

MEND THE GAP





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Women Assessment Toolkit

Interview Greet

Project title: Mend the Gap - Mending the Pay and Employment Gap through Eco-entrepreneurship

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Project Partners:

Solution: Solidarité & Inclusion

Le Tre Ghinee Aps

Artis Multimedia

Mobius Circle Aps

Meuskills sl

Spectrum Research Centre CLG

KAINOTOMIA & SIA EE

Activity 4 - Women's Needs Assessment Toolkit

Result 4 - Assessment toolkit

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Mend The Gap – Mending the Pay and Employment Gap through Eco-entrepreneurship. This project has been funded with support from the European Commission. This publication reflects the views only of the author, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.



Introduction

The idea of the interview greet is to conduct an initial assessment interview with women learners prior to the evaluation of knowledge and competences and prior to the start of the learning activity. This is a resource in educators' hands that is part of a broad process detailed in the "Women's needs Assessment Toolkit".

The interview greet is aimed at better knowing the individual that will participate in the training, and create a framework of trust that will support the commitment in the training activity.

Thus, in order for this process to be successful, the educator should conduct the interviews with the learners in a friendly way to make them feel at ease and comfortable with answering questions.

In the following sections, the educators will find step by step indications to conduct the interview greet, which is the first stage of the women's needs assessment process that will allow trainers to understand their learners' requirements and design a learning path specifically tailored to their needs.

Short analysis of the current gender gap in business and finance education

In the realm of eco-entrepreneurship education, it is essential to confront the persistent gender gap that looms large in business and finance instruction. This gender gap, which varies in intensity across regions, has been exacerbated in Europe by the disruptive forces of the Covid-19 pandemic. The urgency lies in our mission to develop innovative and educational tools that empower women who are facing greater obstacles in this domain.

The European Institute for Gender Equality underscores the pandemic's far-reaching impact, particularly in exacerbating economic gender disparities. It has led to a significant exodus of women from the workforce, attributed in part to their overrepresentation in essential but low-paying roles, such as healthcare.

Moreover, the European Commission's data reveals a persisting gender pay gap in the EU, standing at 14.1%, with minimal progress over the past decade. This translates to women earning, on average, 14.1% less per hour than men. This disparity takes several forms:

Sectoral Segregation: Roughly 24% of the gender pay gap stems from women's overrepresentation in lower-paying sectors like healthcare and education, where their contributions are systematically undervalued.

Unequal Work Distribution: Despite women putting in more work hours per week, they shoulder a disproportionate burden of unpaid labour, impacting their career choices.

The Glass Ceiling: Organisational hierarchy perpetuates pay inequalities, with fewer than 8% of top CEOs being women, and female managers earning 23% less than their male counterparts.

Pay Discrimination: In some cases, women earn less than men for equivalent or comparable work, despite equal pay principles enshrined in European Treaties since 1957 (Article 157 TFEU).

This analysis underscores the pressing need to bridge the gender gap in business and finance education, especially in the context of eco-entrepreneurship. Empowering educators with the knowledge and tools to uplift women facing greater obstacles is vital to rectifying these disparities and cultivating a more inclusive and equitable economic landscape.

First contact with learners

The first contact with your learners is very important because this will allow you to present and propose the Mend The Gap courses. In recruiting the learners you may face two different situations. Either they will be learners you already know because they attend your classes or because they are members of your organisations or they are “newcomers” in your organisation and do not yet know your activities and missions. In the first case, the communication will certainly be easier and there will be more chances that they will trust you. In the second case, you may need to make an extra effort to present your organisation and its activities.

Regarding the communication channels, you may use the common tools your organisation employs to reach learners (social media, direct calls and messages, face-to-face interactions, etc.). It is important, if you use digital tools, that you attach the **Mend The Gap standard PowerPoint presentation or the general Word presentation** (see annex) to your message or email, so that the learners have a clear view of the educational offer of Mend The Gap. You can explain that the Toolkit is necessary for you to understand their educational needs in terms of financial management, eco-entrepreneurship and gender equality.

Then, once you have gone through a number of discussions, interviews and questionnaires, you will propose a training path based on the “Train the Trainers Programme on financial education and eco-entrepreneurship for women” developed by Mend The Gap.



Information about Mend The Gap and the Toolkit

Once contact with the potential participants is established, you can meet your learner or group of learners. First of all, it is important to inform the participants that their personal information will only be used within the scope of the project and that it will not be shared with entities external to the project.

Then, you will have to provide detailed information about the project. You may use the **general presentation annexed** to this document. You should also present the **Toolkit** and explain that this first interview is to greet the participants and to start getting to know each other to establish a friendly trustful environment before starting the Mend The Gap training path.

You will have to explain to the participants that the Toolkit is a resource to assess their learning needs and that after this first interview they will be involved in the following activities, you will explain that this is necessary for you to better understand how to design training course they will take:

- **3 questionnaires** organised as open discussions targeting previous learners' knowledge about women empowerment, financial management and eco-entrepreneurship.
- A discussion organised as imaginary **scenarios** focusing on gender awareness and empowerment, eco-entrepreneurship and financial management, reflecting a situation in which the learner will have to start her own business.

Then, you will have to explain to the learners that as a result of these interviews and questionnaires, you will design a dedicated learning pathway for them, tailored to their needs that came out from these discussions and questions.

Finally, it is also important to stress out that learners are at any time free to ask questions, to refuse answering or stop the activity if they feel somehow uncomfortable.

Information about the training programme and participants' involvement

Once you have presented the needs' collection process to your learners, you will have to provide them with practical information about the implementation.

It is recommended to conduct this research on women's needs in small groups of 2 - 5 persons, since this will allow at once to exchange ideas that can only come out through confrontation with other learners and to give everyone the chance to express their opinion and share their experience.

You can organise these research sessions either online or offline, however, since there will be a number of interviews, discussions and questionnaires it is recommended that you implement the whole process face-to-face, which may contribute to collecting more complete information about the learners' needs. The face-to-face mode will also allow a more trustful environment and fluid exchange and confrontation among the participants.

You will also have to inform the participants that the whole research conducted through the Toolkit resources should take about 3 hours for a group of 5 persons, or less for smaller groups.

To sum up, you can explain to your learners that the whole process will include the following steps:

1. the presentation of the Mend The Gap project and the Toolkit;
2. the central part of the interview greet, which are the ice-breaking activities and the questions about the women profile;
3. the 3 questionnaires mentioned here above;
4. the scenarios activity, organised as a discussion about a possible situation in which the learner will have to start her own business;
5. the conclusions where you will match the learners' profile with a specific learning path, included in the Train the Trainers Programme. At this final stage, you will have to present the learning contents, the modules, the methodology of the course and its duration;
6. final questions and discussions with the learners.

One last suggestion, do not forget to add coffee breaks between one activity and another!

Ice-breaking activities and interview greet questions for the learners

Ice-breaking activities

You can use one of these ice-breaking activities with your group of learners to break the ice and create a friendly and relaxed working environment.

Icebreaker 1

Activity Title	Building Trust Through Breaking Ice
Type of resource	Icebreaker
Duration of Activity (in minutes)	15 minutes
Aim of activity	The aim of the activity is to create a positive and engaging atmosphere before an interview, allowing participants to reflect and share aspects of their identity or background that they feel proud of. This activity aims to build a rapport, and create a trustworthy connection between the interviewer and interviewee.
Materials Required for Activity	N/A
Step-by-step instructions	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Step 1: As interviewer, you should welcome the participant and introduce yourself as the facilitator of the activity and the interview. You explain that the purpose of the activity is to encourage a comfortable and inclusive environment through the sharing of dialogue.



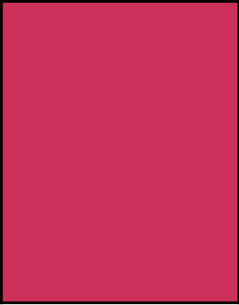
- **Step 2:** You proceed to explain the activity. Firstly, the interviewer opens up about an aspect of their identity and/or background that they feel proud of. It can be an aspect that they feel proud of professionally or personally. You explain that active listening is a key element for this activity.
- **Step 3:** You should then ask the interviewee if they would like to share an aspect of their identity or background that they feel proud of. You should emphasise that it can be related to their skills, experiences, accomplishments, values, or any other relevant aspect. You should encourage the interviewee to speak for around 1/2 minutes.
- **Step 4:** You should actively listen when the interviewee is speaking, engaging in positive body language and nodding and expressing interest in what they have to say.
- **Step 5:** When both the interviewer and interviewee have shared what they feel proud about, you should conclude the activity by expressing gratitude to the interviewee for opening up and for their willingness to share their personal thoughts. Also you should comment on any positive connections formed and any shared experiences that were highlighted during the activity. You should then proceed with the next stage of the interview.



Icebreaker 2

Activity Title	Time Travel Tales
Type of resource	Icebreaker
Duration of Activity (in minutes)	15 minutes
Aim of activity	The purpose of this activity is to establish a welcoming and enthusiastic environment prior to an interview, enabling participants to contemplate and express elements of their identity or background that bring them a sense of pride. The activity aims to foster a connection, build rapport, and establish trust between the interviewer and the interviewee.
Materials Required for Activity	N/A
Step-by-step instructions	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Step 1: As the interviewer, you welcome the participant and introduce yourself as the facilitator of the interview. You explain that the purpose of the activity is to encourage a comfortable and inclusive environment by using her imagination.• Step 2: You ask the participant to take a moment and think about if they had the power to travel back in time and have a conversation with any historical figure, who would they choose and why?



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- **Step 3:** After the participant gives their answer, you can also share your answer to the same question. This is a fun exercise to get you and the participant better acquainted.

Interview greet Questions

You should then explain that the next stage of the interview are questions about the participant's profile. These will include questions such as age, job, family, and possible barriers they may face that would inhibit them from participating in the training. The Mend The Gap project aims to support social and labour inclusion of women who face difficulties in being financially independent and in integrating in the labour market, because of the particular conditions in which they live (disability, migration, living in remote areas, gender discrimination in their community, etc.). The aim of the profile questions are simply to get to know the individual better and understand what exactly are barriers to becoming financially independent and integrated in the labour market for them.

After this explanation, you can proceed with the questions. You will ask the following questions of the participants:

1. Name?
2. Age?
3. Nationality? They may have already mentioned this in the activity above, however, ask again to clarify.
4. Ask the participants about their current economic status:
 - For example, if they are employed, are they in a full-time or part-time position?
 - Are they self-employed?

- Are they in a single income 'household' or dual income 'household'?
 - Are the participants unemployed?
 - Ask if they engage in unpaid work such as family and caring duties?
 - Are they in receipt of an illness or disability allowance, preventing them from working outside of the home?
 - Are they retired?
 - Or, are they actively seeking employment?
5. Ask the participants about their family situation:
- Are they single people without any dependent bodies?
 - Lone parents? If yes, to how many dependent children?
 - Are they married/have a partner?
 - Do they have children that are reliant? If so, who takes care of their children ? Do they benefit from childcare services?
 - Do they care for anyone with an illness or disability?
6. Ask the participants about their current transport situation:
- Do they have access to frequent public transport?
 - Are they currently reliant on public transport?
 - Can they drive/have access to a vehicle for regular use?
 - Do they feel as though transport is a barrier in their daily lives?

You can conclude the interview at this point, however, you should ask if the participants would like to add anything else, a question or statement.

You should thank participants for their time and cooperation whilst conducting the interview. Then you should ask any questions the participants may have at this point with as much information as possible and endeavour to find the answers if they do not have them on hand.

Annexes

1. General Presentation of Mend The Gap - PowerPoint



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What is Mend the Gap?

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Mend The Gap is a 24 month long Erasmus + project co-funded by the European Union. The main focus is financial education and on environmental and digital practices.

We want to tackle these 2 issues:

1. On one side, the lower rates of inclusion of women in the job market
2. On the other side, the need to reinvent vocational training by providing the trainers with the competences and know-how to overcome the new challenges imposed by the COVID19 pandemic and climate change, in particular online learning and the need to acquire new knowledge about environmental practices.



Meet Our Team



Solution
Solidarité & Inclusion



Le Tre
Ghinee



Spectrum Research
Centre



Meus



Kainotomia & Siaee



Mobius Circle



Artis Multimedia



Project Results

Project Result 1

- Women's Needs Assessment Toolkit

Project Result 2

- Train the Trainers Programme

Project Result 3

- Online Platform

Project Result 4

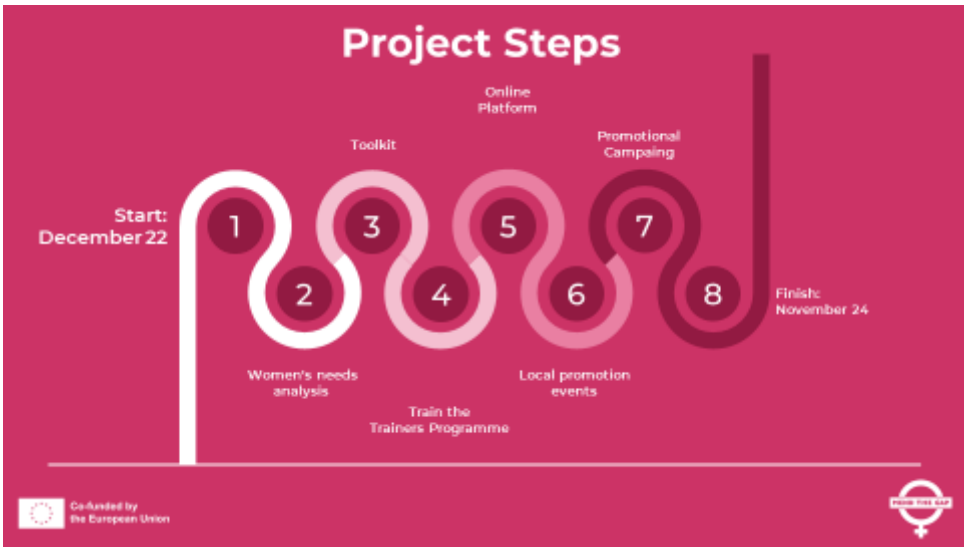
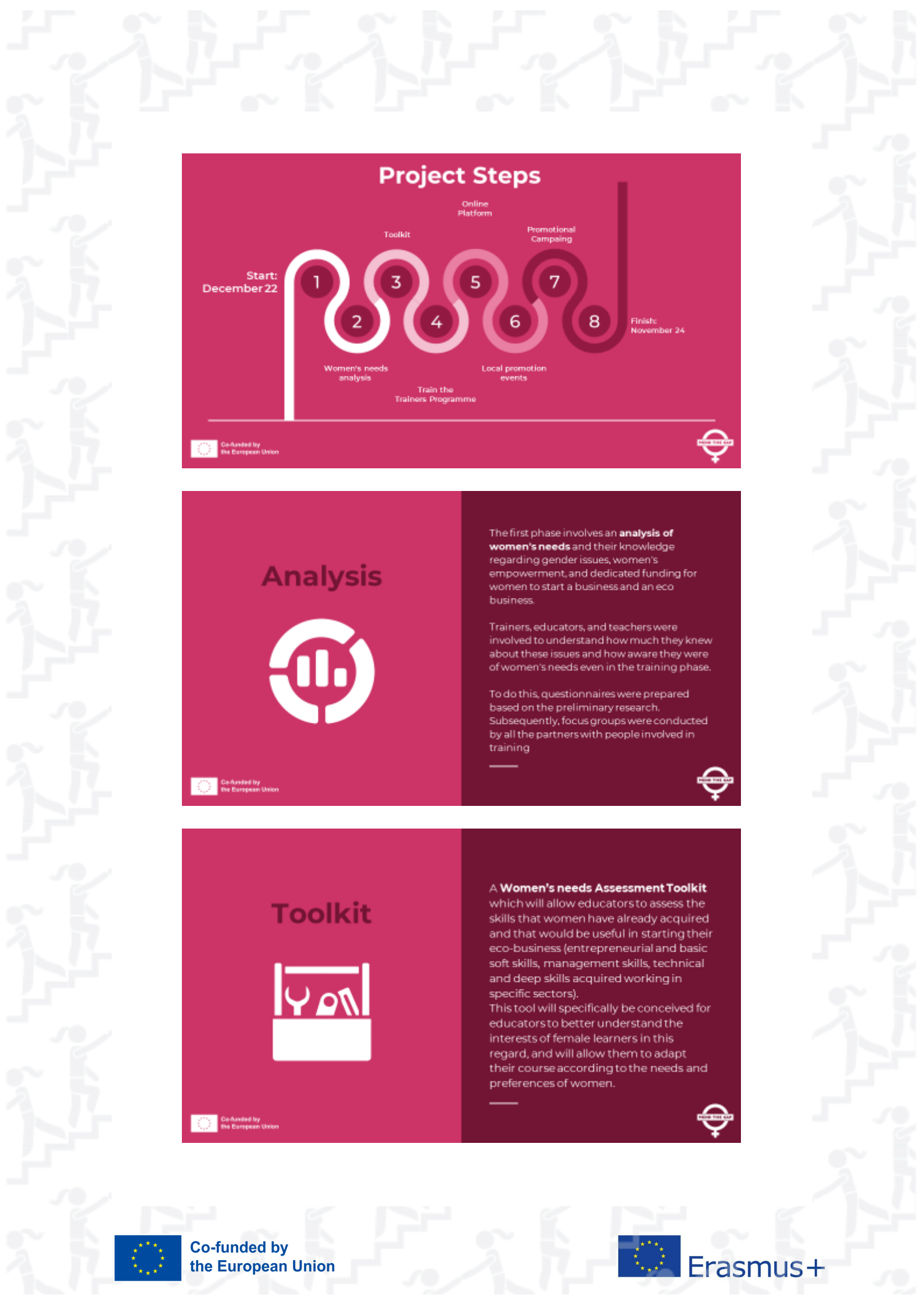
- Promotional campaign



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Analysis

The first phase involves an **analysis of women's needs** and their knowledge regarding gender issues, women's empowerment, and dedicated funding for women to start a business and an eco business.

Trainers, educators, and teachers were involved to understand how much they knew about these issues and how aware they were of women's needs even in the training phase.

To do this, questionnaires were prepared based on the preliminary research. Subsequently, focus groups were conducted by all the partners with people involved in training

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Toolkit

A **Women's needs Assessment Toolkit** which will allow educators to assess the skills that women have already acquired and that would be useful in starting their eco-business (entrepreneurial and basic soft skills, management skills, technical and deep skills acquired working in specific sectors).

This tool will specifically be conceived for educators to better understand the interests of female learners in this regard, and will allow them to adapt their course according to the needs and preferences of women.

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Train the Trainers



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A **Train the Trainers Programme** for vocational educators, which includes a program for blended-learning courses designed for educators to teach green entrepreneurship practices and financial education to women with minor opportunities wishing to start their own businesses. The Programme will include videos, interactive resources, PowerPoints, and other teaching materials for vocational educators.



Online Platform



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An online platform to provide easy, free and immediate access to the training courses, and which will also enable courses for vocational educators to be completed in a blended learning format.



Promotional Campaign



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A sound and extensive promotional campaign for the project to advertise the results of the project, multiply the impact among vocational educators and women, and raise awareness about the importance of women's empowerment through financial education and eco-entrepreneurship.



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Social Network and Website



@mend_the_gap_project



mendthegap-project.eu



Mend The Gap



Thanks for your attention



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2. General Presentation of Mend The Gap - Document

Mend The Gap - Mending the Pay and Employment Gap through Eco-entrepreneurship is a project funded by the Erasmus+ Programme of the European Commission.

It started on the 1st of December 2022 and it will last 2 years. The project will be carried out by organisations from all over Europe: Solidarité & Inclusion and Artis Multimedia from France; Markeut Skills from Spain; Spectrum Research Center from Ireland; Le Tre Ghinee and Mobius Circle from Italy; Kainotomia from Greece.

The project stems from the need to reduce the gender pay and employment gap at work that exists, to varying degrees, in Europe, exacerbated by the Covid 19 pandemic, through the development of innovative and sustainable learning tools.

The objectives of Mend the Gap are:

- To provide educators working with women from difficult backgrounds with innovative teaching tools to enable them to access public and private funds and increase their financial skills to start their own eco-business;
- To enhance educators' knowledge about the gender gap and gender discrimination issues and provide the right tools to tackle them;
- To upskill women educators in order to offer them new skills to make them more competitive in the labour world;
- To strengthen educators' skills in applying digital tools and methods in their practice;
- To encourage innovation, research and exchange in Europe about VET related to women empowerment and eco-entrepreneurship;
- To promote the acquisition of soft and entrepreneurship skills among women to empower them and emancipate them economically;
- To promote the use and application of environmental practices in different entrepreneurial fields;
- To raise awareness among the general public about the importance of empowering women by offering educators the right tools to increase women's skills useful in the labour market.

To tackle these issues, Mend the Gap will develop the following results:



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- A Women's Needs Assessment Toolkit, which will allow educators to assess the skills that women have already acquired and that would be useful in starting their eco-business (entrepreneurial and basic soft skills, management skills, technical and deep skills acquired working in specific sectors). This tool will specifically be conceived for educators to better understand the women learners' interests and will allow them to adapt their course according to their profiles.

- A Train the Trainers Programme, including a program for blended-learning courses designed for educators to teach green entrepreneurship practices and financial education to women with minor opportunities wishing to start their own businesses. The Programme will include videos, interactive resources, PowerPoints and other teaching materials for the educators.

- An online platform to provide easy, free and immediate access to the training courses, which will also enable courses in a blended learning mode.

- A sound and extensive dissemination campaign to advertise the results of the project, multiply the impact on the target groups and raise awareness about the importance of women's empowerment through financial education and eco-entrepreneurship.

The innovative character of Mend the Gap lies in the development of a training Programme specifically conceived for educators working with women coming from difficult contexts, available in an interactive e-learning platform. This Train the Trainers' Programme will include learning resources to support women in starting their own businesses respectful of the environment. It will include a section about financial education helping women to better manage their finances online and modules about funding to make their small businesses sustainable.

<https://mendthegap-project.eu/>



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