



radio
workshop

MINI GUIDE #5

COMMUNITY SOLUTIONS

Zambia, 2016

INTRODUCTION

From food gardens to community-owned electricity production to restoring rivers and wetlands, there are a lot of positive actions that communities can take to respond to climate change and work towards a Just Transition, even with limited resources. Even small things can add up to make a big difference. Just imagine if everybody reduced their use of disposable plastics by half? Or if everyone spent one morning per month cleaning up rubbish in their community? In the small European country of Estonia, activists mobilised 4% of of the entire population to clean up the whole country in [just 5 hours](#), which would have taken their government 3 years at a cost of 22 million Euros! There is one powerful tool for creating solutions that is free to everyone—imagination. Think about your community, and notice what happens if you turn your focus from ‘what is’ ... to ‘what if?’

What if every school had a food and medicinal plant garden? What if the community owned and operated its own solar-powered microgrid, providing everyone with free access to clean energy? What if there was an entrepreneurship hub where young people could get free skills training, mentorship and seed funding? What if people had dignified jobs and could support their families by restoring degraded land and recycling waste in their communities?

What other ideas can you think of that would meet the needs and contribute to the wellbeing of people in your community? (Remember, the imagination has no limits!)

Organising for community solutions requires resourcefulness. What wealth, or sources of potential wealth, already exist in your community, not just in terms of money but also in terms of infrastructure, natural resources, and social networks? What skills, talents, knowledge and interests do people have? Perhaps the local seamstress has a flair for tailoring and upcycling old clothing into cutting edge new styles? Perhaps your neighbour is an excellent

cook who could partner with local farmers to offer the community tasty, nutritious, affordable, locally produced food? Perhaps someone else in your community is a retired engineer who can help design better storm drainage systems to improve flood safety? Young or old, everyone has something to contribute towards a vibrant and resilient community, especially when their individual initiatives are combined with wider community organising efforts and collaborations involving other stakeholders like NGOs, the local government and businesses.

What are some resources in your community that could help bring increased social and environmental benefits? For example, are there ways of mobilising volunteers or raising funds that could be used to employ young people to restore polluted rivers and wetlands? Are there other interventions that would address multiple challenges at once, such as building green housing that provides jobs as well as creates greater climate resilience and better living conditions for people?

CASE STUDY

Transition Towns:

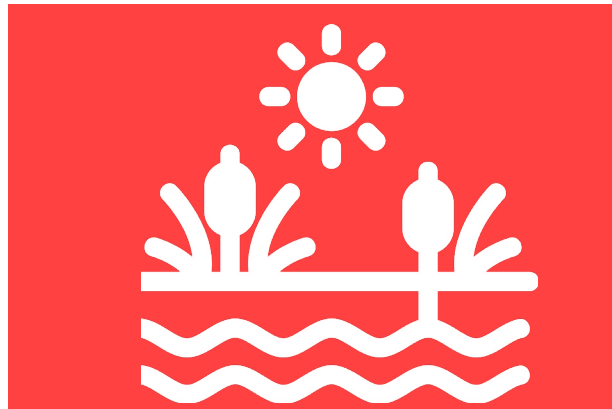
The question ‘what if’ comes from Rob Hopkins, the founder of the “Transition Towns” movement in the UK in 2005. There are Transition Towns in 48 different countries around the world, including one in Greyton, South Africa. These are places where people have agreed to work together to build strong, resilient, low-carbon communities and economies to meet big challenges like climate change, unemployment and food insecurity. Putting their skills and knowledge together, people in these communities are building inclusive local green economies that offer opportunities for everyone, especially youth and women.

By getting organised and making full use of its resources, there is a lot the community can do. In [Greyton](#), South Africa, for example, people collect waste such as plastic bottles which they exchange for food and other household necessities. The waste is then used to create eco-bricks which are used to build new classrooms for the school. (See video: <https://youtu.be/KseuO8YYY0s>). Another initiative helped community members to grow their own food, improving their household food security and linking them to a community market to sell their surplus produce. (See video: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s_gRsh3TIAI).



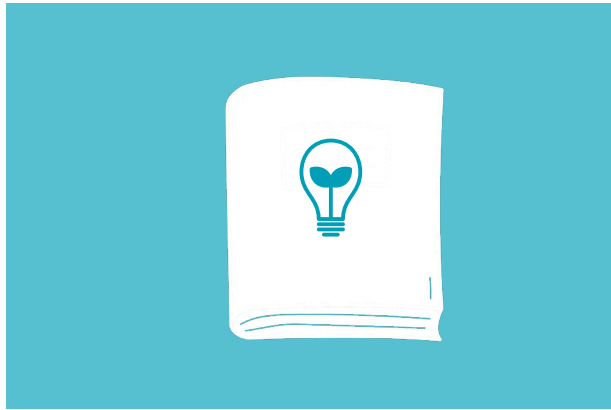
River and wetland restoration for flood protection:

Healthy rivers and wetlands provide important flood protection in cities and natural green spaces for people to enjoy. In eThekweni Municipality, the Sihlanzimvelo Stream Cleaning Programme, now expanded into the Transformative River Management Programme, was introduced to create work opportunities restoring local rivers degraded by pollution and blocked by rubbish and invasive vegetation. The programme employs communities to manage rivers and streams throughout the city, creating job opportunities while also increasing resilience to flooding. The stream cleaning project has employed hundreds of people to maintain some 500 kilometers of rivers and streams, and is currently being scaled up to cover more than 7,000 kilometres of the city's [waterways](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HqUfFpButQA). (See video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HqUfFpButQA>).



Tapping schools for climate change solutions:

Schools offer important climate solutions! Imagine if every child learned “green skills” and about climate change in school? A study found that a combination of women’s empowerment and climate change education for all young people around the world could result in an 85 billion tonne reduction of carbon dioxide by 2050 through the cumulative impacts of behaviour change and decision-making (as opposed to a 47 billion tonne reduction from increasing investment in wind turbines, or a 19 billion tonne reduction from increasing investment in concentrated solar power) (Brookings Institute). Climate change education will soon be introduced into the school curriculum in South Africa. (See video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Qvqd7TSzFrc>).



Community-owned renewable energy:

The Urban Movement Incubator (UMI) addresses energy security and service delivery, in a partnership between community-based social movements and NGOs for the installation and operation of community-led, socially owned renewable energy projects in Emalahleni, south Durban and the informal settlement of Ekhenana in eThekweni. Through the pilot project, informal communities that lacked a connection to the power grid have gained affordable energy access. ([See video: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fyDEPMeOGA](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fyDEPMeOGA)).



A circular waste economy:

Meanwhile, in Ekurhuleni, a partnership between the city, the NGO Oxfam and industry is building an inclusive circular economy through plastic waste recycling. A circular economy promotes maintenance, repair, recycling, upcycling and composting as ways of keeping materials and products in circulation so that they don't become waste. The programme creates employment opportunities and diverts some 8,000 tonnes of plastic waste

from landfills every year. The project supplies the reclaimed materials to product manufacturing companies such as Unilever to reuse in their packaging, and aims to create a waste processing facility that is collectively owned by community waste-pickers. (See video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GN0UUfxSemg>).



Private/community partnerships Wind Farms:

Wind Farms also provide a source of climate-smart community/private investment in communities. A 318-hectare wind farm in the Northern Cape community of Louriesfontein is now under construction. When construction is complete, it will harness wind power for energy generation and provide local jobs. A portion of the profits will be invested in a community trust. (See video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RR7IR8zV1I4>).



RADIO PRODUCTION GUIDE

PREPARING FOR THE SHOW

ANGLES: DIFFERENT WAYS TO TALK COMMUNITY SOLUTIONS

- In what ways have communities organised themselves, historically?
- In what ways have communities organised themselves, looking at cases?
- In what ways is my community already organised?
- In what ways could my community organise itself?



COMMUNITY SOLUTIONS

CHOOSE AN ANGLE

In what ways have
communities
organised themselves
(case studies)?

ANGLES: DIFFERENT WAYS TO TALK ABOUT THE WAYS THAT
COMMUNITIES HAVE ORGANISED THEMSELVES (CASE STUDIES)

- In terms of establishing food gardens
- In terms of establishing community-owned electricity production
- In terms of organising to restore rivers and wetlands
- In terms of individuals and organisations mobilizing within their communities for clean-up efforts, volunteers, to address environmental issues

FORMATS FOR TELLING THE STORY



AUDIO COMMENTARY



AIM:

This is a way to get people's opinions about a topic they care deeply about. You don't just talk to ordinary members of the community – you choose a person who has first-hand experience of the issue you're exploring.



WHO DO YOU TALK TO?

An expert who knows about many community initiatives in South Africa and globally and which you feel would inspire listeners to imagine new possibilities.



QUESTIONS

- In what ways have communities organised themselves in other parts of the country or world? Considering all the challenges faced by the community of eMalahleni in the transition away from coal, what might we have to learn from others?



AUDIO PROFILE



AIM:

To get a first person account of someone's experience, passion and journey. Audio profiles often aim to inspire.



WHO DO YOU TALK TO?

Someone who has been involved in a successful community organising initiative.



QUESTION

- Can you tell us about the community initiative you have been part of? How did it start, how did it grow (what did you achieve), how has the journey been, and what have you learned along the way?



INTERVIEW



AIM:

To source information from someone who has expertise or experience in the topic.



WHO DO YOU TALK TO?

- A community activist
- An NGO staff member who works at building communities, community initiatives, or community projects?



EXAMPLES OF QUESTIONS FOR INTERVIEW:

- How long have you been working with communities?
- What do you see as the major challenges of transitioning away from coal?
- In what way can communities build resilience in facing this transition?
- How easy is it to mobilise a community?
- Where do you start in deciding what is the most important issues to focus on and the community strategy?
- What challenges do you typically face in community solutions work?

***(Please remember to fine-tune the questions once you know who you are interviewing).**



VOX POP



AIM:

To get many opinions on one topic.



WHO DO YOU TALK TO?

A large number of community members



QUESTION

- In what ways have you seen communities organise themselves? (Such as taking on an issue or action together to create a change?)

HOW TO PRESENT YOUR SHOW

SAMPLE SCRIPT

[INTRO:]

Host 1: It's just gone [TIME] and you're just in time for the [NAME OF SHOW] on [RADIO STATION]. My name is [NAME].

Host 2: And my name is [NAME]. On today's show, we will be talking about ways in which communities organise themselves when faced with challenges.

Host 1: Yes! eMalahleni is facing a lot of changes in the coming years, and we need to understand and prepare for them.

Host 2: We want to hear today from community members in what ways they have seen communities organise themselves? How have communities taken action together to create change?

[PLAY VOX POP]

Host 1: Let's talk about community getting organised! From food gardens to [give examples that were mentioned in Vox Pop], there is a lot that communities can do to take positive action, even with limited resources.

Host 2: There is one powerful tool for creating solutions that is

freely available to everyone. That is imagination. Think about your community, and notice what happens if you turn your focus from 'what is' ... to 'what if?'

Host 1: What if every school had a food garden?

Host 2: What if there was an entrepreneurship hub where young people could get free skills training, mentorship and seed funding?

Host 2: What if all children felt safe and secure?

Host 1: Listeners out there, we want to hear from you, what is our imagination telling you? Remember, the imagination has no limits! Send us your ideas on [share WhatsApp, Facebook, etc contact details].

Host 2: We spoke to [name of person that did audio-profile], who has been involved in [name of the community initiative] for [number of years], to tell us more about how this initiative started, grew, and what they learned along the way.

[PLAY AUDIO-PROFILE]

Host 2: [Comments on the audio-profile to provide closure and transition]

Use your produced radio features, your research and the suggested script and questions to write your own script.

Host 1: Organising for community solutions requires resourcefulness!

Host 2: Considering all the challenges faced by the community of eMalahleni in the transition away from coal. We asked [name person that did audio-commentary + short intro to who he/she is] in what ways have communities organised themselves in other parts of the country, world or in the past? Considering all the challenges faced by the community of eMalahleni in the transition away from coal, what might we have to learn from others?

[PLAY AUDIO -COMMENTARY]

Host 2: [Comments on the audio-profile to provide closure and transition]

Host 1: Loving all the energy, passion and ideas in this show! Just want to read some of the messages coming through from our listeners out there. [read some...]

Host 2: Working together is not always easy, though! Where do you start? We asked some of these questions to [name person that did the interview + introduction to who they are].

[PLAY INTERVIEW (if live, you can do it in-studio)]

Host 1: [Comments on the interview to provide closure and transition]

Host 2: Let's hear now from our listeners... [share ways in which they can comment and participate in the show]

[OPEN LINES FOR LISTENERS FEEDBACK]