special loans, incubators... What an entrepreneur should do is decide on their goal first and then seek the appropriate assistance”.

Foster a social entrepreneurial culture

Foster a social entrepreneurial culture to cultivate an environment that nurtures innovative thinking and action aimed at addressing social challenges through entrepreneurship. Promote values such as creativity, collaboration, and social responsibility. Encourage individuals to think outside the box, take risks, and pursue ventures that create positive social impact.

Statements of the Survey Respondents:

Q. How the ecosystem, other stakeholders can support young entrepreneurs in building and developing sustainable WISE/SEs?

“Strengthening the design and delivery of social entrepreneurship support”.

“On the community level, start to promote the national SE strategies, if there are any in your country”.



Co-funded by
the European Union



Project: 101049682 — WISEs4Youth — ERASMUS-YOUTH-2021-PCOOP-ENGO

7. CONCLUSION

The Sustainability Roadmap of Social entrepreneurship among Youth, emerges as a dynamic and indispensable resource, to be used for future ecosystem approach towards Social Entrepreneurship. The aim is to support and empower young potential entrepreneurs in their endeavours to establish and sustain successful WISEs/social enterprises.

This roadmap represents a practical framework tailored specifically for young individuals navigating the complexities of social entrepreneurship. By providing clear and targeted implementation steps, it equips aspiring entrepreneurs with the necessary knowledge to embark on their entrepreneurial journey with confidence and purpose.

The roadmap provides a guide with simple steps on how to build sustainable social entrepreneurship and includes best practices in WB6 and EU to be tackled as models for replication. Moreover, insights gathered from representatives of social enterprises through surveys enrich the roadmap with invaluable real-world perspectives.

The roadmap presents a series of actionable steps for young entrepreneurs to consider and adopt, guiding them in the establishment of social enterprises that are not only dedicated to their social mission but also deeply ingrained in sustainability principles designed to achieve long-term financial viability, thereby fostering lasting positive impact within their communities and beyond.

In essence, this sustainability roadmap serves as a means to sustain and build upon the achievements of the WISEs4Youth project. Through a multifaceted approach encompassing training sessions, study visits, toolkit, and the roadmap itself, we aim to provide comprehensive support to young potential entrepreneurs on their path towards establishing resilient, successful, and sustainable social enterprises.

As the final complementary element of this holistic support framework, the Sustainability Roadmap represents a significant milestone in our collective efforts to nurture and empower the next generation of impact makers.



Co-funded by
the European Union



Project: 101049682 — WISEs4Youth — ERASMUS-YOUTH-2021-PCOOP-ENGO

8. ANNEX

Within this section of the Sustainability Roadmap, it is provided a compendium of the 17 best practices of social enterprises that participated in the survey, to serve as models for replication by young potential social entrepreneurs. Also, it is provided the template structure with the questions of the two questionnaires utilized to gather insights.

Please access the materials via the provided [link](#) or scan the QR code.

