Interreg NEXT Romania – Ukraine
Co-funded by the European Union

Stefan cel Mare University of Suceava

Ivano-Frankivsk National Technical University of Oil and Gas

LIFECED

Lifelong and Cultural Inclusive Education on the Romanian-Ukrainian Border

Event creation – the incubator of ideas

Module 1

Defining the problem/need that can be tackled by an event

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MODULE 1

What We Will Cover

1. Opening discussion: what makes an organisation survive?
2. Why events exist: the event as a tool
3. Identifying real community needs
4. The problem tree technique
5. From problem to purpose
6. Writing SMART objectives
7. Workshop & self-assessment

Business

Which of these is essential for a company to survive?

DISCUSSION • MODULE 1

Business

Which of these is essential for a company to survive?

A. Profit

B. A great product or idea

C. Customers / a real market need

D. Talented employees

E. Capital / funding

MODULE 1

Learning Objectives

By the end of this module, participants will be able to:

1. Understand events as instruments for communication, education, intercultural exchange and community engagement.
2. Identify real community needs, problems and opportunities using structured methods.
3. Translate an identified need into the rationale (purpose) of an event.
4. Formulate clear SMART objectives and distinguish purpose, objectives and activities.

1. Why Events Exist

An event is a means, not an end

MODULE 1

The Event as a Tool

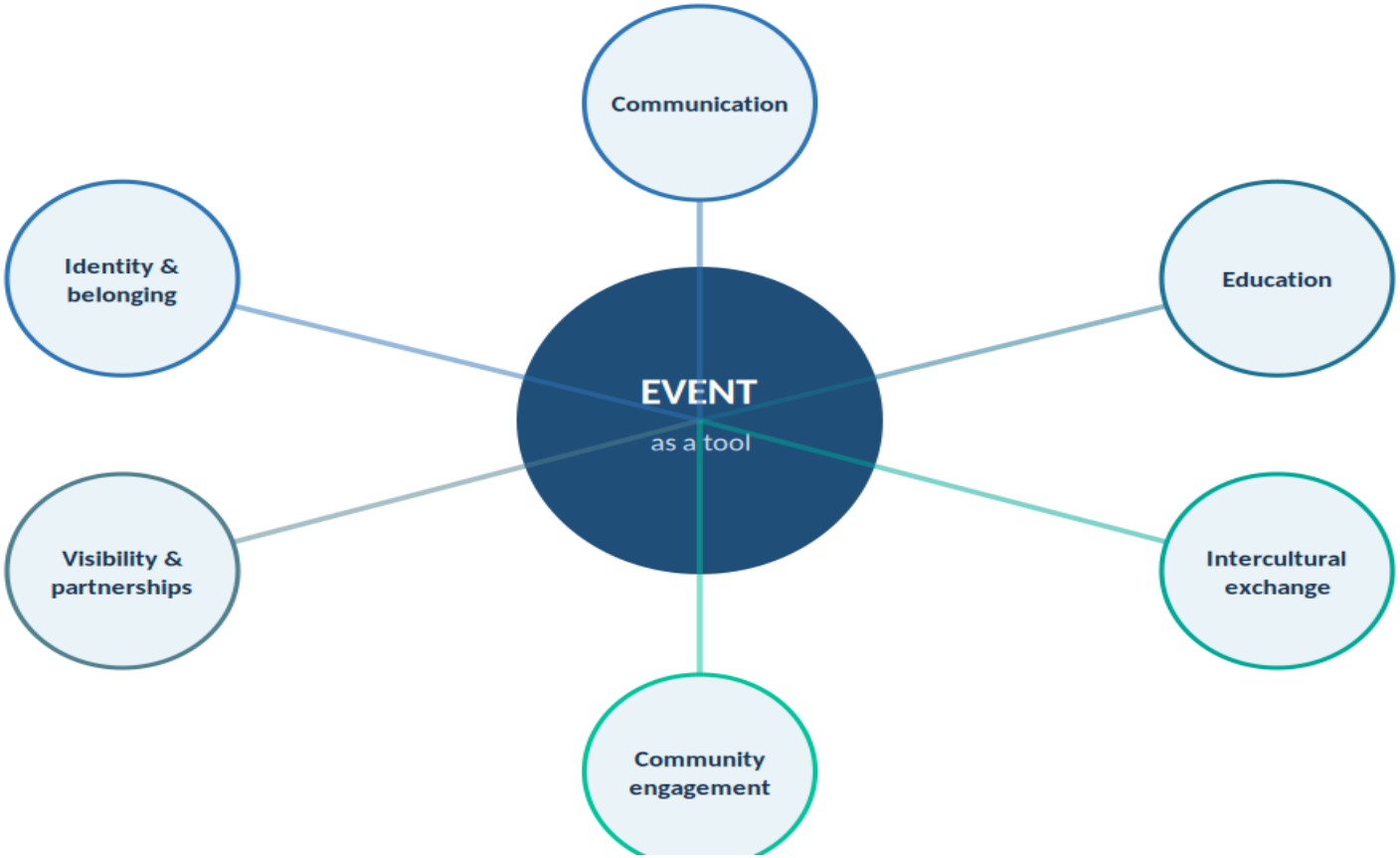
- An event is never the goal in itself – it is a tool to achieve something for a community or an organisation.
- Events can serve communication, education, intercultural exchange and community engagement.
- They also build identity and belonging, and create visibility and partnerships.
- The clearer the purpose, the easier every later decision becomes.

Remember

If you cannot say what an event is for, you are not ready to plan it yet.

MODULE 1

Events Serve Many Purposes



An event is a versatile tool – the purpose defines the design.

2. Identifying the Need

Start from a real problem, not from an idea

MODULE 1

From Need to Event

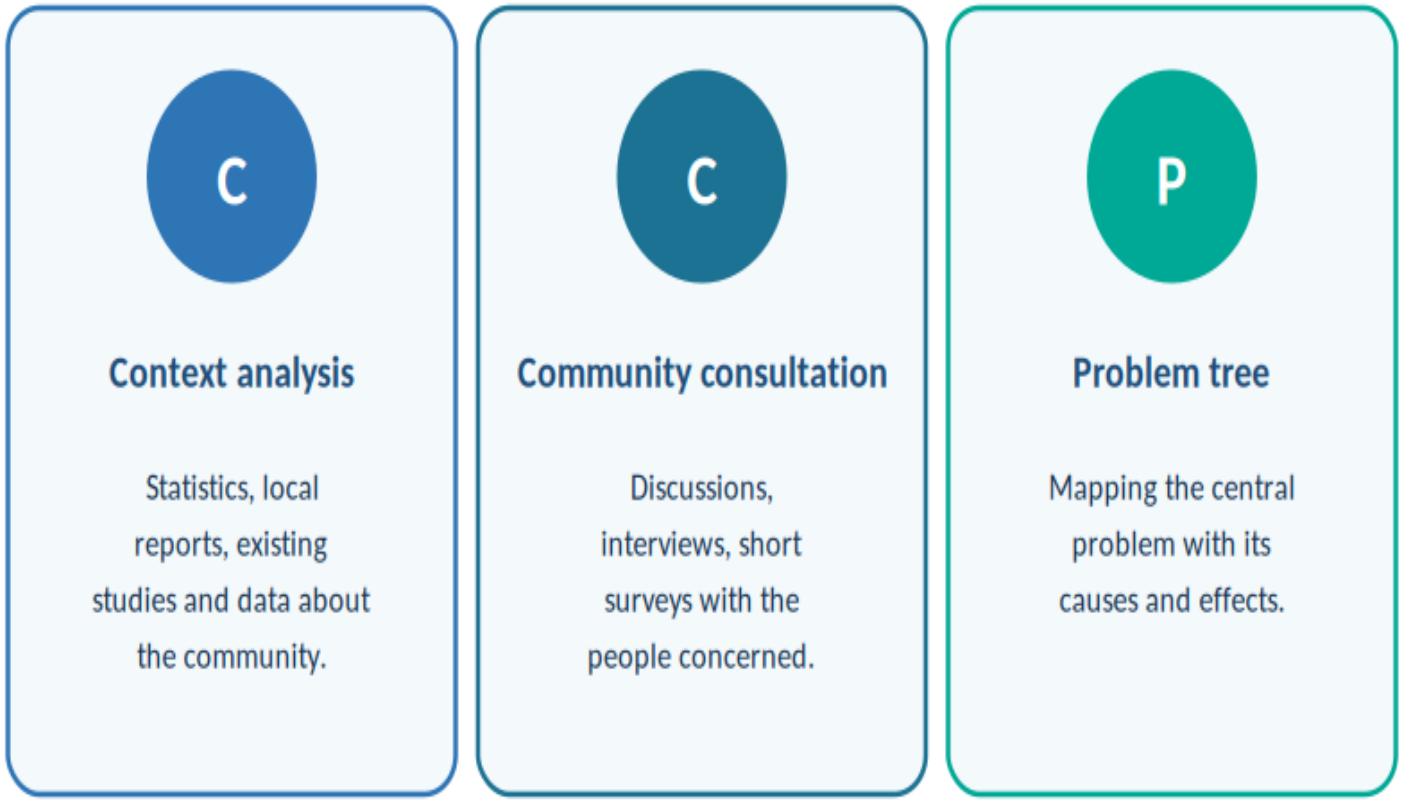
- Every successful event starts from a clearly identified problem, need or opportunity.
- A need can be a gap (something missing), a problem (something not working) or an opportunity (something to build on).
- Designing an event before understanding the need leads to events nobody attends.
- The identified need becomes the rationale – the reason the event exists.

Why it matters

Events grounded in a real need are more relevant, attract the right audience and are far easier to evaluate.

MODULE 1

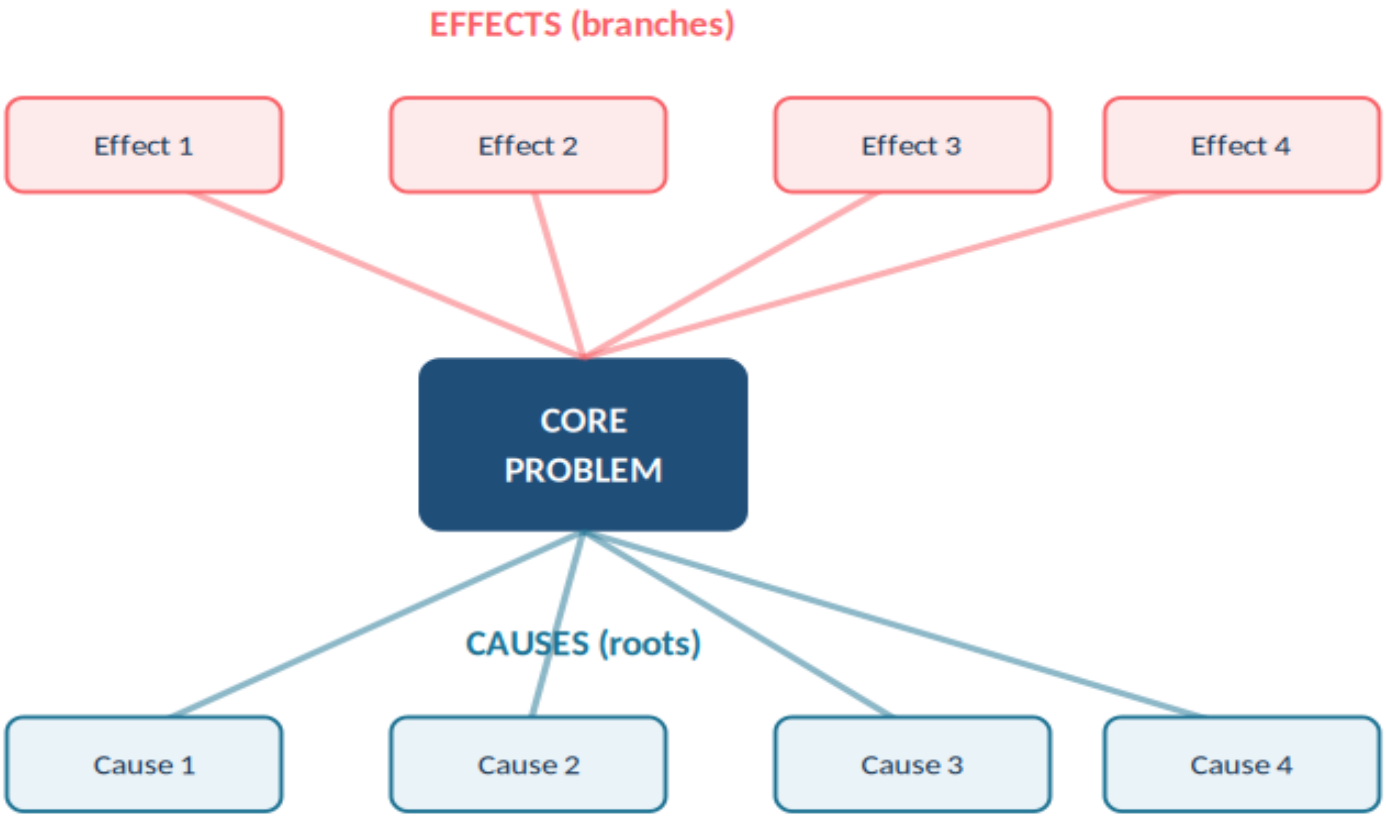
How to Identify Real Needs



Three complementary methods – combine them for a fuller picture.

MODULE 1

The Problem Tree



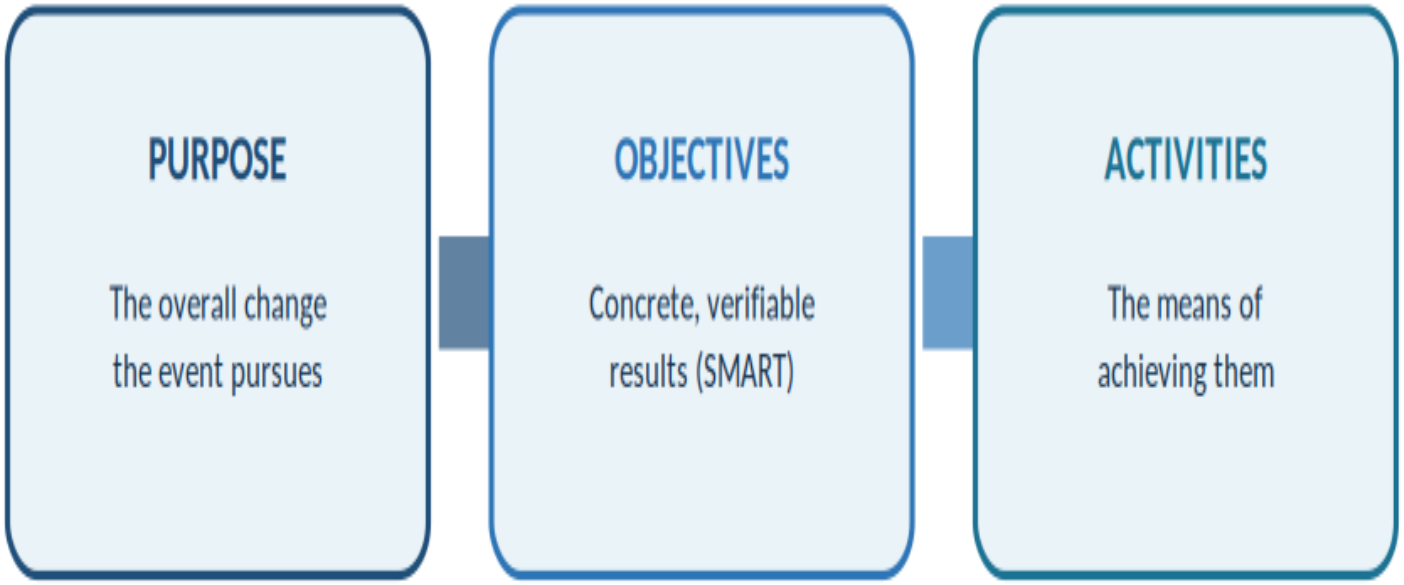
Map the central problem with its causes (roots) and effects (branches).

3. From Problem to Objectives

Turning the need into a clear direction

MODULE 1

Purpose → Objectives → Activities



Keep the three levels distinct - a common source of confusion in event planning.

Three distinct levels – keep them separate.

MODULE 1

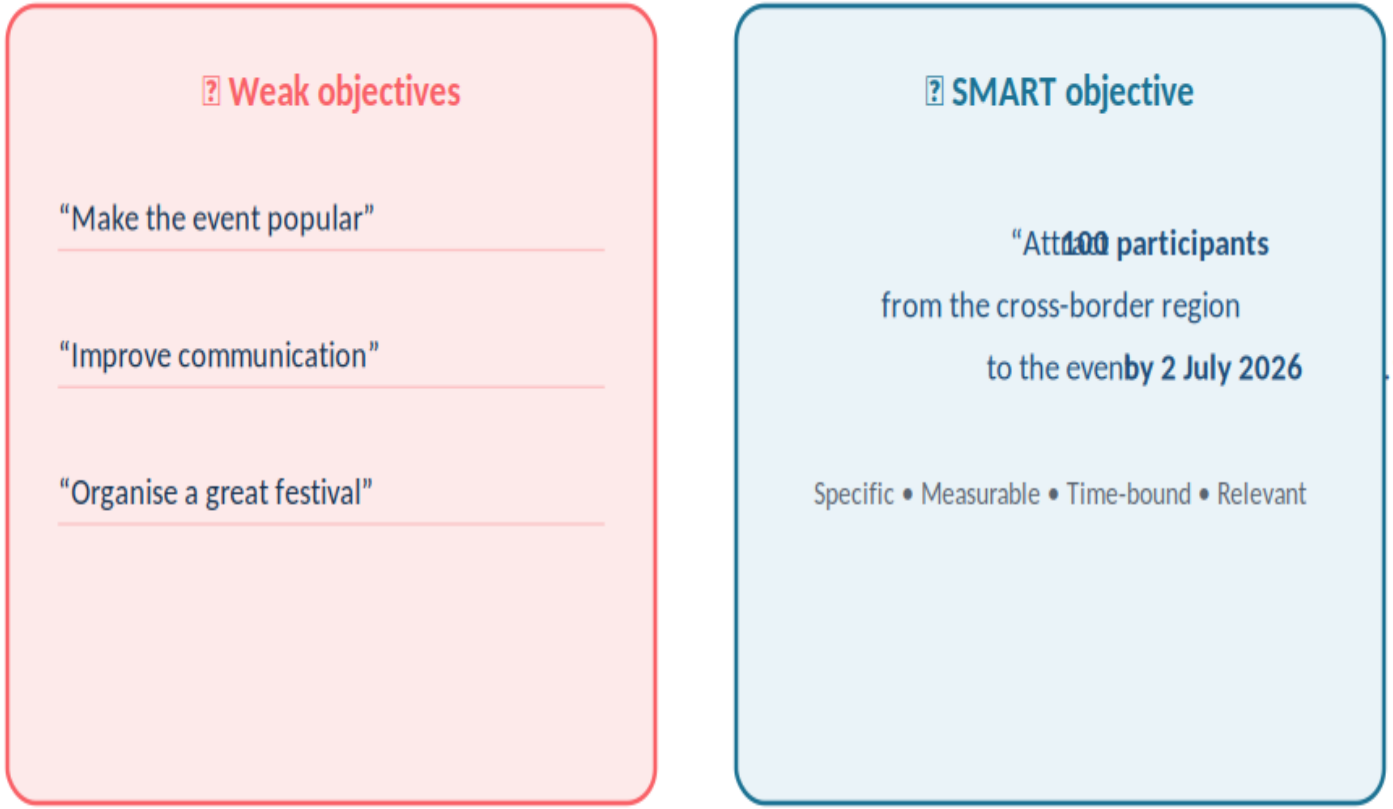
SMART Objectives

S	**Specific**	Clear and well-defined
M	**Measurable**	Quantified, trackable
A	**Achievable**	Realistic with resources
R	**Relevant**	Tied to the real need
T	**Time-bound**	Has a clear deadline

Five criteria that turn a vague intention into a workable objective.

MODULE 1

From Weak to SMART



The same intention, reframed to be specific, measurable and time-bound.

MODULE 1

Why SMART Objectives Matter Later

- Objectives set now become the benchmarks used to evaluate the event in the follow-up stage (Module 7).
- Measurable objectives make it possible to show results to partners and funders.
- Time-bound objectives drive the planning calendar and the promotion calendar.
- Relevant objectives keep the whole team focused on the original need.

Looking ahead

Module 7 will measure success against exactly these objectives – so write them carefully now.

KEY TAKEAWAY

An event is a means, not an end – it is justified by a clearly defined community need and guided by SMART objectives, which later become the benchmarks of its evaluation.

WORKSHOP • MODULE 1

Workshop 1 – Identifying Needs & Setting SMART Objectives

In small groups, analyse a local challenge and draft a short concept note for a possible event.

FORMAT
Groups of 4–5

DURATION
~50–65 minutes

MATERIALS
Worksheet, flipchart / shared doc

Goal of the workshop: Move from a real community problem to a clear event rationale and 2–3 SMART objectives.

WORKSHOP • MODULE 1

Workshop – Step by Step

1	**Pick a challenge** – Choose a real community problem your group cares about	5 min
2	**Problem tree** – Sketch the causes (roots) and effects (branches)	15 min
3	**Define purpose** – State the change the event should produce	10 min
4	**Write SMART objectives** – Draft 2–3 objectives and check each against SMART	15 min
5	**Prepare a 2-min pitch** – Who, what, why, expected impact	10 min

WORKSHOP • MODULE 1

Worksheet – Fill This In

Each group completes the following for their own event:

Problem / need	*What real need does the event address?*
Purpose	*The overall change the event pursues*
SMART objective 1	*Specific, measurable, time-bound…*
SMART objective 2	*…*
Audience & format	*Who is it for? What kind of event?*

WORKSHOP • MODULE 1

Debrief & Output

Each group presents (2–3 min). Together we check:

- Is the objective truly Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-bound?
- Does each objective clearly connect to the identified need?
- Could you measure this objective after the event (link to Module 7)?

Output of this workshop: A one-page concept note with the problem statement and SMART objectives of your event.

This becomes one building block of your group mini-project "From Idea to Impact Event Design".

MODULE 1

Check Your Understanding

Which of the following is a SMART objective?

a) Make the event popular.

b) Attract 100 participants from the cross-border region to the event by 2 July 2026.

c) Improve communication.

d) Organise a great festival.

MODULE 1

Check Your Understanding (cont.)

The problem tree technique is mainly used to:

a) Plan the event budget.

b) Analyse the causes and effects of a community problem.

c) Design promotional posters.

d) Select volunteers.

MODULE 1

Key Terms

Need analysis — Identifying and understanding the community's real problems, needs or opportunities before designing an event.

Problem tree — A visual tool mapping a central problem, its causes (roots) and effects (branches).

Event rationale (purpose) — The overall justification of an event – the change it seeks to produce.

MODULE 1

Key Terms (cont.)

SMART objectives — Objectives that are Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Time-bound.

Concept note — A short document summarising the problem, objectives, audience, format and expected impact of a proposed event.

MODULE 1

In Summary

- Events are tools – they must be justified by a real, clearly defined need.
- Use context analysis, community consultation and the problem tree to identify needs.
- Translate the need into a purpose, then into SMART objectives.
- Keep purpose, objectives and activities distinct.
- Well-written objectives become the benchmarks for evaluating the event.

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NEXT Romania – Ukraine

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Thank you!

Defining the problem/need that can be tackled by an event

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