ENERGY DEMOCRACY

TOOLS FOR SYSTEM CHANGE

Resources, Case Studies and Tools for training and events in the Friends of the Earth Europe network
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ENERGY DEMOCRACY
# Content

## Common Curriculum Energy Democracy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOOLS</strong></td>
<td>07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mapping exercise</td>
<td>08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Building small base groups</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educational game: Energy transition</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CASE STUDIES</strong></td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Action against energy sieves</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Energy democracy convergence</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Storytelling at the Convergence</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Global Days of Action for Climate Justice</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Energy murals</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SESSION PLANS</strong></td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Challenges and Solutions in a community energy project</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spectrum of allies</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>BOOK REVIEW</strong></td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>GLOSSARY</strong></td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Welcome to the Energy Democracy module. You have in your hand or on your screen a tool we hope you can use in your energy campaigning.

Energy Democracy is a frame that we use to talk about control of our energy system. We believe in Friends of the Earth that energy should be under people’s control and not run for the profits of Big Energy companies. We should have democratic control over our energy system. This is better for people who are involved in local energy projects, better for those who are energy poor and better for the climate.

When we start thinking about issues of Climate change and Global Justice these concepts can feel far away and difficult to act on. Energy, on the other hand, is part of our daily lives. We all use electricity in some way. Where does that energy come from? Is it from renewables, from climate polluting coal? Who pays for that energy? Who makes money from selling that energy? Answering these questions can help us in conversations that we want to have about equality and resources.

A large amount of the material is drawn from the first European Energy Democracy Convergence, organised in Mas Franch, close to Girona (Spain) in September 2017. More details on the event can be found in the case studies section, as well as in the podcasts and videos listed in the resources section. This material has been produced as part of Friends of the Earth Europe’s School of Sustainability project. More information on this project, and many more tools, case studies and resources on a wide range of topics can be found online at: https://vitual.foei.org/trainings

We hope that the activities and information gives you inspiration to get active or strengthen your campaign. We encourage you to try the games and methods in this toolkit even if you are not totally sure who they will work out. You might need to modify them for your local context or develop them further to suit your facilitation styles and needs. Give it a try, get feedback and give it another try!
**Energy Democracy**

Energy democracy includes a very broad range of projects and approaches that give citizens and communities the ability to make democratic decisions over their energy system. It includes groups of citizens getting together to put solar panels on the roof of their school. It includes remunicipalisation struggles to take back ownership of the local energy grids. It includes cooperatives working together simply to buy energy and supply it to customers. These projects often take different forms in different parts of Europe. In Eastern Europe, there are fewer projects where people and communities own energy production and supply infrastructure, but Energy Democracy projects exist in the form of building very low energy-use Straw Bale houses and whole apartment blocks buying insulation together to reduce their energy use.

At the heart of the term is the concept of bottom up decision making, that people have control over the decisions about energy that affect them. It implies people and communities taking an active role in the energy system, through directly contributing to energy production or energy savings, through owning shares in an energy cooperative, or through other democratic decision-making processes. Energy Democracy is generally also thought of as a philosophy that is contrary to the current European energy model which is controlled by large profit-orientated Energy Monopolies. Within this dominant model, people are seen only as individual customers and consumers.

Another key aspect of Energy Democracy is seeing Energy as a Right. This is in opposition to the current system that views energy as a commodity which is extracted and produced for profit. Fair and just access to energy must go hand in hand with energy sobriety, reducing the over-use of energy. A world where we have achieved Energy Democracy is one where everyone has the right to the energy that they need, but does not use more than they need.

**Why do we work on Energy Democracy?**

Friends of the Earth is fighting for a sustainable and fair energy system. We believe that to get there we must dismantle the corporate power of the current Energy Giants. To have a chance to win against such strong actors we think that we are going to need a powerful people’s movement. We think that we need to share all the skills and resources that we have across Europe to build up this power. A call for energy democracy that is about control and justice has the potential to resonate enough to build such a strong movement.
Defeating the corporate powers that currently control our energy system is not going to be easy but it is certainly achievable. Many of the corporates are already struggling. However the challenge of building the energy system we want will require a lot of choices over how energy is produced, distributed and consumed. Every energy source has an environmental and societal cost. The costs of fossil fuel energy on climate and democracy are obviously so high that we resist all fossil fuels. But all renewable energy also has a cost: windfarms can damage nature and landscapes, solar panels rely on heavy metals being mined to be produced, even small-scale hydro projects have an impact on the habitats where they are constructed. With a demand for a right to energy on the one hand, and a desire for a sustainable energy system on the other, there is a delicate balance to be found.

Many tricky questions arise, such as: How much energy is enough? Does everyone have the need and right to the same amount of energy or can some people make do with less? Where should the energy be produced? How many landscapes will be altered with wind turbines? What impacts will we as communities accept to produce the energy we need? What cuts to our energy use will we make to avoid mining materials to produce energy? Difficult decisions need to be made, and this raises the question of who should make those decisions. Energy Democracy rests on the idea that these decisions will be best made by those who will be affected by them. With strong values of justice and equity, paired with the decisions being taken by the people that they will affect, we will come closest to a fair and just energy system.

*Molly Walsh, Friends of the Earth Europe*
TOOLS
Mapping exercise

TIME NEEDED: 20-30 minutes

PREPARATION NEEDED:
✓ A large printed map of the regions participants come from, it is recommended to print it in a print shop as it needs to be big!
✓ Black, blue and green sticky dots

Why use this tool
The mapping exercise is a good tool at the beginning of a workshop, to get to know where participants are from and what they are working on. It creates more awareness of what each participant is facing as opportunities and challenges in their work. This can help the group to see what similarities and specificities there are. It can also be used by facilitators to identify needs for the rest of the workshop/event.

Description
✓ Present the map of the region. Make sure that all cities/regions/countries of where the participants come from are on the map.
Give each participant black, blue and green dots that represent energy democracy or other initiatives they are involved in. Explain that the Green dot is for a project that is going well; the Blue dot is for a project that has some challenges, and the Black for a project that is blocked. Give them 5 minutes to reflect.

Invite each participant to come in turns to put their dots on the map and explain a little bit on each dot. It is important that each participant is able to come and present their own projects/struggles. If a debate arises, or if some questions are raised, write them down on a flipchart to be addressed at a later stage.

At the end of the exercise, you will have a visual representation of where people are from and/or where they are working. The group should get a better feeling of what are the challenges and opportunities for each one.

Facilitator considerations

Make sure the objective of the exercise is clear for everybody at the beginning. Are you using this tool for everybody to get to know more about each other’s contexts? Are you using it to identify common challenges that will be looked at afterwards? Are you using this to pair people up (for example, bring people who have succeeded in overcoming some challenges in setting up an energy cooperative with people who are starting one)? This is only a 30-minute exercise, so be sure not to set to high expectations.

For some people, it is sometimes difficult to identify what is going well. Try to encourage them to find something through questions if you can.

This exercise can be useful as well to identify needs that are not addressed yet in the agenda of what follows during the workshop or activity. If you are using an emergent design (design of workshop adapting itself to the needs of the group), make sure you can go back to the questions that have been raised. You can also encourage people to talk to each other if this activity identifies that they share a similar kind of challenge.

Additional elements or variations

Instead of using coloured dots, you could create a weather map, with “sunshine” to represent projects going well, “rain” for projects that are blocked, and “wind” to represent projects with challenges.

If you have more time, you can also make the map more complex by asking people to add other elements such as supportive local/national authorities, movements that are being engaged in the projects etc.

Written by Laure Kervyn, Friends of the Earth Europe
TIME NEEDED:
40 - 60 minutes

PREPARATION NEEDED:
A set of questions/tasks that you feel would fit the group need to be prepared in advance.

Why use this tool?
At a multi-day event with a diverse group of participants (different backgrounds, experiences, people who do not know each other, etc) it is often useful to form small groups which participants can gather once in a while to discuss matters and check in. The tool is also a good icebreaker at the start of an event with multiple languages, where everyone can express themselves and feel together without sharing a common tongue.

Description
✓ Gather all participants in a space where there is room to move around and ensure you have interpretation if needed for giving instructions. Ask participants to stand in a circle and look around to notice all the people that are present and get a sense of the group. You will then ask participants to carry out five tasks, one by one.
✓ As they are carrying out the tasks, you ask participants to find people who seem to be doing the same thing. The first four tasks have no purpose other than making participants mingle and interact without needing to use words.

✓ For each task, give participants appropriate time to find groups/individuals doing the same and take note of individuals who might not have found people to share with and help them joining a group.

✓ Examples of tasks: 1) imitate your favourite animal, 2) find people with similar colored shoes, 3) find people with same way of getting here (mimicking your way of transportation), 4) mimic your favourite energy source.

This tool was used at the Energy Democracy Convergence in Spain in September 2017. This was an event with multiple languages spoken and every participant had a name tag with colored dots on, representing the language(s) they speak. Here, the fifth task was “Find 3 other people with matching language dots”, and this was when the base groups were created.

✓ When all participants are in groups of ~4, you ask the participants to share how they are feeling and what their expectations are for the event, with the other members of the group. Take 20-30 minutes for this and highlight that it’s important that everyone gets a chance to speak. At the end, you bring everyone back together and ask a few people to share some thoughts from their newly formed base groups in plenary.

✓ Use the base groups throughout the meeting, making them part of the support structures and/or safer spaces during the event. Set specific times for base group check ins. Allow people time and space to discuss things which are important to them, check in with each other, talk about how they feel the event is going, ask for specific feedback or input on questions or decisions that need to be made, and so on.

**Facilitator considerations**

Make sure that the first four question do not require that people speak to each other, in case they don’t share a common language. Be prepared for participants being shy in the beginning. You might for instance have to initiate the animal imitation by stepping into the circle making loud noises and somewhat exaggerated gestures to show participants that it’s completely ok to really act it out. With the four tasks you ensure that participants are mixed up, thus the fifth task (where groups are created) will be dependent on who are close to one another at this stage and not on who knows each other beforehand.
If you have a good knowledge of the participants, you might also consider pre-defining the groups in advance to ensure there is a good mix of backgrounds in each group. This can be particularly useful if the groups will also be used to get inputs that will be fed back to plenary during the meeting. In case you do so, this tool is more a way of initiating contact and dialogue between diverse participants with diverse languages.

Written by Thor Markussen, Friends of the Earth Europe
**TIME NEEDED:**

**PREPARATION NEEDED:**
The game needs a horizontal surface to place the map and other materials, preferably a table.

Material needed:
- World Map: Functioning as the board of the game. It is important to have a bigger size (a metre wide for instance) and to be waterproof and easy to clean.
- Chips: Different type of chip or counter symbolizes a certain type of power plant. For the Days of Action, Amigos de la Tierra used caps of different plastic bottles (recycled material). We recommend that each type of power plant should be the same colour, for example renewable ones are white. In the 1st attachment there is a possible set up based on the map of world energy production.
- Instructions: write or print the instructions in the 2nd attachment on separate pieces of paper or small pieces of cardboard. These can be picked randomly throughout the game, so participants will not see the content before. You can put all of them in a small bag or jar.
- Questions: Print or write the questions onto small pieces of paper. In the 3rd attachment there is a list of questions, which can be easily adapted according to the age or knowledge of the participants.
- Prize: The winner can receive a small prize; it is up to the organiser. A pin, badge or flag related to the topic is the best.
- Containers: for the instructions and chips or counters (separately non-renewable and renewable) and another for the chips that have been removed from the map.

**Why use this tool**
This game on energy transition is ideal to play on a market or a fair, where people come and go continuously and are not able to stay for a longer period of time. It is a game for people of all generations in which participants learn and participate in cooperation.
It can be used to reflect on the differences of production and energy consumption worldwide, raise awareness on the impacts of the European consumption and to promote the involvement of society in energy transition. The main topic is energy transition from dirty energy to renewable energy on a global level.

It also addresses issues of:

- **Renewable energy**: raising awareness and inviting people to get involved in renewable energy
- **Dirty energy and draining our resources**: debating the issue of energy sources based on non-renewable resources and their consequences on the environment and society
- **Energy consumption**: reflecting on the high energy consumption of the most economically developed countries and promoting energy savings
- **Climate change**: drawing the link between non-renewable energy production and the production of greenhouse gases causing climate change. Showing the necessity of change in the energy system and of reducing consumption
- **Geopolitics**: To know the location of the world's largest producers of each type of energy, both renewable and non-renewable and how that impacts global politics.

**Description**

**Participants**
This game can be played by children and/or adults. Mixing generations can be very positive for the game.
Start by establishing an order of participation – which can be changed later in the game if needed. The participants can enter or leave the game at any time, depending on their feelings, ideas or knowledge.

**Introduction to the game**
The game consists of the symbolic withdrawal of non-renewable energy production plants and the installation of new renewable power plants. To do this, these plants are represented by chips or counters that will be strategically placed on the world map in the countries with the highest production according to the type of energy.
It is important to emphasise that this is a cooperative game and not a competition; the main goal is to replace all the old power plants with the new
ones. Because of that, it is not necessary for participants to stay throughout the whole game, although the more they stay, the more they learn and achieve.

**Facilitating the game**

This game needs at least one facilitator who is not playing the game but facilitating:

- Reading out loud the questions and evaluating the responses
- Giving instructions throughout the game
- Supervising the game and the instructions
- Supervising each turn of the game

**Development of the game**

1. Prepare the board game on a table or a flat surface. The participants can help in this as well. It is important to prepare the chips of power plants and place the non-renewable ones on the map before starting the game. You can find recommendations on how to set them in this PDF: [http://virtual.foei.org/trainings/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2018/06/Energy-transition-game.pdf](http://virtual.foei.org/trainings/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2018/06/Energy-transition-game.pdf)

2. Once the order of participants (or groups) is set, they answer the questions given in the PDF one by one (or group by group). Depending on the level of knowledge the facilitator can help or assist them while they have to answer a question, and of course other participants can help as well. Using Internet is also possible, if needed. Again, this is a cooperative game, not a competitive one!

3. If the answer is incorrect, the next participant can respond as well and place a new chip if the answer is correct.

4. If the answer is correct, they can pick an instruction from the bag or jar. The instructions can follow one of these layouts:

   - **We close down a power plant of______________ (dirty energy) in __________ (country).** In this case we locate and withdraw the chip from the map. This is a common achievement. We can talk about the importance of reducing these plants while withdrawing them.

   - **We open a new production of______________ (clean energy) in __________ (country).** In this case, the participant will place a new chip on the map of the given country.

We can also give a prize to the participant for a correct answer. It does not have to be big, something symbolic like a pin or badge is perfect.
The main goal of the game is to withdraw all dirty energy plants and replace them by new, renewable and clean energy plants in the same country.

**Additional elements or variations**

It is possible to put emphasis on different topics (the effects on the environment of both dirty and clean energy plants, saving energy, distribution of production and energy consumption, use of natural resources with its ecological and socioeconomic consequences) according to what topic is being emphasised. It is useful to have a look at what is most relevant depending on the context and draft the questions accordingly.

**Facilitator considerations**

This game is about cooperation. Feel free to remind the players of this if needed. Make sure you include people who would be join the game once it has already started.

It is best that the facilitator is aware of the content, has played the game before and has good knowledge of this topic. Bringing extra information could be an option as well: participants could try to find the answer from the leaflets or other flyers they can find around them. Depending on the participants age and background, make sure the information is accessible for everyone.

*Game developed by Sofía Alfaya Gómez, Amigos de la Tierra. Translation by Réka Patócs (Amigos de la Tierra) and Laure Kervyn (Friends of the Earth Europe)*
CASE STUDIES
Action against energy sieves
Friends of the Earth France

Context
✓ In France, between 4 and 5 million households spend more than 10% of their budget on energy and find it difficult to pay their energy bills. In cases of particularly small apartments in private rental housing which are very poorly insulated and leaking energy like a sieve, heating costs can account for more than 70% of the energy bill.
✓ The public authorities have recognised the challenge ahead and their objective is to reach 500,000 renovations per year by 2017 (380,000 private rental homes and 120,000 social housing units) with specific measures regarding low-income households.
✓ A number of measures and schemes have been implemented but rather than creating a one-stop shop, the support system has tended to become ever more complex, involving a multitude of different actors and methods.
✓ Ultimately, the opacity of the various support systems and the feeling of lacking power to persuade landlords to undertake renovation discourages tenants living in fuel poverty from taking any steps to improve their situation.

Who was involved
In the first stage of this project, we trained 15 organisers from various cities in France. In a second stage, we will support 5 of them to go on to work with 5 residents’ groups (2 in Grenoble, 2 in Montpellier and 1 in Aubervilliers).

Using popular education methodologies
In addition to the support of individual households, work mostly carried out by our allies, we provided support specifically to residents’ groups. The aim of this support is to empower residents, to strengthen their ability to take action collectively by giving them a better understanding of their rights, of the resources available (third-party support, subsidies...), and of how to use those rights and resources to secure the thermal renovation of their housing.
Our proposed methodology is at the crossroads of different fields of expertise and experience. It is based on two guiding principles: the relational approach and organisational strengthening.
Inspired by the tradition of “community organising” developed in the US by Saul Alinsky, the idea is to fight against the feeling of being helpless to take action, to

19
empower residents by building their self-confidence and their ability to organise themselves in order to attain a specific goal. During the 6-days-training, we have mobilised many popular education tools like theatre, creativity workshops or door-to-door exercises to identify problems faced by the inhabitants.

**Connecting local to global**
The fight against fuel poverty is a major social issue; access to heat is essential to maintaining decent living standards. It is also an environmental issue because in order to reach the objectives for reducing greenhouse gases, France needs to vastly accelerate its housing renovations.

**What happened**
The training was organised between February and May 2017. The next stage, is the support of the 5 residents’ groups that will start from June 2017 to May 2018 (with a first assessment) and then will be adapted to needs.

**What we’ve learnt**
At this stage of this project, it’s hard to share lessons learnt but the use of popular education methodologies during the training and the share of experiences between participants from very different background, is clearly an added value.

*Written by Sylvain Angerand, Amis de la Terre France / Friends of the Earth France*
Summary and Context

To build a stronger movement engaging in and fighting for energy democracy, we need to bring people together to share stories, victories, struggles and ways forward. These people might be coming from very different contexts, and popular education techniques can help in bringing the different actors together in a way that ensures a good process and facilitation in order to get engaging, inclusive and concrete outputs.

FoEE has been engaged in building capacity for community owned renewable energy solutions for several years and have also been collaborating with REScoop.eu, particularly on the Brussels level. This Energy Democracy convergence in Spain was the chance to take the collaboration to the next level, and connect with groups to make community owned renewable energy systems happen.
Who was involved
FoEE and REScoop.eu were leading on organising the convergence together with their member groups in Spain, Amigos de la Tierra and Som Energia, respectively. The convergence brought together 80+ people from all over Europe, many being engaged with national FoE groups or REScoops, others coming from other parts of active energy democracy circles and others again coming from broader civil society with an aim to get engaged in energy democracy issues.

Using popular education methodologies
The Energy Democracy convergence is part of a strategy to support a powerful movement on Energy ownership. FoEE and REScoop.eu work together on advocacy for the right conditions for people’s ownership of energy. However, we know that dismantling the fossil fuel energy system also needs a powerful movement behind it. So this convergence was part of a wider strategy to build power in a movement for people’s ownership of the energy system. Popular education methodologies were used in several of the workshops at the 4-day convergence and were a central part of how the entire convergence was facilitated. We created base groups (see tool above), had storytelling evenings (see case study below), made open spaces for participant led workshops, experimented with consensus decision making through base groups and had creative banner and props making time before a joint action. Furthermore, we adapted the agenda to emerging issues day-by-day, based on input from plenaries, the principle of listening ears and overall sense of direction from the facilitation team.

Linking to system change and local/global issues
Striving for a change of the system is at the heart of the fight for energy democracy. Here we are talking about changing the energy system. It is essential to dismantle corporate power, to break the monopolisation of energy supply and bring the decision making power back in the hands of the people. Furthermore, the fight for energy democracy is directly connected to the resistance against false and dirty energy solutions. It is in essence a way to think globally by acting locally, to understand one’s positive influence on the global systemic crises by creating local community cooperatives which counter and take power from the multinationals.
What happened

Overview

✓ March-May: Planning, logistics, programme overview etc
✓ June-August: Opening registration, further planning
✓ August: Inviting participants, finalising programme
✓ September: Final logistical planning and convergence

Planning, before convergence

The core organising group had numerous joint calls before the convergence. The first calls were in early spring 2017 to agree on aims, location and practicalities, how and where to spread the invitation for the convergence and an overall structure of the programme for the meeting. A task list with names of the responsible persons and deadlines for when the different tasks were to be done was created and we had bi-weekly calls in the group. The two national groups in Spain were in charge of the logistics while FoEE and REScoop.eu were focusing more on the overall aspects of who to invite and drafting the programme etc. The first open invitation was sent out in early summer 2017 with links to a registration platform in English, French and Spanish. As the amount of space at the venue was limited, we had to make a selection of who to invite based on responses to a questionnaire that was part of the initial sign-up sheet. Three specific questions were asked together with more open questions:

✓ Are you currently involved in a community energy project? If yes, briefly explain.
✓ Are you connected to a specific organisation that works on energy democracy? If yes, which one?
✓ Very briefly, what is your main area of work and/or interest?

When the selection had been made, we formally invited participants to the convergence and asked them to confirm their participation and book travel. We also encouraged participants to give inputs to the agenda and suggest specific topics that they would like to see represented at the convergence. A Slack team was set up prior to the convergence and all participants were encouraged to say hello and follow Slack to get the latest news before the convergence. Participants were highly encouraged to arrive before the start of the meeting, so that we all felt we were part of the same group. Most participants did this and it has a hugely beneficial impact on the atmosphere and sense of connection that was developed.
At the convergence
The core organising group arrived at the venue one day before the start of the convergence to set up the spaces and have time to discuss final practicalities and programme issues. The convergence consisted of two full days and two half days for the participants. The general structure of the programme was a plenary in the morning, specific content workshops during the day and gatherings in the evening. The structure can be seen in the table below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Morning</th>
<th>Afternoon</th>
<th>Evening</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Day 1</td>
<td>Arrival</td>
<td>Arrival</td>
<td>Informal sharing</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>Getting to know each other, group building</td>
<td>Video projection</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Opening plenary</td>
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<td>Day 2</td>
<td>Plenary</td>
<td>Workshops exploring current challenges</td>
<td>Short plenary, reflections on the day</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Workshops, getting more</td>
<td>Workshops exploring challenges, practical</td>
<td>Storytelling</td>
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<td>specific</td>
<td>first steps forward</td>
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<td>Day 3</td>
<td>Plenary</td>
<td>Joint action</td>
<td>Short plenary, reflections on the day</td>
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<td>Workshops, getting more</td>
<td>Open space workshops</td>
<td>Party</td>
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<td>specific</td>
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<td>Day 4</td>
<td>Workshops focusing on next</td>
<td>Departure</td>
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<td></td>
<td>steps</td>
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<td>Closing plenary</td>
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As mentioned, the agenda was adapted to emerging issues day by day. The core organising group checked in when possible during the day and met each morning for an hour to go through the agenda for the day, checking up on emerging issues and make sure that everyone was feeling good. We intentionally dedicated a lot of time on the first day for participants to get to
know each other, rather than diving directly into very technical or content-specific matters. Due to heavy rain, and a somewhat packed programme we decided to check in with the participants on day two to see how we best could carry out the joint action that was planned for day three. This led to a change of plans compared to what was originally organised – instead of going to Girona, we decided to do a photo and action at the venue and in this way leave more time for open spaces and participant led sharing sessions. Day four was short and mainly focused on what we could take on from the convergence.

**Staying in touch, after convergence**
After the end of the convergence we as organisers mainly focused on encouraging participants to stay in touch and to share outcomes and visuals from the convergence with the greater public. Several videos were made showing the general ambiance of the venue as well as presenting voices from the convergence. All participants were invited to an already existing email list on energy democracy and several sub-channels were created on Slack to allow participants to continue the conversations.

**What we’ve learned**

✔️ Listen to the Real World Radio podcast, where Lavinia, Alexa, Dirk and Angel talk about energy efficiency, cooperatives, mobility, remunicipalisation and much more: [https://soundcloud.com/foeeurope/episode-12-energy-democracy-now-building-a-movement-to-create-solutions](https://soundcloud.com/foeeurope/episode-12-energy-democracy-now-building-a-movement-to-create-solutions)

✔️ And check out this video from the convergence: [https://youtu.be/gUaK24ZV0gc](https://youtu.be/gUaK24ZV0gc)

The general outcomes of the meeting are difficult to put into concrete words, as it is very much about strengthening and growing a movement. Many participants seemed very happy about having had the opportunity to attend and meet likeminded people from different sectors of work and many different parts of Europe. Being able to bring these people together is an achievement in itself. The convergence did not focus on setting up new specific partnerships, but it is the hope that participants will engage with others that they met at the convergence. This is just a first step towards our joint efforts to strengthen the movement for energy democracy and should thus not be seen as a one-off event, but rather as a first event in a series of many.

We could have left more space or had more specific sessions for setting up practical partnerships/relationships between participants in order for the movement to grow. This should therefore be an aim for the next convergence.
Having a **core organising team** was very effective. This team was built up over the weeks and months before the Convergence and had a strong team feeling of support and flexibility. We always did a “meteo” check in at the beginning and end of the meeting. This was a space for everyone to express their feelings. As trust grew in the team people were more and more honest and this led to a really good understanding of where everyone else in our team was.

**Following up:** It has been a challenge to follow up on the convergence and keep the momentum going even though we had several discussions on how to do this before the convergence. Most of the workshops and topics of the convergence were focused on sharing skills and knowledge and not on finding practical ways of working together. Thus, it might not be surprising that the momentum drops after the convergence. Based on the feedback we have received, it seems like the participants had a stronger sense of connectedness to a bigger European movement after having been at the convergence, and this by itself is very important. This was a main aim, but we could have communicated this more clearly before the convergence.

**Inviting participants:** We were late with sending out invitations and advertising the event which meant that some people who would’ve really liked to join were unable to. Furthermore, we could have been clearer on which kinds of people we were hoping to join the convergence, as we later in the invitation process heard from several people that they thought the convergence was not for them.

**Facilitation:** The design of the programme (using popular education methods, inclusiveness, listening and adapting to the inputs from participants etc.) and the facilitation methods used seemed to have a big effect on several participants, based on the feedback. It is therefore also not only an aim to have clear outcomes but equally important to present different processes to achieve such outcomes in order to contribute to system change on an internal as well as an external level.

*Written by Thor Markussen, Friends of the Earth Europe*
Storytelling at the Energy Democracy Convergence in Spain

Context
In September 2017, the first European Energy Democracy Convergence was organised (see above). For four days, about 80 people from 20 different countries gathered to discuss the concept of energy democracy, as well as what projects exist in their cities/ countries/ regions and what challenges they are facing. The agenda of the four-day meeting was pretty packed. At first, sessions had been planned for the evening, but organisers quickly realised that the energy level was low at the end of the day, and that people also wanted to be able to chat informally. The sessions were re-organised to use story-telling as a form of bringing more content in a lighter way. The documentary and debate session that was planned for the first evening was replaced by a ‘TV-show’ debate.

Who was involved
A facilitator from the core organising team and participants to the Convergence, who were approached before the session started.

What happened/Using popular education methodologies
A stage was set up, with a background image, two chairs (one for the journalist and one for the interviewee) and two microphones (a fake one, and a real one,
for the interpretation to be possible). The facilitator/journalist was the only one to be constantly on the stage. The other participants were all sitting in front of the stage, as an audience would be at a TV show. The facilitator would call for one of the participant he had talked to before the session to join the stage. That person would then be briefly presented and then the interview would start. Each of the four participants was presenting their own way of taking part in the struggle for energy democracy. One talked about the documentary she made on the energy oligopoly system in Spain, one talked about her experience about joining Ende Gelände (a mass civil disobedience action against coal) and the climate camp in Rhineland, another one talked about the story of the energy cooperative he works with, and a last one talked about different energy democracy projects happening in Croatia.

Once all the participants had been on the stage, the facilitator closed the programme as a TV presenter would do.

**Linking to system change and local/global**

The four participants that were asked to share their story were bringing local examples from different regions of Europe. Through each of them, it was also possible to see the variety of actions taken to change the system; from denouncing it, to sharing a story of a successful project that is proposed as alternative to the current system.

In this case, the facilitator/journalist did not ask if the audience had questions, but it could have been another way of bringing voices from other regions to the stories, as well as bringing new elements to the questions raised.

**What we’ve learned**

The facilitator needs to take different elements into account while asking some participants if they could be interviewed. Finding a good regional/thematic/gender balance is important. The facilitator also needs to talk with each interviewee beforehand to be able to draft some questions in advance. During the TV show, the facilitator needs to be listening carefully to what the interviewee is saying, to be able to ask questions in return. But the facilitator is also responsible for keeping an eye on the mood of the ‘audience’: if people are getting tired, or bored, it might be time for another question, or take a question from the audience itself, etc. It is important that the facilitator uses an informal tone, making jokes every now and then and making sure that what is explained does not become too technical.

In this case, no further debate was proposed because of the low energy level, and the impressive nature of the stories, but the themes that were presented
that night created informal discussions in the following days. It felt that the TV show session had been a good way to introduce some ideas, without trying to get any output from the session itself.

This tool uses some of the elements of the “conceptual dialogue” tool described here: http://virtual.foei.org/trainings/tools/conceptual-dialogue/

Written by Laure Kervyn. Friends of the Earth Europe
Global Days of Action for Climate Justice

Friends of the Earth International organised Days of Action on Climate Justice in October 2017. Friends of the Earth groups from around the world took part, using a wide variety of different activities, and working on many different climate and energy struggles at local, national, regional and global level.

Context and problem to be addressed
The days of action focused on being more powerful through acting together, demonstrating our power, and using it to win fights on the ground. For several years, FoEI has taken part in the Reclaim Power activities and this year (2017) FoEI wanted to have specific “global days of action for climate justice”. By acting together, the days of action aimed to support and boost national campaigning objectives, help in building national profiles, contribute to the fight against dirty energy/for community power, encourage groups to take action, and make FoE groups all feel part of a global federation acting on climate change. This is the kind of action that can be done by kind of network that wants to create a feeling of connectedness across a geographical space. It can be a lose network of groups sharing a topic...anti coal work or for an organisation like Friends of the Earth International.

Who was involved
The days of action were coordinated at a global level by FoE International. At European level, a working group was formed that was led by FoEE and involved...
participants from FoE groups in Spain, England, Wales & Northern Ireland, Scotland and Finland. A rather large number of FoE groups both in Europe and the rest of the world were taking part in the action days themselves.

**Which strategies/tactics/activities were used**
The specific ways that activities were carried out were decided by the individual groups. Young FoEE created an action guide: [http://virtual.foei.org/trainings/tools/days-of-action-for-global-justice-toolkit-young-foe-europe/](http://virtual.foei.org/trainings/tools/days-of-action-for-global-justice-toolkit-young-foe-europe/) which was shared with groups together with a short explanation related to the Fossil Free Europe campaign. It is important to set a frame for the action days but to leave plenty of flexibility for different local actions. There is power in diversity.

**Using popular education methodologies**
This is an outreach activity and thus groups decided themselves in which way they were engaging with the public. Some were doing simple social media activities while others were doing higher engagement activities, e.g. through popular education methodologies. As an example, FoE Spain engaged many of their local groups in drawing murals in the public space (see separate case study). This was an informal way of engaging the public, meeting them in their own spaces rather than having them come to our spaces.

**Linking to system change and local/global**
The aim of action days like these is to take the space, to show people power even at a time when there might not be a particular political hook. It is furthermore a concrete way of trying to link the local to the global, by bringing all the different local/national activities together to show a global movement acting for system change and climate justice.

**What happened/Timeline/results**
European FoE groups decided during in a joint meeting in January 2017 to take part in the initiative, and to try and use the moment to focus on the Fossil Free Europe campaign. All European groups were invited to join a working group which would focus on decentralised activities around the days of action and also around the COP. FoEI had already scoped the interest of groups in the early part of the year and at FoEE level we followed this up with a second questionnaire roughly two months before the action days. Here we asked groups what their
plans were (if they were considering taking part) and also gave specific action ideas aimed at those groups who did not have concrete plans yet. In the immediate run-up to the action days we tried to follow up particularly with those groups who had indicated they wanted to join but who did not yet have specific ideas. The action guide (thanks to YFoEE) was also sent around roughly a month before the days. We tried to suggest actions on a scale from big time investment to small time investment also taking into account the different national contexts (e.g. some countries are not able to do street actions so a “big time investment action” needs to be something else). Groups were encouraged to share outcomes, pictures and materials with the wider network during and after the days of action and the input we got was put into a special edition of our Network News as well as a Flickr album, and a summary on the FoEI website: https://www.foei.org/news/people-power-at-its-best-friends-of-the-earth-demand-climate-justice

Lessons learnt
Feedback from groups after the event was quite diverse in relation to which material was most useful, for different groups. The promo film seems to have been useful, while banners/flags, case studies and media material including press releases were essential for some while not necessary for others. Some were missing a good action guide and a joint specific symbolic action theme. Most are very positive about a follow-up (photo) blog. Groups generally seem to feel that the action days were good for supporting their national work, feeling part of something bigger and for encouraging them to do activities they otherwise wouldn't have done.

Expectations: Don't be overly positive in what you write to people about expectations and how great this thing is- as this can disempower people who are not finding it easy to mobilise. Furthermore, try to make clear what kind of scale we're talking about so as to not blow expectations out of proportions. While on one hand it can be engaging and inspiring for groups to see what others are doing, it can also be very demoralising for some – “why can they do so much when we can't do anything” or “oops, it looks like you have to do a lot to take part, we can't do that and thus won't join”. Thus, encouragement is good but it needs to be with a proper balance and understanding of the diversity of the groups/actors you're reaching out to.
Other considerations and recommendations

✓ It doesn't always fit into groups campaigning, which means that groups can't commit fully, or they drop out sometimes when it doesn't fit politically at the moment of the action day.
✓ Be open to groups having alliances with others as well, which may change the messaging or focus of the activities.
✓ Consider the possibility of a joint, not too specific, message that fits for everyone.
✓ Be mindful that possibilities of taking action might be quite different from one country to the other or from one local group to another.
✓ Choose one weekend or one week, not a period of 4 weeks to create a real sense of taking action together.
✓ Flexibility is important for our groups, but it can make the message more diffuse, and reduce visibility.
✓ Make it visible. If you don't plan the communication about it beforehand, it is only half of a success.
✓ Claim joint and national successes, even if they seem small.
✓ Be clear about your role and make that clear to everyone. Groups have their own experiences and often have so little time for 'beyond their own group work', only able to read half of our emails.
✓ Be aware of the language used, often a slogan in English might not translate well into another language or culture.
✓ Be realistic about time investment – keeping an overview of a host of activities on European level takes more time than expected.
✓ Use a questionnaire as a way for groups to register, make the questionnaire open so that those who do not consider taking part can also fill it in.
✓ If time allows, have one-to-one calls with the groups, allies and identify their needs, and the possible joint work and resources they can put in.
✓ Even if you plan your action days from quite early on, groups might still not be able to plan before last minute. However, the earlier you can set a date, the more likely it is that some groups will be able to put it into a bigger context.
✓ The action days are part of our movement building strategy. Movement building needs time and the days of action can contribute to this, but it cannot be the only tactic.

Written by Thor Markussen, FoE Europe
Energy murals
Day of Action in Spain

Context
Friends of the Earth International called the member groups of the federation to all take action on the Global Days of Action. The European network decided to focus mostly on the struggle to make Europe fossil free. Amigos de la Tierra (FoE Spain) created a frame for the local groups to be able to take part to the Days of Action.

Who was involved
The local groups of Andalucía, Ibiza, La Rioja, Mallorca, Madrid, Galicia and Aragón organised to paint murals for a day. School of Sustainability staff, campaigners, volunteers and artists were all part of making this day a colourful success.
Using popular education methodologies

In total, seven local groups in eight cities spent a day painting a mural under the theme “Libera tu energía” (Free Your Energy). And while people were painting, others could also play a game that had been created for the occasion (see tool above), listen to music or engage in other festive activities. All the different activities made it possible for people of different ages, with different knowledge and skills to take part, learn more about energy issues and on how energy democracy will happen if we all take part to the shaping of our energy future. At the same time, the groups recorded the voices of their activists to share their experience and inspire other people to join Amigos de la Tierra.

Linking to system change and local/global

The theme for the murals (Free Your Energy) was common for every group, but each individual mural turned out differently as the problems related to energy vary from one place to another, and the solutions vary as well. In the cities where the game on Energy was introduced, it was also an opportunity for people to learn about energy issues globally.

What happened

It was really positive to involve activists in an artistic and creative activity. It helped to empower them, make them feel they are part of something and that they are the ones at the forefront of the action. When it comes to visible impact, the murals were painted in public spaces, where people often walk by. Thanks to the different activities that were taking place (music, storytelling, games, food), the festive atmosphere made it attractive for people of all ages and backgrounds to join for longer than just a few minutes. Some of the murals were made on permanent surfaces so that the impact of the activity lasts beyond the Days of Action.

Written by Friends of the Earth Spain
Identifying Challenges and Solutions in a community energy project

**TIME NEEDED:** 90 – 120 minutes

**PREPARATION NEEDED:**
Drawing material for all participants, a pen and a piece of paper could be sufficient. If the facilitator wants to contribute to the discussion with their own experience, then they should also have prepared the drawings that correspond to the different steps.

**Why do this session**
The goal of the exercise is to use the knowledge and expertise of all participants to develop ideas and strategies in order to address a common problem or challenge in developing a community energy project. Community energy projects often bring together energy experts (engineers, technicians or others), as well as members of the community that do not necessarily have technical expertise but have important knowledge about the community where the project could be started. The tool invites all participants to be active in the discussion.

**Description**
The exercise alternates between drawing, allowing individual development of ideas, and group discussions. It may also include short interventions of the facilitator. It is important that these interventions are scheduled and designed in a way that useful information is provided without restricting the creativity of participants.

**STARTING: 15 mins**
✓ The session starts by asking the participants to make a simple drawing that brings them a positive feeling, memory or idea about the place where they live. The facilitator can give additional information on what to draw about: is it a landscape? Is it inside a building?
It is important that the questions are open enough for every participant to be able to make their own drawing and describe it, no matter what level of knowledge they have. And at the same time, the questions should be guiding enough for the drawings to be related to the problem or challenge that is the focus of discussion, as it will provide the basis on which to build possible ideas or solutions.

After a few minutes drawing, participants can gather in small groups of 2 to 4, depending on the size of the group. They are asked to present their drawings to their small group, and explain the reason why they chose to draw that. As it is important to try to give everybody similar speaking time, the facilitator can offer to speak in turns of 1 to 2 minutes each, and announces the time out loud when it is time to switch.

Starting the session in this way makes it possible for all participants to begin the conversation at the same level and reduce fears to speak as well as the risk that only experts or the most talkative people lead the discussion.

If the facilitator not only facilitates the discussion, but is also expected to provide insight into the topic, it is a possibility that they follow the same drawing steps as the rest of the participants.

**DEFINING THE PROBLEM AND DEVELOPING SOLUTIONS: 60-90 mins**

Participants are asked to add other components to the drawing. Initially, these components should help better understand the problem or challenge that is the focus of discussion.

The questions can vary depending on how far the project has already progressed. If the project is at its first steps, you might ask: Where is the community situated? In a big city? In a village? What are the surroundings? What does each participant use most energy for? Heating their home? Transport? etc. For a more advanced project, you might want to identify ‘missing’ actors in the community energy group. The questions then could be: who is present in the room? Who are the other members of the community? Where are they? Where do they meet? etc. This can be done in several stages, from more general to more specific.

Again, take into account that questions should be open and guiding enough for everybody to be able to participate. A question such as: ‘what are the resources available?’ might block some people. You can try asking about the typical climate of the area, or about the immediate surroundings instead.

The interventions of the facilitator (if any) are best scheduled so that they build up the discussion. Once the problem is sufficiently defined, it is time to do the same for the development of solutions.
For each step, participants are asked to present their new inputs. Participants are welcome to ask questions to each other in relation to their drawing presentations, and also to integrate new ideas or components which may appear while discussing with other participants, in their own drawings.

**CONCLUDING: 20-30 mins**
- This might be different depending on whether you have been working with a single group or various small groups. When working with various groups, take 15 minutes to bring the main points from the different groups and to open a space for collective discussion.
- The facilitator can choose to write down the main points on a flipchart. This can help for the following phase, which is to agree on at least a few key aspects to develop a strategy that will help them solve the discussed challenge. If any point appears to need more discussion for developing the strategy, make sure some time is allocated for the discussion to happen.

**Additional elements or variations**
The session plan described here is based on a single group of local stakeholders that would be facing a common problem. If you were to use this with a heterogenous group where participants are coming from different cities/regions/countries, make sure the questions are open enough for people to be able to learn from each other’s challenges and experiences.

**Facilitator considerations**
It is important to try to balance the time used by each of the participants to present their drawings and contribute to the discussion. There must be time for everybody, beware the privileged participants who take up too much space and be prepared to ask them to make space for others.

Written up by Leire Gorroño, Specialist in Social Aspects of Renewable Energies, Nordic Folkecenter for Renewable Energy (Denmark)
TIME NEEDED: 80 – 120 minutes

PREPARATION NEEDED:
✓ Flipchart and markers
✓ Post-its
✓ Sheets of paper and pens for each participant to draw their spectrum of allies
✓ Newsprints on successful community energy projects or a story of a successful project to tell the group

Why do this session?
In developing a renewable energy community project, it can be useful to mobilise different actors within the community itself not only to focus only on fighting the big energy company that holds the monopoly on the energy production and distribution. This tool helps to identify key allies, avoiding the pitfall of focusing only on the opposition. It can also help to assess where more research is needed related to potential allies, which can then be used to better shape tactics to attract different groups.

Description

PART 1: WHAT CAN WE LEARN FROM A SUCCESSFUL STORY? (10 – 20 minutes)
✓ Use examples to show the idea that for many successful community-owned renewable energy projects, it started with a struggle between those who wanted the project to happen and those who were opposed to the project (or supporting barriers to the project).
✓ On one side of a flipchart, draw a dot to represent those who were starting the community energy project (say, on the left). Draw another point to represent those who were opposed to the project on the other side of the flipchart (say, on the right). Explain that societies (or towns, or states) usually include a range of groups that can be put on a kind of spectrum from closest
to the point of view of the advocates to farthest away. Draw a horizontal line to represent that.

✔ Then draw a half circle above that line, with wedges from that line, to create a kind of “speedometer”. Ask who in society might be more or less inclined to support the project you have used as an example so far. Ask who could be in the middle. You can mention groups as well to help the group at the beginning. For example, ‘farmers’, ‘low income families’, ‘city council’, etc. Write down the different groups mentioned and their location on the spectrum.

✔ If people mention groups that can fit in different parts of the spectrum, ask them to be more specific and identify the different groups within that first group.

✔ This part of the exercise is only to make things clear. Do not spend more than 20 minutes on it.

PART 2: MAKE YOUR OWN SPECTRUM OF ALLIES (50 – 60 minutes)

✔ Give the good news: for the successful story you told, just as for most other projects, you do not need to convince the big energy company to be able to set up your community energy project. You only need to make people identified in some of the wedges shift one step your way. The active opponents only need to become passive. The neutral parties only need to become passive allies and you need to find active allies only amongst the passive allies.

✔ While distributing the sheets of papers and pens, let the good news sink in, especially if the group is composed of people who self-identify as activists. Quite often, activists have the mistaken assumption that change can happen
only by convincing everybody (which makes the task way too big) or the
direct opposition, such as the energy company (which might be pointless
anyway).

✓ Ask participants to draw their own spectrums and write down the different
actors they can think of. Give them 15 minutes to do the exercise individually,
then invite them to pair up or form groups of three to share their spectrum
for 20 minutes.

✓ Once you have done so, ask the different groups to spend the last 20 minutes
thinking whether more research is needed for some groups, or if working
with some groups requires specific roles or skills. Ask them to write down
each group on post-its (and the associated role or skills, as well as needs
related to the group).

✓ At the end of the given time, ask groups to come stick their post-its in the
relevant wedges of a new flipchart with an empty spectrum.

PART 3: COMING BACK TOGETHER FOR IDENTIFYING THE NEXT STEPS (20 – 40
minutes)

✓ Bring the group back together and read the post-its together with them.
Focus only on the groups (and potential needs identified for that particular
group) for now, leaving the roles and skills out. Try to see with the
participants if you can group some of the post-its together.

✓ Before going into skills and roles, ask the participants if they think of other
actors. If they do, write them down on a post-it and ask the participants to
locate them on the spectrum.

✓ Once all actors have been identified, start looking into the skills and roles that
have been identified and see who in the participants could do some tasks. If
nobody in the room feels like they can do one of the tasks mentioned, leave it
out in a first phase. Once all skills have been looked at, ask the participants if
they have other skills that haven’t been mentioned but they think could be
useful. Make sure everybody feels they are comfortable in the group and that
they feel their presence is an important part of the puzzle to make the project
successful.

✓ Once this is done, go back to the skills/roles that no one felt they could do.
Assess with the group if this would be crucial for the group or if it can wait for
later. Ask the group if training for (some of) the participants would be
possible or if the group needs to find new people to join.

✓ Before finishing, emphasise how important it is to make groups who were
slightly hostile more neutral about the project, and change passive
supporters into active supporters – instead of focusing on active opponents.
If there is any remaining need that was identified but not addressed, make sure you do give time to address that.
✓ If you feel like it, have a quick discussion on how useful this tool was.

Additional elements or variations

✓ Instead of using newsprints at the beginning, you can also tell a successful story of a campaign or a community energy group.
✓ If you feel it's appropriate for the group, once you have introduced the spectrum and shown how it can make people shift towards your direction, you can add a layer of complexity by explaining that sometimes polarization happens, and the wedges closest to the opponent move away from you and toward the opponent. Emphasise the fact that you can still win if enough of society takes a step in your direction.

Facilitator considerations

✓ This tool is meant to bring optimism and motivation to a group, especially at a time when a project might seem too big to even start. Throughout the exercise, make sure people consider the whole spectrum, and do not focus on direct opponents.
✓ It is useful to think of a concrete goal as well. For example, feel what difference there is in between: “We need more people to understand community energy to be able to fight energy poverty” or, “We need to block the bill that is intending to privatise our water system”. The more precise the goal is, the easier it might be to identify clear groups. Yet, if possible, try avoiding the pitfall of the ‘expertise’ thinking as well, as it could intimidate some of the participants.
✓ This tool can be very useful to motivate people, but make sure you do not lose some individuals by overlooking their skills and needs.

Written by Laure Kervyn, Friends of the Earth Europe based on the original handout on Spectrum of Allies by George Lakey, Training for Change
BOOK REVIEW
Summary
This short guide (part of the “Rough Guides” series), gives an accessible introduction to how to set up a community energy project for saving energy, or generating electricity from renewable sources.

Description
The Rough Guides book publishers are best known for producing guides for backpackers and travelers on a budget to visit tourist hot-spots around the world- aimed at backpacker. The pocket-sized *Rough Guide to Community Energy*, written by Duncan Clark & Malachi Chadwick tackles the adventure of setting up and maintaining a community energy project...
The guide starts with a basic introduction to the triple challenges of climate change, future shortages of fossil fuels and energy poverty. Community energy is proposed as the best solution to tackle these issues, as it creates a way for people to get directly involved in making a change, uses trusted messengers who are directly linked to their community, and provides cost-effective solutions that work at a scale – but are close enough to people so that there is a real connection to the energy being produced.

A series of case studies also illustrate how community energy can be small enough to be within reach for ordinary people, but large enough to make a significant difference, and can also produce broader benefits, including more trust and friendship, empowerment, and engagement in other community projects.

The guide is written for the UK context, and is now a little out of date (this edition was published in 2011). While some of the UK specific details (especially the description of the UK’s energy mix and the legal, subsidy and planning framework) will not be relevant to people outside the UK, the basic principles are likely to be relevant in many contexts - and the cases studies could be very inspiring.

The guide provides practical advice on establishing a local “carbon and energy” group – or finding groups that may be willing to work on the topic. It takes you through setting up a group, your first meeting, promotion, finding support and growing your network through face-to-face and online channels, and finding funding. Much of this advice could be replicated for setting up any local project or campaigning group.

The guide looks at 2 different projects that a group could undertake: house-by-house energy savings and community power generation.

Energy savings are shown as an important first step, to reduce the amount of energy that a community needs (and thus increase the percentage of energy that can be supplied from a community power project), and also as a way of building skills and trust within the group.

The guide provides simple tips for reducing energy use for heating, hot water & air conditioning (including “easy wins” and the insulation of roofs, walls,
floors and windows), and reducing energy use of appliances (including reducing stand-by use of electricity, and tips for energy efficient lighting, kitchen and laundry, and installing energy monitors). Some technology has developed since the guide was written- and in some countries domestic energy use will be very different. However, this is a useful list of places to start in reducing domestic energy use.

While many of these tips could be undertaken by individual households, the case study on “draught-busting workshops” (page 45) shows how a community-based approach can share skills and build confidence amongst people who may not have otherwise been ready or able to take these measures. The case study of “Sydenham community insulation” (pages 48-49) also shows how a committed group of local volunteers managed to spread the word about energy savings to local residents, and also managed to get private landlords engaged in the project.

In the section on power generation, the guide provides information on solar PV, wind, hydro and anaerobic digestion for electricity generation, and solar hot water, ground and air source heat pumps and biomass for heating. For each technology, there is a short description of how much heat or power it can generate, the space needed, cost and potential income, and a link to (UK based) sources of more information. Many of the technologies are illustrated with a short case study of how communities have put their projects into practice.

The final chapter gives an overview of project management, including the steps of feasibility study, fundraising, design, approval, construction and maintenance.

Although the guide is not detailed enough to take you through every step you'll need to take in order to get your project up and running, there is certainly enough information to give an idea of what is involved, and to show some of the many options that are possible!


Written by David Heller, Friends of the Earth Europe
Glossary:

Energy Democracy: In Friends of the Earth we use this term to refer to any projects that contribute to peoples' or communities ownership of the energy system. However it is a term with different meanings in different contexts.

Community Energy: The collective ownership of renewable energy by any community.

Citizen Energy: A broader term that applies to all kinds of involvement of citizens in the energy market, includes community energy and prosumers.

Energy poverty: Energy poverty refers to the inability to guarantee necessary domestic energy services due to a combination of low income, high energy expenditure and poor energy efficiency of households.

Energy sobriety: Coined by the French members of the Energy Cooperative movement. It communicates the concept of consciously “giving up” energy use when it feels possible.

Energy sufficiency: this suggests having an adequate amount of energy and not more.

Prosumer: A term coined by DG Energy to apply to energy consumers who also produce some of their own energy. This definition is still being debated but in general use it applies to single households.

Energy efficiency is a term common in EU policy making the goal to reduce the amount of energy required to provide products and services. For example, insulating a home allows a building to use less heating and cooling energy to achieve and maintain a comfortable temperature.

Remunicipalisation commonly refers to the return of previously privatised service or utility to municipal control in this case often the energy grid or a local or regional supply company.

Big Energy: is used to refer to the small number of very big energy companies that own the vast majority of Europe's energy extraction, production, distribution and supply.

Check out some more detailed discussions on different definitions in this paper: https://www.rosalux.de/fileadmin/rls_uploads/pdfs/sonst_publikationen/strategies_of_energy_democracy_Angel_enql.pdf
Our European School of Sustainability project brings together 23 groups from across Europe, Young Friends of the Earth Europe and Friends of the Earth International. Inspired by the Latin American Escuela de la Sustentabilidad, and driven by popular education techniques, the project aims to strengthen the regional network of Friends of the Earth Europe, and create common political analyses of system change from a social justice, environmental justice and human rights perspective. Exploring and building understanding on transformational education, will help challenge oppression, power and privilege in our work and the issues we are campaigning on.

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