

ENGAGE CONNECT



EngageSDG Newsletter
March 2025

 **OBREAL**

 **SARUA**





Project Updates & Upcoming Events

Updated EngageSDG PMC Meeting Dates

The EngageSDG PMC meeting in May has been rescheduled to align with the upcoming **Interregional Hybrid Webinar on Participatory Approaches in Higher Education**. The webinar, titled "**Transforming Higher Education: Participatory Approaches for Sustainable Community Engagement**," will take place on **20 May 2025**, with a consortium meeting scheduled for **19 May 2025**.

PMC 2025 Meeting Dates at 16:00 SAST:

- 26 February (Closed to the consortium)
- 26 March (Open to consortium)
- 30 April (Closed to consortium)
- **19 May (Open to consortium) – 09:00 SAST**
- **20 May – Interregional Workshop - 09:00 SAST**
- 25 June (Closed to consortium)
- 30 July (Open to consortium)
- 27 August (Closed to consortium)
- 24 September (Open to consortium)
- 29 October (Closed to consortium)
- 26 November (Open to consortium)

PMC 2025 Meeting Dates at 16:00 SAST:

We are pleased to announce that an EngageSDG Meeting will be held **prior to the International Congress on Engaged and Critical Education: Global Justice and Transformative Curriculum** taking place on the **22 to 24 January 2026** in **Barcelona**.



Work Package Updates

Work Package 3

Integrated Participatory Framework (IPF) Prototype

As an output of WP3, we are thrilled to share **the prototype of our IPF** with you. Before giving you a quick tour on how the tool functions, we want to share the following request with you:

Our main focus has been the development and architecture of the framework. However, as you will see, we are also bringing together a vast array of structured knowledge on more than 25 approaches and methods. Here, we are looking to the collective expertise of this consortium. **For the next step of peer-review**, we invite your suggestions for reviewers for each of our key approaches (Citizen Science, PAR, Living Labs, CBPR, Science Shops) and some of the key methods included in the framework.

Beyond the more formal peer-review, you find a feedback form at the bottom of every page, which we invite you to use should you come across any technical or content-related issues. (After peer review, the content of the tool will likewise be made available in PDF form.)

The Integrate Participatory Framework:

The prototype of our framework is now available for exploration:
<https://engagesdg.softtr.app/>



Overview of What to Expect



About PAs and the SDGs

How can you use participatory approaches in pursuit of the SDGs - and why should you?



Inclusive Participation and SADC

What to consider when applying participatory approaches in the SADC region.



Selection Criteria

What to consider when choosing your approach: Explore the various criteria that shape your decision-making process.



Search Directory

Have you familiarised yourself with the background information and selection criteria? Now you can use our search framework to identify your approach and method!

The IPF is an online tool that brings together knowledge related to the **use of PAs for the SDGs**, context-specific considerations on **conducting inclusive PAs in the local realities of the SADC region**, as well as in-depth reflections on the **various criteria that help choosing the most appropriate approach and method** considering your objectives, resources, participants and scope.

Most notably, the IPF presents a dynamic directory that allows you to **search and filter PAs based on key criteria**.

Participatory Approaches Directory

Are you ready to explore our directory and find the most suitable approach and method for your project? Reflect on the key criteria that will inform your decision and begin your search:

- Filter the approaches based on your needs and context.
- Click on an approach to learn more, explore examples and find guidance.
- For each approach, find the most suitable method for your project.
- Learn about the pros and cons of different methods and explore examples from the field.



Approaches

Begin by using the filters below to find your approach based on your project needs and context:

Project Goals

Q Search

Desired Knowledge

Time



For each of these approaches, you will find

- **in-depth information** regarding the key criteria
- **real-life examples** in pursuit of different SDGs
- additional links to **toolkits and handbooks**
- a dynamic filter-based list **of appropriate methods** to apply in your particular context

For each of the related methods, you will again find

- **in-depth information**
- **real-life examples**
- **toolkits and handbooks**

By integrating background reflections, in-depth information, real-life examples and external toolkits in one dynamic search platform, the IPF will guide HEIs in the SADC region, empowering them to drive impactful participatory engagement for the SDGs.

Work Package 2

Preliminary Research and Situation Analysis

Year 2: Development phase for frameworks, digital tools, and capacity-building initiatives. Includes developing IPF, digital learning platform, repository setup, and training programs Progress

- The WP 2 group had two meetings to resolve finalisation of desk top study that is supplementing WP3 design to ensure comprehensive coverage of all types of PA's- subcontracted Ms S Zweni to assist with the update,
- Provided inputs into the selection of a hosting platform in WP6
- Are in the process of planning a Sensemaker workshop for the design of the M&E.
- University of Barcelona has finalised their research project that they will roll-out at UB.
- NWU hosted a visit from a staff member of Obrèal (Mr Jaume Fortuny) and plans to become a member of this network.
- The Project leader filled out the M&E questionnaire from the external evaluators.



Work Package 4

Digital Academic Ecosystem Development

✓ **Completed:**

- Development of an online collaboration space (Microsoft Teams deployed with project tools and integrations)

□ **In Progress:**

- Customization of E-Learning Platform: Two potential LMS platforms identified; training sessions ongoing to determine the best fit
- Academic Repository Development: Initial requirements gathered for centralizing participatory approaches (PAs) and best practices in SADC Higher Education

🕒 **Upcoming:**

- Piloting the Digital Academic Ecosystem with Project Partners (Completion: 30 November 2025)

Work Package 5

Piloting Participatory Approaches in Higher Education

✓ **Completed:**

- Selection of pilot projects at SADC universities (July 2025)
- Implementation of PAs in Higher Education institutions (December 2025)

🕒 **Upcoming:**

- Monitoring and Assessing Pilot Project Impact (Completion: 31 May 2026)



Work Package 6

Capacity Development Programme

After a successful meeting in Mauritius, WP6 has refined its approach to training materials. **Key priorities for 2025 include:**

- Designing **initial training resources** based on WP2, WP3, and WP5 outputs
- Exploring **the Obreal learning platform** for enhanced training delivery
- Developing **case studies on participatory approaches**

✦ Upcoming Milestones:

- Conducting a t (September 2025) **needs analysis for capacity development**
- Designing the **Capacity Development Programme** (January 2026)

Work Package 7

Dissemination, Policy Uptake & Sustainability

- **First Project Dissemination Event:** 25-27 November 2024, Mauritius
- **Second Project Dissemination Event:** January 2026, Barcelona
- **Third Project Dissemination Event:** March 2026
- **Establishment of SARUA Community of Practice:** March 2026
- **Final Project Close-Out Conference:** March 2026

🔊 **Stakeholder Engagement Strategy:** Developed May 2024

🔊 **Project Communication Strategy:** Implemented & Ongoing

Final Reminder: Annual Review Survey

Final Reminder: Annual Review Survey

If you haven't completed the Annual Review Survey, please do so by clicking here: [Survey Link](#).

Photo Gallery of the first meeting in Cape Town



