Social Innovation + Initiative

ICT TRAINING MANUAL FOR THE THIRD SECTOR
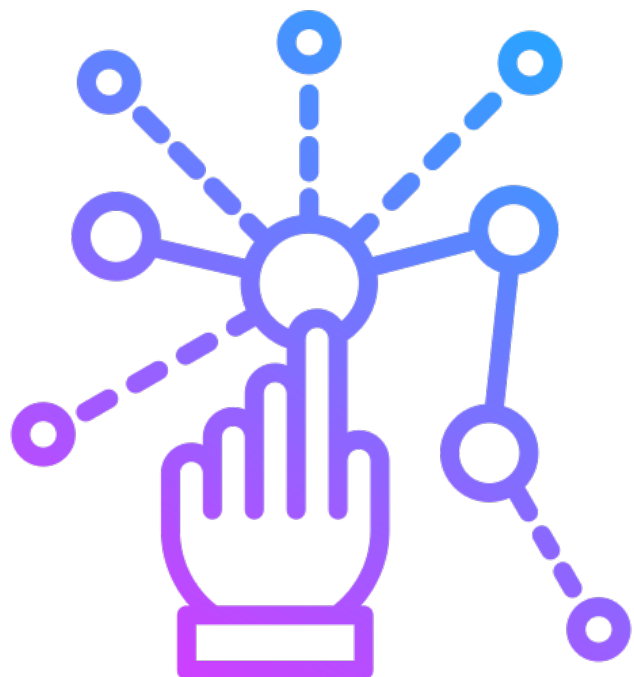
**Social
Innovation ⊕
Initiative**

ICT Training Manual for the Third Sector

Welcome to the ICT Training Manual for the Third Sector.

This manual is designed as the official support material for the training programme within **Work Package 2 (WP2)**. It accompanies the learning path and reflects the structure of the modules you will follow during the training.

The manual provides a combination of theory, tools, methods, and exercises. It is **not a book to read passively**, but a resource to **interact with**, using the examples, case studies, and practical suggestions to strengthen your professional capacity in the non-profit field.

Chapter 1: Why this Manual

1.1 The Transformation of the Third Sector

The Third Sector has entered a digital era. NGOs, associations, and non-profit organizations are no longer isolated actors but part of a global digital ecosystem.

- Donors expect **transparency** and **real-time updates**.
- Volunteers want **flexibility and digital engagement**.
- Policymakers require **evidence-based results** supported by data.

ICT (Information and Communication Technologies) are the bridge that allows non-profits to meet these expectations.

1.2 Objectives of this Manual

Objective	Description	Example in Practice
Awareness	Understand why ICT is crucial for today's non-profits.	An NGO explains to its board why moving from paper records to a CRM system improves donor relations.
Practical Skills	Learn to use digital tools in daily operations.	A youth association uses Trello to assign and monitor volunteer activities.
Employability	Prepare professionals for new roles in the Third Sector.	A graduate entering the job market becomes a "Digital Fundraiser".

1.3 Link with WP2

This manual follows the modules of the **WP2 Training Programme**, which includes:

1. ICT tools and project management
2. Storytelling and communication
3. New professional roles in the Third Sector
4. Practical orientation for job opportunities

Chapter 2: ICT – Tools and Methods

This is the most technical and practical part of the manual. Each section includes tools, methods, examples, and short exercises.

2.1 Project Management Tools

Digital project management ensures **coordination, accountability, and efficiency**.

Tool	Features	Example in Non-Profit Work
Trello	Kanban boards, task assignment, deadlines	Managing volunteers for an awareness campaign.
Asana	Workflow automation, team collaboration	Coordinating EU-funded projects with multiple partners.
Monday.com	Visual dashboards, progress tracking	Tracking milestones for a capacity-building project.
Slack	Instant messaging, integration with tools	Communication between local NGOs and international offices.
Microsoft Teams	Video calls, document sharing	Regular project meetings with stakeholders.

Exercise: Create a Trello board with at least three columns: "To Do – In Progress – Completed" and insert your organization's current activities.

2.2 Digital Collaboration

Why Digital Collaboration Matters

In the past, NGOs often relied on face-to-face meetings, phone calls, or endless email threads. Today, with organizations spread across **cities, regions, and continents**, digital collaboration is the backbone of non-profit operations.

Key reasons why it is crucial:

- **Efficiency:** Cloud-based tools reduce duplication and errors.
- **Transparency:** All partners can access the same updated information.
- **Inclusion:** Even small NGOs in remote areas can join global projects.
- **Sustainability:** Reduces travel costs and environmental impact.

Main Collaboration Platforms for Non-Profits

Platform	Features	Strengths	Weaknesses	Best Use Case
Google Workspace	Docs, Sheets, Slides, Drive, Meet	Free/discounted for NGOs, real-time co-editing	Limited advanced features compared to MS Office	Collaborative drafting of EU project proposals
Microsoft Office 365	Word, Excel, Teams, OneDrive	Advanced document editing, strong Excel functions	Higher costs, requires training	Financial management and formal reporting
Nextcloud	Open-source, self-hosted cloud	High data privacy, customizable	Requires technical setup	NGOs handling sensitive beneficiary data
Slack	Channels, file sharing, app integrations	Excellent for internal team communication	Not ideal for document storage	Day-to-day team discussions and quick updates
Notion	Notes, databases, project boards	All-in-one workspace, flexible	Learning curve for new users	Knowledge management for projects

Best Practices for Effective Collaboration

1. **Folder Organization and Naming Conventions**
   - Poorly organized folders = wasted hours.
   - Always structure by **Project > Work Package > Deliverable**.
   - Example:
   - Project_A > WP2_Training > Reports > Draft_V1
2. **Version Control**
   - Avoid "Final_V1.docx", "Final_V2.docx", "Final_REALLYFINAL.docx".
   - Use built-in version history (Google Docs, OneDrive).
3. **Access Permissions**
   - Apply the **principle of least privilege**: give access only to those who need it.
   - Example: Financial documents accessible only to the Treasurer and Project Manager.
4. **Meeting Etiquette in Online Collaboration**
   - Always set an agenda and share documents in advance.
   - Use breakout rooms (in Meet/Teams) for group discussions.
   - Record important meetings for absent team members.

Case Example – Digital Collaboration in Action

An Erasmus+ consortium with 6 partners in Italy, Spain, Malta, Greece, and Germany:

- Used **Google Drive** for drafting applications and storing reports.
- Adopted **Slack** for daily communication and quick updates.
- Held monthly **Teams calls** with shared minutes saved directly to OneDrive.

Result:

- Reduced email traffic by 70%.
- Partners had immediate access to the latest versions of documents.
- Project reporting was completed 2 weeks ahead of schedule.

Security Considerations

- Always enable **two-factor authentication** on shared platforms.
- Train staff on phishing risks.
- Avoid sharing sensitive data (beneficiaries' personal details) via unsecured links.

Mini Exercises

Exercise 1 – Folder Setup
👉 Create a shared folder for your current project.
Structure it as:

Project_Name > WP1_Planning > WP2_Training > WP3_Dissemination

Exercise 2 – Collaborative Writing
👉 Open a Google Doc with your team.

- Assign one paragraph to each member.
- Practice co-editing in real time.

Exercise 3 – Permissions Check
👉 Review your NGO's current shared folders.

- Who has access?
- Are permissions too open (e.g., "Anyone with the link")?
- Adjust them according to the **principle of least privilege**.

2.3 Data Collection and Impact Measurement

Donors and policymakers want to see **evidence of impact**. ICT makes it possible to collect, analyze, and present data.

Tool	Purpose	Example
Google Forms	Online surveys	Collect feedback from workshop participants.
Typeform	Interactive forms	Survey on volunteer satisfaction.
Power BI	Data visualization	Display youth unemployment trends.
Tableau	Dashboards	Monitor KPIs of social inclusion projects.

2.4 Digital Communication and Advocacy

Non-profits must **tell their story digitally**.

Channels:

- Social media: Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, TikTok.
- Newsletters and email campaigns.
- Blogs and organizational websites.

Tools:

- Canva, Adobe Express → Visual content.
- Mailchimp, Brevo → Email campaigns.
- Hootsuite, Buffer → Social media scheduling.

Case Study: A human rights NGO increased donations by 35% through a campaign combining Facebook ads with storytelling videos.

2.5 Fundraising and Online Engagement

Fundraising is digital.

| Method	Description	Example
Crowdfunding	Small contributions from many donors online.	"GlobalGiving" campaign for women's empowerment.
Peer-to-Peer Fundraising	Volunteers raise funds through personal networks.	Supporters create personal donation pages.
CRM Systems	Manage donor databases and engagement.	Salesforce Nonprofit Cloud tracks donor history.

Exercise: Write the outline of a crowdfunding campaign (title, goal, story, platform).

2.6 Cybersecurity Essentials

Why it matters: Non-profits manage sensitive data (beneficiaries, donors, staff).

Rules to follow:

- Use strong passwords and 2FA.
- Train staff to avoid phishing.
- Ensure compliance with GDPR.
- Encrypt sensitive documents.
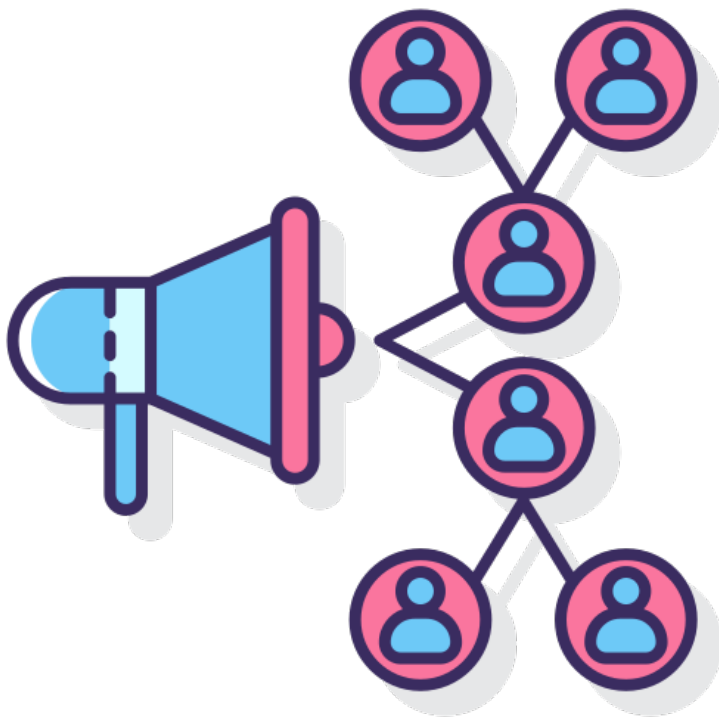
Storytelling for the Third Sector

Stories are at the heart of human communication. Long before the invention of writing, people shared knowledge, values, and traditions through oral storytelling. Today, in the context of the Third Sector, stories still play the same essential role: they help organizations **connect emotionally** with their communities, donors, and volunteers.

While **facts and numbers** provide credibility, they often fail to generate action. Telling someone that "1 in 5 young people in Europe is unemployed" is informative but abstract. Sharing the story of *Elena, a 22-year-old graduate who struggled to find a job until an NGO helped her gain digital skills and start her own small business* is powerful—it gives a face, a voice, and emotions to the issue.

The Impact of Storytelling in the Third Sector

1. **Mobilizing Volunteers**
   o People are more likely to volunteer when they can imagine themselves as part of a story.
   o Example: A youth NGO in Spain recruited dozens of new volunteers by sharing videos of existing members explaining *why they joined* and *how their actions created change*.
   o Storytelling creates a sense of belonging and allows potential volunteers to see the tangible difference they can make.
2. **Attracting Donations**
   o Donors rarely give money to abstract causes—they give to people and stories they can connect with.
   o Example: During a crowdfunding campaign, an Italian NGO raised €15,000 not by presenting statistics but by telling the story of Ahmed, a young refugee whose dream was to finish school. Each donation was framed as "a step toward Ahmed's graduation."
   o When people feel emotionally engaged, they are more willing to contribute financially.
3. **Strengthening Community Trust**
   o Communities are more likely to support and trust organizations that share stories transparently.
   o Example: A women's empowerment association in Greece regularly publishes short stories of local women who benefited from their workshops. This open communication not only shows impact but also fosters trust between the NGO and its community.
   o Storytelling also demonstrates accountability—stakeholders see real people, not just numbers in a report.

Why Stories Work Better Than Facts Alone

Psychological studies show that humans process stories differently than raw data:

- **Emotional engagement**: Stories trigger empathy and compassion.
- **Memory retention**: People remember narratives up to 22 times more than isolated facts.
- **Action orientation**: Stories activate brain regions linked to decision-making, pushing people to act.

📌 *Key Insight*: A fact may open the mind, but a story opens the heart. And in the non-profit world, actions are driven by both.

The Role of Storytelling in Advocacy

Advocacy is about influencing decisions, shaping policies, and giving voice to those who are often unheard. While reports, statistics, and policy briefs provide the **evidence base** for advocacy, they are rarely enough to move policymakers to act. Decision-makers are constantly overwhelmed with technical documents, data, and institutional jargon. What cuts through the noise is the **power of a human story**.

Why Storytelling Works in Advocacy

1. **Humanizing Abstract Issues**
   - Social problems like unemployment, migration, or climate change often appear abstract in policy debates.
   - Storytelling gives these issues a **human face**, making them relatable and urgent.
   - A narrative about one individual's struggle can embody the experience of thousands.
2. **Emotional Engagement**
   - Policymakers, like all humans, are driven not only by rational analysis but also by emotions.
   - A story can evoke empathy, urgency, or moral responsibility, creating a stronger incentive for action.
3. **Memorable Impact**
   - Data can be forgotten after a few minutes, but stories are remembered for years.
   - A policymaker might not recall exact unemployment figures but will remember *Ahmed, the young refugee who could not access education until an NGO intervened*.

Case Examples of Storytelling in Advocacy

Case 1 – Youth Unemployment in the European Parliament

An NGO presented both **statistics** (30% youth unemployment rate in a given region) and a **short video** showing three young people sharing their struggles. While the data was acknowledged, the video triggered a debate among MEPs and was quoted in follow-up discussions.

📌 *Lesson*: Policymakers respond more strongly to **narratives combined with evidence** than to numbers alone.

Case 2 – Climate Change Campaign

An international NGO launched a campaign during a COP meeting. Instead of focusing on global CO_2 statistics, they presented the story of a **farmer in Kenya** who lost his crops due to drought. His personal testimony was featured in international media and helped push climate adaptation policies higher on the agenda.

📌 *Lesson*: Local stories can drive global policies when framed effectively.

Case 3 – Disability Rights Advocacy

A disability rights NGO in Greece used storytelling by inviting people with disabilities to **speak directly in parliament hearings**, sharing their daily challenges. These testimonies were more impactful than written reports and directly influenced amendments to accessibility laws.

📌 *Lesson*: **First-person narratives** are among the most powerful forms of advocacy storytelling.

Best Practices for Storytelling in Advocacy

1. **Combine Data with Stories**
   o Data gives credibility, stories give life.
   o Use statistics as a frame, but let the story carry the emotional weight.
2. **Respect Dignity and Ethics**
   o Never exploit a person's suffering.
   o Focus on empowerment: show beneficiaries as resilient individuals, not passive victims.
3. **Adapt the Story to the Audience**
   o Policymakers need concise, clear, and relevant narratives.

- o Use formats they can easily consume: short videos, infographics, personal testimonies.
4. **Use Multi-Channel Advocacy**
   - o Present stories during formal hearings, but also share them on social media, newsletters, and public campaigns.
   - o A story that resonates online can reach policymakers indirectly through public pressure.

Mini Exercises

Exercise 1 – Turning Data into Advocacy Stories
Take the following data: *"40% of young people in rural areas lack digital skills."*
👉 Transform it into a story about *one young person* whose life is limited by this issue.

Exercise 2 – Story for Policymakers
Draft a **3-minute testimony** that could be delivered in front of local decision-makers.
Structure:

- Problem (the challenge)
- Human story (lived experience)
- Solution (what NGOs are doing)
- Call to action (what policymakers should do)

Exercise 3 – Ethical Check
Review one of your NGO's stories.

- Does it respect the dignity of the protagonist?
- Does it focus on empowerment rather than pity?
- Would the person featured be proud to share it?

Conclusion

Storytelling in advocacy is not about replacing data—it is about **bringing it to life**.

- Numbers show the scale of the problem.
- Stories show the **human cost and urgency**.
- Together, they create a compelling case for change.

📌 **Final Thought**: Policymakers may ignore a report, but they rarely forget a face and a voice.

Mini Exercises for NGOs

Exercise 1: Fact vs. Story

- Write one sentence with only data (e.g., "30% of children in this city live below the poverty line").
- Rewrite it as a story (e.g., "Sofia, a 10-year-old girl, often goes to school hungry because her family cannot afford daily meals. Our project ensures she has food and energy to learn.").

Exercise 2: Volunteer Recruitment Story

- Draft a 5-line story about a volunteer in your NGO.
- Focus on *motivation*, *experience*, and *impact*.

Exercise 3: Community Trust Story

- Write a short paragraph showing how your NGO has transformed a community.
- Share it on social media with a picture or infographic.

Storytelling is not just a communication tool—it is a **strategic necessity** for non-profits.

- It inspires action.
- It mobilizes resources.
- It builds trust and transparency.

By mastering the art of storytelling, NGOs can transform passive audiences into **active supporters**, ensuring long-term sustainability and greater social impact.

3.2 Anatomy of a Story

Element	Description	Example
Protagonist	The central figure	Maria, a refugee supported by an NGO.
Challenge	The problem	She could not access education.
Intervention	The NGO's role	The NGO provided online training.
Impact	The transformation	Maria is now employed and mentors others.

3.3 Storytelling Channels

- **Written**: Blogs, newsletters, annual reports.
- **Visual**: Instagram reels, TikTok videos, YouTube campaigns.
- **Audio**: Podcasts, interviews.

Box – Practical Tip
➡️ Start every story with a **personal detail** (a name, a smile, a quote). It creates empathy.
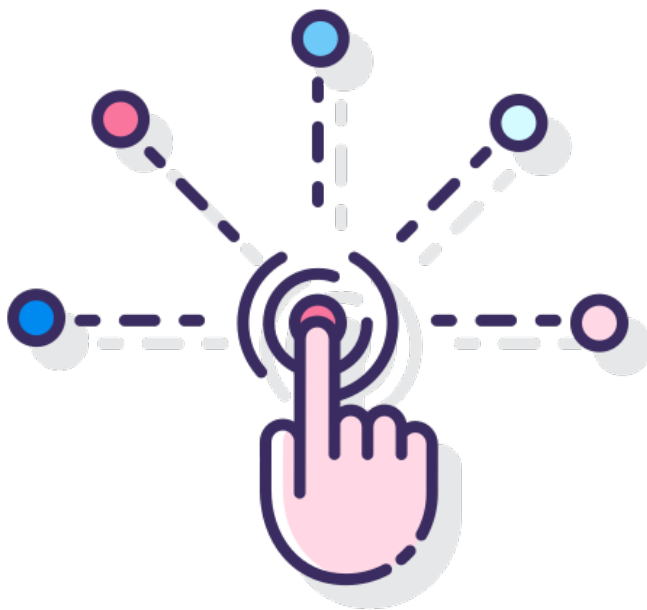

3.4 Tools for Storytelling

- **Animoto / Powtoon** → Animated videos.
- **Canva Video** → Quick editing for NGOs.
- **Anchor.fm** → Free podcasting.

Exercise: Write a 5-sentence story about a recent project using the structure: *Protagonist – Challenge – Intervention – Impact*.

Chapter 4: New Professions in the Third Sector

The rise of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) is transforming the **nature of work** across all sectors, and the Third Sector is no exception. In the past, NGOs were primarily associated with roles such as community organizers, social workers, or field volunteers. While these remain essential, today's non-profits require an entirely new set of professional figures capable of navigating the digital landscape.

This digital shift is driven by three key forces:

1. **Digital Transformation of Society** – Citizens, donors, and volunteers expect NGOs to be as digitally connected as private companies.
2. **Funding and Accountability** – EU institutions and foundations demand detailed data, transparency, and professional reporting.
3. **New Communication Channels** – Social media, digital campaigns, and online platforms dominate the way organizations reach their communities.

📌 **Key Insight**: ICT adoption does not just improve efficiency—it **creates entirely new professions** that did not exist in NGOs ten years ago.

New Professional Profiles Emerging in the Third Sector

1. Digital Fundraiser

- **Role**: Manages online donation platforms, crowdfunding campaigns, donor databases, and digital payment systems.
- **Why It's Needed**: Traditional fundraising events are no longer sufficient; donors expect easy, online giving options.
- **Example**: An Italian NGO raised €50,000 for disaster relief via GlobalGiving, using personalized donor updates by email.

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2. Social Media Strategist

- **Role**: Designs and implements digital communication strategies, creates campaigns, and manages social media platforms.
- **Why It's Needed**: Visibility is essential to attract youth, volunteers, and partners. A static website is no longer enough.
- **Example**: A youth NGO increased Erasmus+ project participation by 40% through TikTok challenges and Instagram reels.

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3. Impact Analyst

- **Role**: Collects, analyzes, and visualizes data to demonstrate social impact. Uses dashboards, reports, and infographics for donors and institutions.
- **Why It's Needed**: Donors and policymakers require evidence of impact before funding future projects.
- **Example**: A Bulgarian NGO used Tableau dashboards to show how its activities reduced school dropouts by 15%, securing new EU funding.

4. Community Manager

- **Role**: Builds and maintains both online and offline communities around the NGO. Moderates forums, coordinates volunteers, and fosters engagement.
- **Why It's Needed**: Communities are no longer just local—they are global, online, and highly interactive.
- **Example**: A German NGO created a Facebook group for environmental activists, reaching 20,000 members worldwide.

5. E-Learning Designer

- **Role**: Develops digital training programmes, e-learning courses, and online workshops for NGOs and beneficiaries.
- **Why It's Needed**: The pandemic accelerated online training; NGOs must now deliver education and capacity-building digitally.
- **Example**: A Maltese NGO developed a Moodle-based online course for youth workers, reaching participants in 12 countries.

Comparison Table – Traditional vs. Digital Roles in NGOs

Traditional Roles	New ICT-Driven Roles	Added Value
Event Organizer	Digital Fundraiser	Reaches global audiences online.
Communications Officer	Social Media Strategist	Builds online visibility and engagement.
Project Evaluator	Impact Analyst	Provides data-driven accountability.
Volunteer Coordinator	Community Manager	Maintains active online & offline communities.
Trainer	E-Learning Designer	Scales training internationally via digital platforms.

Implications for NGOs

1. **Recruitment and Training**
   - NGOs must actively seek professionals with ICT expertise.
   - Partnerships with universities and training institutions can fill this gap.
2. **Organizational Change**
   - NGOs need to restructure their internal teams to integrate digital roles.
   - Example: Creating a "Digital Engagement Department" within the NGO.
3. **Funding Opportunities**
   - EU programmes (e.g., Erasmus+, Horizon, CERV) increasingly prioritize digital skills and innovation.
   - Having these profiles improves competitiveness in grant applications.
4. **Challenges**
   - Smaller NGOs may struggle to afford full-time digital experts.
   - Solutions include **shared services** among partner NGOs or training volunteers in ICT.

Mini Exercises

Exercise 1 – NGO Job Mapping

- List all current roles in your NGO.
- Identify which ones are traditional and which ones are digital.
- Suggest one new ICT-driven role that could add value.

Exercise 2 – Digital Fundraising Simulation

- Draft a crowdfunding campaign outline (goal, platform, storytelling angle).
- Estimate the number of donors and average donation required to reach the goal.

Exercise 3 – Future Visioning

- Imagine your NGO in 2030.
- Which roles will disappear? Which new roles will emerge?
- Write a short paragraph envisioning your NGO's "Digital Team of the Future."

The digital shift in jobs is not optional—it is **redefining the Third Sector**. NGOs that adapt by creating and supporting these new professional roles will not only survive but thrive in the coming decade. By integrating digital fundraisers, social media strategists, impact analysts, community managers, and e-learning designers, non-profits can become **more effective, visible, and sustainable**.

4.2 Skills for the Future

Skill	Why it matters	Example
Digital Literacy	Navigate ICT tools with confidence.	Using Teams for online collaboration.
Project Management	Organize tasks and deadlines.	Leading an Erasmus+ project.
Intercultural Communication	Work across borders.	Coordinating NGOs from 5 EU countries.
Critical Thinking	Evaluate information critically.	Selecting reliable data sources.

4.3 Practical Applications

📌 *Case Study*: A youth NGO created the role of "Digital Engagement Officer" to manage TikTok campaigns. Within 6 months, they tripled their reach among young audiences.

Appendix: Tips and Tools for Entering the Third Sector Job Market

A.1 Career Tips

- Volunteer strategically in areas matching your goals.
- Build a digital portfolio (website, LinkedIn, GitHub for coders).
- Join professional associations.
- Follow EU funding opportunities (Erasmus+, Horizon, LIFE, CERV).

A.2 Platforms and Opportunities

Platform	Purpose
Idealist.org	NGO job offers worldwide
Eurodesk	EU volunteering and youth programmes
Impactpool	International careers in social impact
LinkedIn	Networking and visibility
Coursera, edX	Free/affordable online courses

A.3 Career Roadmap

Stage	Typical Roles	Strategy
Entry Level	Volunteer, intern, assistant	Gain experience, build CV
Mid Level	Project assistant, officer	Specialize in ICT + management
Senior Level	Project manager, director	Lead international projects

Conclusion

The Third Sector needs professionals capable of **combining social passion with digital innovation**.
This manual is a **living document**: keep updating it with tools, practices, and your own experiences.

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Module 2 – ICT: Tools and Methods

2.1 Project Management Tools

Why Project Management Tools Matter

In the non-profit sector, projects often involve multiple partners, limited budgets, and strict deadlines. Effective project management is not only about planning tasks but also about ensuring **accountability, transparency, and coordination** across teams. ICT tools make this possible by providing digital spaces where teams can **collaborate in real time**.

Key Tools Overview

Tool	Core Features	Best Use Case in Non-Profits
Trello	Kanban boards, drag-and-drop tasks, labels	Organizing volunteers for an event.
Asana	Task dependencies, calendar view, reporting	Managing multi-phase EU projects.
Monday.com	Custom dashboards, time tracking	Tracking fundraising campaigns.
Slack	Team messaging, integration with apps	Day-to-day communication within NGOs.
Microsoft Teams	Video conferencing, file storage	Holding transnational meetings.

Case Example:
A youth NGO coordinating Erasmus+ mobility created a shared Trello board with "To Do", "In Progress", and "Done" lists. This allowed 4 different countries to stay aligned, reducing email overload by 60%.

Mini Exercise:
👉 Create a Trello board for your organization. Add at least 5 tasks related to your ongoing project and assign them to team members.

2.2 Digital Collaboration

Collaboration is the **backbone of non-profits**. With cross-border projects, physical meetings are often not possible. Cloud platforms ensure documents are updated and shared in real time.

Collaboration Platforms

Platform	Benefits	Example
Google Workspace	Free/discounted for NGOs, Docs and Sheets allow real-time editing	Drafting project proposals with international partners.
Office 365	Professional suite with Excel, Teams, OneDrive	Financial management of EU grants.
Nextcloud	Open-source alternative, secure self-hosting	Organizations with high privacy concerns.

Best Practice:
Always define **folder structures** before starting collaboration. Example:

Project_X > WP1_Documents > WP2_Training > Reports

Exercise:
👉 Create a shared folder structure for a training project. Decide on naming conventions and access permissions.

2.3 Data Collection and Impact Measurement

ICT tools allow NGOs to collect evidence and present results clearly to donors and institutions.

Data Collection Tools

Tool	Features	Use
Google Forms	Free, integrates with Sheets	Collect participant feedback.
Typeform	Interactive, user-friendly design	Youth surveys on digital habits.
SurveyMonkey	Advanced analysis, benchmarking	Donor satisfaction studies.

Data Visualization Tools

Tool	Features	Example
Power BI	Microsoft tool, advanced dashboards	Visualizing youth unemployment rates.
Tableau	Interactive charts, maps	Impact evaluation of an inclusion project.
Excel Advanced Functions	Pivot tables, charts	Budget monitoring.

Case Example:
An NGO used **Typeform** to gather data from 300 participants. The results were visualized in Power BI and presented to the municipality, leading to renewed funding.

Exercise:
👉 Design a survey with 5 questions to measure the impact of a training session.

2.4 Digital Communication and Advocacy

Communication is no longer an accessory—it is central to NGO survival. ICT enables **advocacy at scale**, reaching thousands with minimal resources.

Channels and Tools

Channel	Tools	Example
Social Media	Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, LinkedIn	Awareness campaigns on climate action.
Content Creation	Canva, Adobe Express	Posters for fundraising events.
Email Marketing	Mailchimp, Brevo	Monthly donor newsletters.
Campaign Management	Hootsuite, Buffer	Scheduling posts for Erasmus Days.

Case Example:
A human rights NGO launched a **TikTok challenge** using storytelling videos. Within 2 weeks, their hashtag reached 200,000 views, engaging youth who had never heard of the NGO before.

Exercise:
👉 Create a simple campaign idea (title, hashtag, visual style) for your NGO's next awareness initiative.

2.5 Fundraising and Online Engagement

Fundraising is one of the areas most impacted by ICT. Digital fundraising allows NGOs to diversify income streams and reach new supporters.

Digital Fundraising Methods

Method	Description	Example
Crowdfunding	Donations from the general public via platforms	A local NGO raising €10,000 on GlobalGiving.
Peer-to-Peer Fundraising	Supporters create personal donation pages	Volunteers collect funds during marathons.
Recurring Donations	Monthly online subscriptions	Donors sign up via PayPal/Stripe.
CRM Systems	Database of donors, automated communication	Salesforce Nonprofit Cloud.

Best Practice:
Always link fundraising with **storytelling**. Donors give to people and causes, not to abstract organizations.

Exercise:
👉 Draft the first paragraph of a crowdfunding story. Focus on **one person's experience**, not just the organization's work.

2.6 Cybersecurity Essentials

Cybersecurity is often underestimated by NGOs, but data breaches can lead to **loss of trust and funding**.

Golden Rules for NGOs

1. **Strong Passwords**: Minimum 12 characters, mix of symbols.
2. **Two-Factor Authentication**: Always enable for emails and CRMs.
3. **GDPR Compliance**: Collect only necessary data, inform beneficiaries.
4. **Encrypted Storage**: Use tools like VeraCrypt or encrypted drives.
5. **Staff Training**: Most risks come from human error.

Case Example:
An NGO lost donor data due to using a shared unprotected Excel sheet. After a GDPR violation fine, they adopted Salesforce and trained staff.

Module 3 – Storytelling for the Third Sector

3.1 Why Storytelling Matters

In the non-profit world, **facts and numbers are important**, but they rarely move people to action on their own. Humans are wired to respond to **stories**—narratives with emotions, characters, and transformations.

- A well-told story can **inspire donors** more than a statistical report.
- Stories help **volunteers feel connected** to the cause.
- Policymakers and institutions are more likely to engage when they see the **human impact** behind projects.

📌 **Key Insight:** Storytelling transforms abstract issues (poverty, exclusion, climate change) into personal, relatable experiences.

3.2 The Anatomy of a Story

Every powerful story has **four key elements**.

Element	Description	Example (NGO Context)
Protagonist	A person or community at the center of the story.	Fatima, a young refugee.
Challenge	The problem they face.	She cannot access formal education.
Intervention	What the NGO does to help.	Provides language classes and digital training.
Impact	The transformation achieved.	Fatima graduates and finds employment.

Box – The Hero's Journey in Non-Profits
Joseph Campbell's "Hero's Journey" can be adapted to NGOs:

- The **Call to Action** = the social problem.
- The **Mentor** = the NGO providing support.
- The **Transformation** = the empowerment of the beneficiary.

3.3 Storytelling Channels

Different stories require different channels. ICT has expanded the range of possibilities.

Channel	Strengths	Best Use
Written (blogs, newsletters, reports)	Depth, detail, reflection	Annual reports, project diaries.
Visual (videos, reels, infographics)	Emotional impact, shareability	Social media campaigns, fundraising videos.
Audio (podcasts, interviews)	Authentic voices, intimacy	Long-form discussions with beneficiaries.
Live/Digital Events (webinars, Instagram Live)	Direct interaction, Q&A	Advocacy events, awareness sessions.

Case Example:
A disability NGO created a **short Instagram reel** showing the day-to-day life of one of their beneficiaries. Within one week, the video reached 50,000 views and generated 300 new donations.

3.4 Tools for Digital Storytelling

Tool	Type	Best Use Case
Canva Video	Easy video editing	Quick social media stories.
Animoto / Powtoon	Animated storytelling	Explaining complex topics simply.
Anchor.fm	Free podcast platform	Recording interviews with beneficiaries.
Medium / WordPress	Blogging	Long-form impact stories.

Box – Practical Tip:
➡ Always pair a story with a **photo or visual element**. Stories without images are less likely to be remembered or shared.

3.5 Guidelines for Effective Storytelling

Telling stories in the Third Sector is not simply about *sharing experiences*. It requires responsibility, strategy, and ethics. A good story has the power to inspire action, but a poorly crafted one can harm the dignity of beneficiaries or damage an NGO's credibility. The following guidelines provide a framework for building **effective and ethical stories**.

1. Be Authentic

Authenticity is the foundation of trust. Donors, volunteers, and stakeholders can quickly recognize when a story feels exaggerated, fabricated, or staged.

- **Why it matters**: False or embellished stories may generate short-term attention, but they risk long-term credibility.
- **How to apply it**: Use real names (with consent), genuine quotes, and authentic photos. If anonymity is required, make it clear and explain why.
- **Example**: Instead of saying, *"We saved thousands of children from hunger,"* say, *"This is Amina. Thanks to our program, she now has access to a daily school meal."*

2. Respect Dignity

Stories should never exploit suffering for shock value. Beneficiaries must be represented as **agents of change**, not passive victims.

- **Why it matters**: NGOs have an ethical duty to empower, not to objectify.
- **How to apply it**: Focus on resilience, progress, and transformation. Avoid using images or language that portrays people as helpless.
- **Example**: Instead of showing only a refugee child crying, tell the story of how the child gained access to education and is now thriving.

3. Keep It Simple

The most effective stories are often the simplest ones. Overly technical reports, full of jargon and statistics, fail to capture the human imagination.

- **Why it matters**: In a digital world with short attention spans, clarity and emotion are more powerful than complexity.
- **How to apply it**: Write in plain language, avoid acronyms, and aim for short sentences.
- **Example**: Replace *"Our intervention resulted in a 35% increase in youth employability outcomes"* with *"Thanks to the training, 1 in 3 young people found a job."*

4. Include a Call to Action

A story should not end with emotion alone—it should **lead the audience toward action**.

- **Why it matters**: Emotion without direction fades quickly. A call to action transforms inspiration into concrete support.
- **How to apply it**: Always end a story with a clear, specific request: *Donate, Volunteer, Share, Act*.

- **Example**: After telling Maria's story of finding employment through digital training, conclude with: *"You can help more young people like Maria by donating today or volunteering with us."*

Summary Table – Guidelines at a Glance

Guideline	Key Focus	Example in Practice
Be Authentic	Truth builds trust	Share real names, quotes, photos (with consent).
Respect Dignity	Empower, don't exploit	Focus on resilience, not suffering.
Keep It Simple	Clarity over jargon	"1 in 3 youth found a job" vs. "35% increase in employability outcomes."
Call to Action	Inspire action, not pity	"Donate, Volunteer, Share, Act."

3.6 Exercises

Exercise 1: Write Your Story

- Protagonist: Choose one person from your NGO.
- Challenge: Identify the main obstacle they faced.
- Intervention: How did your NGO help?
- Impact: What changed in their life?

Exercise 2: Visual Storytelling

- Use Canva to create a **1-page infographic** summarizing a project's impact.

Exercise 3: Social Media Simulation

- Draft a **tweet** (max 280 characters) telling a story of change.
- Draft a **TikTok/Reel script** of 30 seconds presenting the same story visually.

Summary of Module 3

Key Point	Takeaway
Stories inspire action	Facts inform, but stories connect emotionally.
Anatomy of a story	Protagonist – Challenge – Intervention – Impact.
Channels matter	Written, visual, audio, and live formats each serve a purpose.
Tools	Canva, Animoto, Anchor, Medium are accessible and affordable.
Ethics	Respect dignity and authenticity at all times.

Module 4 – New Professions in the Third Sector and the Application of New Skills

4.1 The Digital Shift in the Third Sector

The rise of ICT has reshaped how the Third Sector operates:

- NGOs are no longer limited to traditional roles such as social workers or volunteers.
- Digital transformation has **created new professions** that combine social mission with technological expertise.
- Skills once considered "optional" (digital literacy, social media, data analysis) are now **core requirements**.

Key Insight: The Third Sector is becoming one of the most **dynamic job markets** for young professionals with hybrid skills (social + digital).

4.2 Emerging Professional Profiles

The New "Digital Roles" in Non-Profits

Profession	Core Responsibilities	Example of Application
Digital Fundraiser	Manage online campaigns, crowdfunding, donor engagement.	Launches a GlobalGiving campaign for disaster relief.
Social Media Strategist	Build visibility, run awareness campaigns.	Designs an Instagram campaign for Erasmus Days.
Impact Analyst	Collect, analyze, and present data on social outcomes.	Creates Power BI dashboards showing reduction in youth unemployment.
Community Manager	Manage online/offline communities, moderate discussions.	Runs a Facebook group for volunteers across Europe.
E-Learning Designer	Develop online training modules for NGOs.	Creates Moodle-based training on digital inclusion.
Digital Advocacy Officer	Lead online petitions, campaigns, digital rights lobbying.	Coordinates an EU-wide petition using Change.org.

4.3 Competencies for the Future

Professionals entering the Third Sector need **transversal skills** that mix social and digital expertise.

Skill	Why It Matters	Practical Example
Digital Literacy	Ability to use ICT tools effectively.	Managing donor database in Salesforce.
Intercultural Communication	NGOs work across borders and cultures.	Leading a virtual team from 5 different countries.
Project Management	Ensures efficiency and accountability.	Using Asana to track Erasmus+ project deliverables.
Data Analysis	Evidence-based reporting to donors.	Preparing dashboards for EU funding reports.
Storytelling Skills	Attracts donors, mobilizes communities.	Writing impact stories for newsletters.
Adaptability	NGOs face rapid social and digital change.	Quickly learning to use TikTok for advocacy.

📌 *Soft skills* (empathy, creativity, teamwork) remain fundamental, but they must be complemented by **digital hard skills**.

4.4 Practical Applications of New Skills

Case Example 1 – Digital Fundraising:
A small NGO in Italy doubled donations by moving from local fundraising dinners to **online crowdfunding campaigns** using GoFundMe and storytelling videos.

Case Example 2 – Community Manager:
An international youth NGO created a Discord server for volunteers. The server became a hub for training, peer support, and informal networking, keeping youth engaged beyond in-person activities.

Case Example 3 – Impact Analyst:
A human rights NGO used Tableau to show policymakers the direct outcomes of its advocacy campaign. Data visualization convinced local authorities to extend funding.

4.5 Exercises

Exercise 1: Competence Mapping

- Write down 5 of your current professional skills.

- Compare them with the "skills for the future" listed above.
- Identify at least **2 skills you need to develop** in the next year.

Exercise 2: Role Simulation

- Imagine you are a **Social Media Strategist** for your NGO.
- Draft the outline of a **one-month campaign**:
    o Topic: _____
    o Main Channel: _____
    o Target Audience: _____
    o Key Message: _____
    o Expected Results: _____

Exercise 3: Job Profile Design

- In groups, design the job description for a new role in your NGO (e.g., "Digital Advocacy Officer").
- Define: responsibilities, required skills, and expected impact.

4.6 Summary of Module 4

Key Point	Takeaway
The Third Sector is changing	New professions are emerging due to ICT.
Digital Fundraiser, Impact Analyst, etc.	Roles now combine social mission + digital expertise.
Competencies	Mix of digital, intercultural, analytical, and storytelling skills.
Practical Applications	Fundraising, community management, advocacy.
Career Development	NGOs offer growing opportunities for digitally skilled professionals.

Appendix – Tips and Tools for Entering the Third Sector Job Market

A.1 Why Focus on Careers in the Third Sector?

The Third Sector is no longer a "voluntary-only" space. It is a **professional environment** offering:

- **Stability**: NGOs and social enterprises are recognized employers.
- **Diversity**: Work spans from local youth groups to international humanitarian aid.
- **Purpose**: Professionals are motivated by impact, not only profit.

📌 **Key Insight**: The demand for skilled professionals in the non-profit field is growing, especially for those with ICT expertise.

A.2 Career Tips for Entering the Sector

Tip	Why It Matters	Example
Volunteer strategically	Builds experience and networks in your area of interest.	Volunteering at a youth NGO if you want to work in Erasmus+ projects.
Build a digital portfolio	Showcases your real work to employers.	Collect campaign visuals, reports, videos in a personal website or LinkedIn profile.
Networking	Expands opportunities and visibility.	Attend Erasmus Days, NGO fairs, or join LinkedIn groups.
Stay updated	EU funding changes constantly; being informed is crucial.	Following EU calls (Erasmus+, CERV, Horizon Europe).
Continuous learning	NGOs value adaptability and new skills.	Taking free MOOCs on project management or data analysis.

A.3 Platforms and Opportunities

These platforms are essential gateways for internships, volunteering, and jobs:

Platform	Focus Area	Best Use Case
Idealist.org	NGO jobs worldwide	Searching for paid/non-paid NGO positions.
Eurodesk	EU opportunities	Volunteering, training, mobility projects.

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Project title: **Women Engagement Boost in Technology**

Social Innovation ⊕ Initiative

Impactpool	International development	Jobs with UN, EU, and global NGOs.
LinkedIn	Professional networking	Connecting with NGO professionals.
Devex	Development projects	Calls and tenders for consultants.
Coursera / edX	Online learning	Gaining certificates in ICT, leadership, fundraising.

📌 *Best Practice*: Set up **job alerts** on these platforms to receive tailored opportunities weekly.

A.4 Career Roadmap in the Third Sector

Career Stage	Typical Roles	Strategy to Progress
Entry Level	Volunteer, Intern, Project Assistant	Gain hands-on experience, focus on ICT skills, participate in mobility projects.
Mid Level	Communication Officer, Project Officer	Specialize (fundraising, ICT, storytelling), build a portfolio of successful campaigns.
Senior Level	Project Manager, Programme Director	Lead international consortia, manage EU grants, mentor younger staff.
Expert / Advisor	Policy Advisor, Trainer, Consultant	Provide expertise to governments, universities, and global NGOs.

Case Example:
Anna started as a volunteer in a local youth center. After completing Erasmus+ mobility, she became a Project Assistant. By building skills in ICT and impact measurement, within 5 years she became Project Manager of a €200,000 Erasmus+ project.

A.5 Practical Exercises

Exercise 1: Career Mapping

- Write down your current skills and experiences.
- Identify where you are in the career roadmap (Entry / Mid / Senior).
- Set **two goals** to move to the next stage.

Exercise 2: Portfolio Building

- Collect at least 3 examples of your work (articles, campaign visuals, project reports).
- Upload them to a personal LinkedIn portfolio or website.

Exercise 3: Networking Plan

- Identify 3 NGOs or networks you want to connect with.
- Draft a short LinkedIn message to introduce yourself.
- Join at least 1 online community or professional group in the next month.

A.6 Final Checklist for Entering the Third Sector Job Market

✅ Do I have hands-on volunteer or internship experience?
✅ Have I created a digital portfolio (website, LinkedIn, or PDF)?
✅ Do I regularly check NGO job platforms?
✅ Have I invested in at least one online course to strengthen ICT or project management skills?
✅ Do I have a clear professional goal (fundraiser, communication officer, project manager, etc.)?

Did You Know? – The Digital Divide in NGOs

While businesses across Europe are rapidly digitalizing, many non-profits are still catching up. According to the *European Commission's Digital Economy and Society Index (DESI 2024)*, only **56% of NGOs in Europe** make regular use of digital collaboration tools such as cloud storage or project management platforms.

This digital divide has concrete consequences:

- NGOs without ICT adoption spend **up to 30% more time** on administrative tasks.
- They risk being excluded from international consortia where digital collaboration is the norm.
- Smaller organizations in rural areas are particularly disadvantaged.

👉 *Implication*: NGOs that invest in ICT training and tools are not just modernizing—they are **ensuring survival** in an increasingly competitive funding environment.

📦 Did You Know? – The Power of Storytelling in Memory Retention

Cognitive science shows that people remember stories far more vividly than data. A study from *Stanford University* revealed that audiences retain only **5–10% of statistics**, but **up to 65–70% of stories** told during presentations.

In non-profit advocacy, this is a game-changer:

- An NGO report with only numbers might be skimmed and forgotten.
- The same NGO, by presenting a short 2-minute story of a beneficiary, ensures policymakers and donors remember their cause.
- Campaigns with storytelling elements raise, on average, **23% more funds** than those with only factual appeals (*Nonprofit Storytelling Conference, 2023*).

👉 *Implication*: If your NGO is still publishing "dry" annual reports, it's time to integrate storytelling formats—case studies, impact videos, personal testimonies.

📦 Did You Know? – Online Fundraising is the Future

According to the *2023 Global NGO Tech Report*, online giving grew by **12% compared to 2022**, with mobile donations showing the fastest growth (+18%). Platforms like GoFundMe, GlobalGiving, and Facebook Fundraisers are now mainstream tools.

Key fundraising trends:

- **Recurring donations** (monthly micro-donations) have 3 times higher donor retention.
- Campaigns with strong **visual storytelling** (photos, short videos) perform 60% better than text-only campaigns.
- Younger donors (18–34) prefer **digital wallets** (PayPal, Apple Pay, Revolut) over traditional credit card donations.

👉 *Implication*: NGOs that do not integrate online fundraising risk losing younger donors, who represent the **future base of support**.

📦 Did You Know? – Emerging Jobs in the Third Sector

The *CIVICUS State of Civil Society Report (2023)* shows that **65% of NGOs plan to hire staff with digital expertise** in the next 5 years. Among the most requested profiles:

- **Impact Analyst** – for data collection and donor reporting.
- **Digital Fundraiser** – for online campaigns.
- **E-learning Designer** – to scale training internationally.

Additionally, LinkedIn's *Jobs on the Rise 2024* report highlights that "Community Managers" and "Digital Strategists" are among the **top 10 fastest-growing roles in Europe**—a trend that directly impacts the non-profit world.

👉 *Implication*: Training programs for NGOs must shift focus from traditional administration to **hybrid social-digital skillsets** if they want to prepare staff for tomorrow's challenges.

📦 Did You Know? – Young People Want Purpose

The *Eurobarometer 2023 on Youth* revealed that over **70% of young Europeans** would like to work in NGOs or social enterprises if given the opportunity. The most appealing areas are:

- **Digital communication and storytelling for change**
- **Sustainability and climate action projects**
- **Social innovation and inclusion**

At the same time, youth are **highly selective**: they prefer organizations that are transparent, digitally active, and visibly impactful. NGOs with weak online presence are often overlooked by young job seekers.

👉 *Implication*: To attract young professionals, NGOs must present themselves as **modern, transparent, and impact-driven organizations**—not outdated charities.

Operational Templates for NGOs

1. Social Media Editorial Plan Template

Week	Date	Platform	Content Type	Topic/Message	Visuals Needed	Call to Action	Responsible	Status
Week 1	01/03	Facebook	Post + Image	Project launch	Project logo + infographic	"Learn more →"	Communication Officer	Draft
Week 1	02/03	Instagram	Reel	Volunteer story	Short video	"Join us!"	Social Media Strategist	Scheduled
Week 2	08/03	LinkedIn	Article	Women's Day reflection	Photo of beneficiaries	"Read more →"	Project Manager	To Review
Week 3	15/03	TikTok	Short clip	Behind the scenes	30-sec raw video	"Follow us!"	Volunteer	Done

📌 *Tip*: Always diversify formats (posts, stories, videos) and keep a **consistent visual identity**.

2. Fundraising Calendar Template

Month	Campaign / Event	Target Amount (€)	Channel	Key Actions	Storytelling Angle	Responsible	Status
January	New Year Appeal	5,000	Email + Website	Newsletter, donation page update	"Start the year with impact"	Fundraiser	Draft
March	Crowdfunding for youth training	15,000	GoFundMe + Social Media	Launch campaign, share weekly updates	Story of Ahmed, a young trainee	Project Officer + Comms Team	Ongoing

| June | Summer Gala | 20,000 | Live event + Livestream | Secure sponsors, sell tickets | "Celebrate impact together" | Events Coordinator | Planning |
| November | Giving Tuesday | 10,000 | Facebook + Instagram | Short video campaign, matching donors | Story of resilience (Maria's story) | Comms Officer | Scheduled |

📌 *Tip*: Always combine **online campaigns** with **offline events** to maximize reach.

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3. Impact Report Template

Executive Summary

- Purpose of the report
- Main results in 3–5 bullet points

Section 1: Context and Objectives

- Background of the project/NGO initiative
- Goals and expected outcomes

Section 2: Activities Implemented

Activity	Date	Location	Participants	Description	Output
Training workshop	12/04	Rome	25 youth	ICT training on digital tools	25 certificates issued
Awareness campaign	15/05–30/06	Online	15,000 reach	Storytelling on social media	300 new followers

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Section 3: Outcomes and Impact

Indicator	Target	Result Achieved	% Reached	Notes
Youth trained in ICT	100	120	120%	Exceeded target
Donations collected	€20,000	€18,500	92%	Slightly below target
Volunteers mobilized	50	47	94%	Almost achieved

Section 4: Stories of Change

- Beneficiary story (narrative)
- Volunteer testimony
- Quote from a partner institution

Section 5: Lessons Learned and Recommendations

- What worked well
- What can be improved
- Next steps

Annexes

- Financial summary
- Photos and media coverage
- List of partners

📌 *Tip*: Always combine **quantitative data** (tables, KPIs) with **qualitative stories** (beneficiaries, volunteers).

Project number: **ESF-SI-2023-SKILLS-01-0011**
Project title: **Women Engagement Boost in Technology**

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Project title: **Women Engagement Boost in Technology**

Project acronym: **W.E.B. in Tech**

Call number: **ESF-SI-2023-SKILLS-01**

Call title: **Social Innovations for the Upskilling of Vulnerable Youth, Especially Young People not in Employment, Education, or Training (NEETs)**

Granting Authority: **European Social Fund Agency**

Project starting date: **01/11/2024**

Project end date: **01/11/2026**

Project duration: **24 months**

https://www.piattaformaprogetti.eu/women-in-technology/