



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY

How to identify an effective community
engagement: 4 pillars to bear in mind



Community engagement strategy

Involving vulnerable citizens in energy-sharing schemes, such as renewable energy communities (RECs), should rely on a solid engagement strategy able to inform and support the participants in the decision-making process, ensuring meaningful participation in the energy transition. Here are the **four pillars**, on which an engagement strategy could be based.

Step 1 – Target Groups for Engagement

Identify **priority groups** based on local housing and socio-economic conditions.

- ❖ Vulnerable families
- ❖ Fragile tenants at risk of energy poverty
- ❖ Elderly residents in public housing facing digital, social, and economic barriers

A useful instrument for identifying target groups is an **End User Matrix**

Step 2 - Structuring the Engagement Process

The strategy answers three critical questions:

- ❖ **Who**: identifying the right stakeholders (municipalities, tenant associations, family members)
- ❖ **Why**: clearly communicating the value of participation, including economic, social, and energy benefit
- ❖ **How**: implementing diverse engagement methods, like in-person events, door-to-door outreach, printed materials, and ensure logistical support

Step 3 – Tailored Engagement Approach

Develop a tailored communication plan:

The 4 **pillars** of an **effective engagement strategy** regard a correctly chosen **target group**, a well-structured **engagement process** and an **engagement approach**, as well as rightly selected **means of evaluation**

- ❖ **Segmentation**: understanding the specific vulnerabilities and motivations of these groups.
- ❖ **Personalized Communication**: face-to-face communication, printed materials, telephone-based outreach
- ❖ **Targeted Content**: clear and practical communication, using visual aids and simple messages about how participation benefits participants
- ❖ **Trust Building**: consistent follow-ups and involving trusted intermediaries like social workers and local leaders.

Step 4 - Means of Verification

To assess the effectiveness of the engagement strategies, several methods are suggested:

- ❖ **Quantitative Metrics**: attendance rates, surveys, engagement analytics
- ❖ **Qualitative Assessments**: focus groups, interviews, participant observations
- ❖ **Feedback Mechanisms**: feedback forms, post-event surveys, ongoing communication channels
- ❖ **Behavioral Changes**: monitoring the adoption of clean energy practices
- ❖ **Longitudinal Evaluation**: tracking stakeholder perceptions and behaviors over time through follow-up surveys.

