



C.H.A.N.G.E.R.S.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ADAPTING BEST PRACTICES IN CHANGING HOUSEHOLD ATTITUDES TOWARDS SUSTAINABILITY FOR RURAL SENIORS

A project outcome of the C.H.A.N.G.E.R.S. project.

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About the C.H.A.N.G.E.R.S. Project and Partnership

The overall objective of the C.H.A.N.G.E.R.S. (Exchanging good practices to Change Household Attitudes for a Non-wasteful, Green environment and Energy-consciousness addressing Rural Seniors) project is to exchange best practice examples on adult education through 4 short-term joint staff trainings covering 3 main topics, namely: energy efficiency, renewable energy sources and sustainability in households.

CAM, the lead partner, is a Hungarian company specialised in education and development of professional awareness-raising material on energy related issues, has great experiences in the field of EE, RES, sustainability, climate change, VET and adult education, and in international cooperation.

Projects in Motion Ltd. (PiM) is a Malta-based SME. As a multidisciplinary research organisation, it believes in the power of human and technology-centred approaches. Its aim is to promote RES, EE and the intelligent use or reduction of energy requirements in Europe through partnerships, awareness-raising, innovation and strategic actions.

Eurocrea Merchant is a consulting and training company based in Milan, Italy. Its mission is to improve the competitiveness of the European society, through business development, training and creation of transnational partnerships.

BSC is the Regional Development Agency of Gorenjska in Slovenia, which promotes the development of the Gorenjska region and unites 18 municipalities under its auspices. BSC is a connecting link between the regional and national level, cooperating with municipalities, companies and chambers of crafts and entrepreneurship, non-governmental organizations, ministries, and other state bodies.

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Goal of the Recommendations

The present paper serves as a user guide for the C.H.A.N.G.E.R.S. project's outcome titled "Best practices in changing household attitudes towards sustainability for rural seniors", and explains the ways the adult trainings covered by this project might be adapted and transmitted for rural seniors efficiently.

The C.H.A.N.G.E.R.S. partnership identified the urgent need for training material which is adapted for rural seniors who have limited learning opportunities on certain topics. This is typically due to poorer digital skills amongst older generations, their physical disabilities, as well as the lack of infrastructure and internet access, local training events in rural areas by which stakeholders (adult educators, municipalities or NGOs) could help this vulnerable and growing cohort, while raising awareness and empowering them to participate in lifelong learning.

Therefore, the team of C.H.A.N.G.E.R.S. has trained their trainers by exchanging good examples in the form of short-term joint staff trainings in order to extend their internal knowledge on energy efficiency, renewable energy sources and sustainability. This also provided the opportunity for adapting training materials at organisational level.

Although the C.H.A.N.G.E.R.S. project focuses on the staff development of the participating partners, we are committed to increase the impact of not only our project, but also those which were implemented by our partners by providing a collection of good examples and a helping guide for the interested parties. Topics covered by the trainings and the collection:

- 1) Energy poverty in vulnerable households
- 2) Energy efficiency
- 3) Renewable energy sources
- 4) Sustainable food management
- 5) Sustainable water consumption
- 6) Smart homes and living

The present paper addresses those stakeholders who can reach rural seniors easily due to their profile and/or daily activities, e.g., local and regional municipalities as well as NGOs working with and for seniors, especially in rural areas.

By reaching out to the abovementioned stakeholders directly, we would like to:

- 1) highlight the importance of providing tailored learning opportunities for rural seniors.
- 2) highlight the importance of some urgent topics which can help the seniors fight against climate change and energy poverty.
- 3) encourage the stakeholders to organize trainings for seniors by including our materials in their existing courses or to start new training programmes based on them.
- 4) encourage the stakeholders to integrate our materials into their awareness-raising campaigns and activities.



Tips on the adaptation of the C.H.A.N.G.E.R.S. best practices for rural seniors

1. TRANSLATE AND UPDATE THE MATERIALS

As language barriers are typical among seniors, education materials for seniors are more effective if they are in the national languages. Most final outputs are available on the project websites. (See Collection of Good Practices document)



2. USE LOCAL NEWSPAPERS TO SHARE CONTENT

Based on the translated materials, we recommend to reach out to rural seniors via local printed media which is still popular among senior citizens, especially in the countryside. You can think of a series of short articles on the most relevant topics.



3. CREATE PHYSICAL TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES

As older people have lower digital skills in general compared to younger generations, we recommend organizing local physical events.

Such local trainings would especially be important in the countryside as training centres operate mostly in the bigger cities resulting in a lack of rural training offer. Trainings can also provide opportunities for developing social connections and community-building.

4. PLAN SHORT-TERM PROGRAMMES

It is recommended to plan shorter programmes for seniors. According to studies, adults can keep their attention at events, trainings for about 20-30 minutes. If possible, organize the training in daytime with natural lights.

5. APPLY VISUALS SUITABLE FOR SENIORS

Seniors might have visual impairments which should be considered at the training. Transparent layouts, large font sizes, simple and contrasting colours, less text, more illustrations can all help the better understanding.



6. CHOOSE ADEQUATE VENUE

Seniors might need special attention while preparing for the event. The venue should be in a well-connected and easily reachable location with facilities.



Offer a buffet with food available which give opportunities to seniors to socialize and discuss between them. Choose location with available technical conditions like projector.



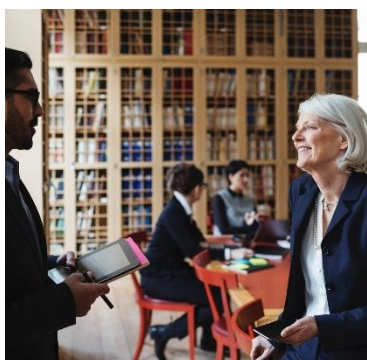
Tips on the adaptation of the C.H.A.N.G.E.R.S. best practices for rural seniors

7. ADVERTISE YOUR EVENTS LOCALLY

Choose the most popular communication channels where rural seniors can be reached: for example, bingo clubs, printed local newspapers or the message board in the community or municipality buildings.



It is also highly recommended to get in touch with local municipalities, NGOs or senior homes who can help disseminate the invitation and even organize the event.



8. USE THE PRESENTED TOOLS AS ADDITIONAL MATERIALS

Our tools are not translated (e.g. food waste game or water footprint calculator), but you can use them for group activity in the event. You can suggest them to share the tools with their family members, too.

9. PLAN INTERACTIVE AND INCLUSIVE EVENTS

In order to help keep seniors' attention, prepare group activities or other type of gamified tasks. Always ensure that the programme you offer is inclusive. For example, some participants might have poorer literacy skills which should also be taken into account.

10. MAKE THE TRAININGS PERSONAL

Asking seniors to share their experiences and opinion will contribute to a higher rate of participation in the activities and a deeper connection to the topics. Peer-to-peer learning is also encouraged.

11. PREPARE PRINTED HANDOUTS FOR THE SENIOR PARTICIPANTS

Printed materials can help the better understanding of the presented topic, the acquisition of the new knowledge and the real-life implementation of the new ideas and best practices.



12. AVOID SCIENTIFIC TERMINOLOGY IN YOUR TRAININGS AND MATERIALS

Using simple language without complex and complicated sentences is encouraged.



13. ASK THE PARTICIPANTS TO EVALUATE YOUR EVENT

At the end of the event, ask the attendees to evaluate the event and its content. Based on their feedbacks, the next events can be more customized for their needs and interest.