

SNAP SURVEY

How-To-Guide

*Community Development Program Supporting
Engaging With Communities*



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Background

Effective waste management is pivotal to the socio-economic wellbeing of communities. Urban cities like Lagos, being the epicentre of surging economic and population growth cannot rely on state investment and regulation alone to properly manage the estimated 10,000 tons of waste generated daily. The intricacies of community dynamics in Lagos are further influenced by varying income brackets and the coastal topography inherent to the state.

Both state and non-state organisations play an important role in building awareness and waste management infrastructure across diverse communities. With no overarching architecture to define how organisations determine which communities to engage with and how to do so, there is a challenge to establish the type of interventions and community participation that may be most effective to support stronger waste management practices in Lagos state.

This How-To-Guide is part of the “Snap Survey” project. The project is an initiative of the Circular Business Platform, an organisation developed with the support of Consul General of the Kingdom of the Netherlands and public and private stakeholders, that promotes circular business development in Lagos State. It is designed to support public and private organisations who work with communities to develop responsible waste management practices.

This project consists of five parts:

1. A database of initiators of community waste management engagements which captures information about the type of organisation carrying out engagements, their locations and types of engagements being carried out. The database may be shared by request.
2. A short paper, which outlines key themes identified in the survey.
3. Detailed public profiles of organisations willing to share information about their engagements for the purpose of promoting organisations working on community engagements.
4. A long case report, which describes 3 uniquely different types of community engagement and evaluates responses from the community to them. The long case report triangulates the findings from activities 1-3 to develop a practical how-to-guide.
5. A how-to guide; the goal of the guide is to support project initiators to plan, identify resources and partners to support implementation, to set realistic targets for their engagements and to encourage sharing about project learnings.

This document is the how-to-guide; a practical document derived from a triangulation of findings during database collation, short paper theme generation and evaluation of three different community engagements by respective communities.

Based on the findings of our short case study and our long case study we have identified six developmental areas for organisations carrying out community engagements. These are:

Community Selection and Needs Assessment: Rationale to select areas, assessing existing waste management infrastructure and communities needs.

Setting Objectives: Setting Realistic Goals for Engagement and Planning for Longer Term Behaviour Change.

Programme Design: Considerations and trade-offs related to carrying out clean-ups, sensitization, incentive programmes etc.

Identifying Partners: Map your own capabilities and resources and potential partners that can amplify your objectives.

Project Planning: Budget, Logistics and Measurement tools.

Fundraising: Developing a convincing proposal and funding sources.

Learning from your experience and from others: How to share and ask for insights from others to develop better engagements.

This guide aims to support organisations developing community engagements by providing practical examples and references to resources that may make it easier to plan, fundraise, deliver and grow engagements over time.

Community Selection and Needs Assessment

What is it?

Community selection is the process of defining the area where you aim to carry out your programme and defining the needs of the community that you have selected.

Why is it important?

Community selection is important because it ensures efficient resource allocation and maximises the effectiveness of your intervention. Understanding the current waste management infrastructure and the needs and interests of community members helps to ensure that precious resources can optimally be used to solve problems at the community level.

How do I get started?

- Define the types of areas that you would like to work in. Be explicit why you believe these are important areas.
- Do your research: think about how you can find out about attitudes and approaches to waste management in the community and how you can use this information to develop your programme objectives. See possible questions [here](#).
- Where possible, engage with community members. Think about how you can use surveys, focus groups, and interviews to understand specific needs, concerns, and challenges related to waste management. Their input informs the design of tailored interventions.
- Soundboard what you have heard with community members and other organisations. You may notice patterns that exist elsewhere and would be able to gather learnings from others on the relevant objectives.

How can I tell if I am doing it well?

To gauge success,

- Document your findings and feedback. This will help you design evidence-based interventions, which are easier to track over the long term.
- Discuss programme objectives with key communities. Do they feel these objectives are consistent with their needs and interests? Do they meet long term waste management goals? You are most likely on the right track if so!

Stories from the Field

Eco Circular Solutions Circular Solutions Provider

How did you determine the communities to engage with for your intervention?

In our own case, we came about it accidentally. We started with collection of waste and in the process, we discovered a particular woman came with two children who were supposed to be in school. We started questioning and she revealed what the problems were and she was not the only one with the problem. Our method was snowballing. That is, someone suffering telling us what the problem is, then links us with other people with similar problems. Do thorough investigation of the needs of the community.

Why is community and needs assessment important?

It is important in order to be able to evaluate impact. This impact is in the feedback that we are getting from those who are benefitting from our initiatives. We did not have a role model to say this is the number of impacts expected over a period of time. So, we rely on feedback.

How would you advise someone engaging in similar intervention?

Set a benchmark for impact and do not bend the rules in between, rather stick to the benchmark. Because we didn't have a target for the number of children we wanted to help, we started having entitled people. And we are a social enterprise, not an NGO. We set a 60% waste deposit target to benefit from the initiative, but we started bending our rules and we had a problem at that point. Set the benchmark and do not bend the rules for anyone no matter how close they are, because the moment you do for one, others will get a wind of it and start demanding the same.

Rodelenz Industries

Why is community and needs assessment important and how did you identify the community's need?

It is important because certain communities have specific waste. For me, being on the university of Benin Campus, a community of 77,000 people. I saw that students consume Pringles, leaving room for waste pringles cans and opportunities for recycling.

How can one get started?

It is important to identify first who would benefit from the waste management initiative. For me I identified photographers. Photography gears are expensive, and students also enjoy being photographed. Whoever is using waste has to create a value loop.

How do you know if you are doing it well?

For me, the way I measure is in the impact. How many pringles can I collect within a period and how many do I get to recycle. Another thought for me is how many photographers are using our repurposed gears, what kind of pictures are they taking, and what kind of feedback are they getting from customers.

How would you advise someone selecting a community?

They would have to develop a resolve for a long term plan, at least a 5 year plan. And also they need to start small and grow.

Who can I call or refer to if I need help?

Reach out to waste management experts, environmental NGOs, and government agencies. Collaborate with organisations experienced in community engagement. Local universities and research institutions may offer valuable support. Also see: <https://lawma.gov.ng/resources>

Setting Objectives

What is it?

Setting objectives refers to the process of identifying what you plan to achieve at the end of an engagement. Setting realistic goals for engagement and planning for a longer term behavioural change are developmental areas for organisations carrying out waste management engagement in communities. While the objectives of your intervention may be simple, for example collecting 1 ton of plastic waste in a single day, the process of setting your objectives involves careful consideration of how you can achieve your objectives and how you will know whether you have achieved them.

Why is it important?

Objective setting helps us define and manage our expectations and also act as a reference point during monitoring and evaluation of the engagement. Objective setting is important because it is central to project planning. Without setting objectives for your intervention, you cannot align with your team and other stakeholders on a common goal. You will not be certain whether your intervention was successful or not and you will have a hard time learning how to improve.

How do I get started?

One of the most common frameworks to help with objective setting is the SMART Framework. In addition to the SMART framework. While the needs of each community you work with may vary, this does not mean your processes should. Keep in mind that to raise longer term funding for your programme, it is also important to demonstrate that your project is Replicable and Scalable. The more research you carry out to set SMART-RS objectives, the higher the likelihood you may align your objectives with partners that have resources to contribute to your intervention.



How can I tell if I am doing it well?

A SMART-RS Framework should be validated with partners that you wish to work with and with potential beneficiaries. You may also seek advice from experts who have carried out similar projects. Pay close attention to their advice on whether objectives are achievable and don't be afraid to change your objectives to meet the needs of the community where you plan to work.

Stories from the Field

Chanja Datti

Tell us a bit about your organisation (Chanja Datti)

Chanja Datti Ltd., established in 2015, is a social enterprise and recycling company based in Northern Nigeria. We collect plastics, aluminium cans, papers, and hard plastics and convert them into commercially viable products (pellets, flakes, or bales). These transformed materials are then supplied to off-takers and recyclers, contributing to a more sustainable and circular economy.

At the core of our operation is the need to build community involvement in addressing environmental pollution, poverty, and social inequality and foster behavioural change where waste is seen as a resource. By actively engaging communities, the organisation promotes awareness and understanding of the importance of responsible waste management.

We strive to provide innovative waste management practices to divert waste from landfills, provide a cleaner and healthier environment, and transform waste into value while empowering women and youth in our communities.

What framework/tool did you use in setting objectives for the bottles for books intervention:

Usually there's an overarching objective that we're working with. I tell people it is better to start something measured, have impact, small impact and then sort of grow than come up with oh, we're going to do something huge and then you don't meet those targets. So for me that's from a high level and then also one of the reasons why we have overarching objectives and goals. And those are our goals for maybe the next five years. We don't change goals for just changing goals. Any project that we do is all lined or it's all aligned with those goals. For us, waste is really a social tool to solve community problems. It's not just waste.



So when we go into communities, we definitely consider smart goals, but when we're coming up with interventions, not really. We just knew that there was a problem. So with Bottles for Books, the children and their parents are using waste as a tool to pay for school fees for financial inclusion. This and some of our other programs were born out of experiences in the field trying to just do collection work, so it depends on what we see on the field that sort of also impacts what we decide we're going to do.

Can you share a bit of background story on the bottles for books intervention:

I think as of 2019, there was like 13 million out of school children in Nigeria, and maybe 60% of those are northern Nigeria. Right. That's a problem. And sometimes when you go to the dump sites, you also see young children who are not in school. So we wanted to try and solve for that. And so that was how that idea was born. We went to do a program in a school, and we saw some of these young girl children selling wara, and they weren't in school, but they were peeping into the school, wanting to be in school. And so we started with trying to get foundations to support those girls and additional girls in that school.

But it was a big problem because a lot of children in that committee were not in school. So we wanted something that would be sustainable. That's why we said we use waste as a tool, because we're like, okay, waste has a value, it's a commodity, right? Why can't we have people collect the waste and use that? And then we'll take that waste from them to convert it to money for them, let them go to school, and then we can even get companies, organisations, individuals to also donate their waste for the program. So, coming up with that, there was no real smart framework around that. But when we go into communities now, there's a bit of a smart framework around, okay, we're looking at 100 children in this community, and this is how much we think that they can collect, right?

If a child is able to collect through their parents, or we get someone to support them with, if it's 30 kg or 100 kg a month and we convert that, it will be enough to cover their school fees, things like that. So usually we're looking at a school year, you understand? We're looking at a school year. So that's why it's time bound. The program began with the onboarding of 100 children at LEA Gwarimpa, and its impact has only grown since then.

In the first quarter of 2021, we enrolled 428 out-of-school children into Nursery and Primary Schools in Kubwa and Kabusa communities of the FCT - 228 children into LEA Kabusa and 200 children into LEA Kubwa II. Another phase of the project was executed in May 2021 in the FCT and Kano State, where we onboarded 200 children back to school. An additional 90 children were enrolled into Primary School at LEA Kubwa II, making a total of 290 out-of-school children on-boarded from the Kubwa community. In addition, 110 out-of-school children were enrolled in Raudatul Ilimu Islamic Primary School in Tudun Murtala Community of Kano State.



The 628 children were sent back to school through the sponsorship provided by The Coca-Cola Foundation. An additional 10 children were supported by the Association of Chartered Certified Accountants (ACCA) in 2022 through their Recycle for Education drive. In total, we have been able to support 738 children to get access to primary school education.

A brief story on the bottles for books intervention that did not go as planned and the lessons learned from that.

We have experienced great success in the onboarding process for the initiative. However, there have been instances where community demands have hindered the project's execution. We visited Kpaduma and Dutse communities in the FCT in 2021 to engage with the community leaders. The objective was to provide a comprehensive briefing on the project, its potential impact, and expectations, while also seeking valuable feedback from community leaders on the feasibility of the project in their community and suggestions to make it better. After several meetings, we discovered they expected us to give them the money for the project so they could execute it themselves. Since that was not our operating standard, they cut off communication with our team. This cut into our project execution timeline and resulted in some delays.

This experience served as a valuable lesson for the initiative, highlighting the need to quickly identify and prioritise communities where there is a shared commitment to prioritising the education of children. It emphasised the importance of selecting communities that are not only receptive to the project's goals but also willing to collaborate in a manner consistent with the initiative's operational framework.

What advice would you give to fellow initiators on setting objectives for their engagements with communities?

I think the first thing is to keep it realistic. I think I see a lot of times people come up with these big numbers or we're going to do x amount of whatever and a lot of times they don't meet those because they don't have realistic goals. Objectives in my mind, especially when you're dealing with communities where a lot of the work we do also is behavioural change mindset where you have to actually convince people of what you're trying to achieve. You can go in as oh, we've done this before in another community and it doesn't work in another community, right? So I would say start with realistic measured goals and then you can build on those goals once you get to know more about that committee or whatever you can build on top of that committee.

The other one that I would say is that we also do a lot of work trying to make sure that we get the community leader on board. We spend a lot of time doing that and just making sure that we have the buy-in of the community leader because it then eases the rollout of whatever program. If you don't do that and you go another way, we've seen it not work a lot of times. We've always had to come back to the community leader who then hands us off to somebody else and says, okay, these people have our blessing.



Who can I call or refer to if I need help?

You may review your SMART objectives with the CBP Secretariat.

Programme Design

What is it?

Programme design is the process of developing the blueprints to achieve your set objectives from the stage of conception all through execution and evaluation.

Why is it important?

Programme design serves as a guidebook during the implementation and evaluation of your intervention. It also serves as a detailed work plan tool lets you make sure of the following:

- The programme activities/components meets the needs of the participants
- The resources needed to execute the programme activities
- Partners and expertise needed to execute the programme have been identified
- Expected outcomes from the programme execution
- Timeline needed to execute the programme
- Monitor and track progress

How do I get started?

Once you have identified your programme objectives you begin to document the step by step process that you will need to take to move from the different stages of the project. Ie from conception-planning-implementation-evaluation. In designing your programme, there are key elements to consider. Be sure to soundboard with your team, experts/colleagues in the field that have done or are doing similar programmes, relevant stakeholders and partners to get their feedback and opinion.

How can I tell if I am doing it well?

A quick and dirty way to tell if you are doing this well is to cross check whether every component of your project plan is consistent with the objectives that you have set.



Stories from the Field

Planet 3Rs

Could you describe what you do at Planet 3Rs

At Planet 3Rs, our solution is in three phases. Number one is that we make sure that we convert sachet waste that we see around us into innovative products. Two, we engage the community by sensitising them, letting them understand the need of having a clean environment and telling them about climate change and how they can be part of the solution as well. Third one is empowerment through the collection of waste.

What are the factors that you considered when designing your waste to product intervention?

Basically at Planet 3R we do a lot of community engagement and the one thing we did is recognizing the community members as our major stakeholders. We met with the landlord association because we knew that our work will be more with women and girls. It became very easy to work with the girls and women in the community without any hindrances when the men of the community bought into our vision. We made them understand the importance of our work, made them own the solution and told them about the product we will be making from the waste which we eventually showed them when we made them.

The reason we are not using plastics, tyres and flip flop slippers but sachet wastes is that we thought about how we could complement existing solutions. We identified what is it that is a huge problem and yet to be worked with that we can work with. We identified the gap and designed our solution around it.

Another thing that we considered is the likeability and acceptability of our product. When we first made the material, it was too thick. It looked like a mat. It was not just okay to make anything from it. Later we changed the nylon strands again to make it lighter, and thinner, but it became very soft. We then did a customer survey. We were able to ask questions and understand what people really want. So we asked them a few questions on the wastes they see on the streets, if they would purchase a product made from waste, if yes, why and if no, why not. We got those feedback and summarised them, which actually helped us in making our products colourful and beautiful. We started getting more demand and positive feedback in such a way that you could see and tell that people genuinely like the product, not because we are making them from waste.



What tool/framework did you use when designing your waste to product intervention?

There was this framework we used, the theory of change. It was so helpful when we were designing and planning, especially when we wanted to come up with our vision and mission statements. There were some key elements that we got from that theory of change that we continue to use even till this point. So I actually had tools to use. Although it was not perfect, one of the things I have learnt from training platforms, both local and international about sustainability journey, is that it is long term. It is not something we might be able to reach at once, but we just have to make sure that we keep getting better so that we can reach that goal. So it's actually a continuous learning journey for me, because what brought me to this level will not take me to the next level.

What challenges did you face with your program design?

We realised that many people were not aware of what we are doing. From the product design and development classes I took, branding especially through storytelling is very important. We started telling the story behind the bags and the impacts which are mopping the communities of waste and creating jobs for women and girls. I believe that once you start doing something and you are open minded, solutions could actually come from anyone, even children. When we did design thinking back then, we were told that we must think like a six year old. We must think like children. Those are the ways to actually come up with disruptive ideas, to come up with great innovation. Because children don't think about impossibility. They see possibility in everything they imagine.

Currently, we have 34 employees and 32 of them are women. This is one of the reasons why when we built our factory, we made sure that we built a nursery there because of women that have children. We recognized that most of these women, actually the ones that have babies, single mothers, and young teenagers really want to work but do not get the opportunity because of their babies.

What advice would you give to people in your line that are using waste to make new products? What advice would you give them as it concerns, like, designing their program and their processes?

One advice I give to people that are in this waste industry converting waste into products, is that they should keep innovating, keep thinking about what they can do better.

Who can I call or refer to if I need help?

Complete the Programme Design template and contact the CBP Secretariat to review it.



Identifying Partners

What is it?

After designing your intervention programme you may find that you do not have all of the resources to meet your objectives. While financial resources can be a major constraint, there are many other types of resources that you need to deliver your programme successfully. Partner identification is a systematic process of reviewing the design of your programme and reflecting seriously about the capabilities and resources that are needed so that the programme will meet its objectives.

Why is it important?

Even for the largest organisations in the world, partnerships are important to reduce costs, and increase speed and innovation towards meeting strategic objectives. While partnering with others can help you achieve your objectives, this does not mean it is easy to do. If you have had a bad experience trying to forge alliances with others, don't worry you are not alone. According to a survey of CEOs in the United States by PwC, up to half of strategic partnerships do not go well. But this should not be a deterrent, because successful partnerships tend to support organisations to scale and build engagement and market opportunities.

How do I get started?

Get started by asking yourself the following questions:

- What are the activities and resources needed at each stage in my programme to deliver successfully? Think about every detail down to the types of collection equipment, incentives, buy-in needed from stakeholders, logistics and methods of monitoring success and failure.
- What capabilities do I/my organisation have to execute activity and what capabilities am I missing?



- Do I know of organisations or individuals that have the additional skills I need to execute? Even if you do not know of someone directly, the clearer that you are about the skills and resources that you need, the more responsive others will be to cold calls.
- What might a relationship with an external partner look like? How can we successfully divide responsibilities and income in a way that will allow us to achieve our project goals and build a longer term relationship.

How can I tell if I am doing it well?

The easiest way to tell that a partnership is going well is that communication between multiple parties is clear and easy. You should feel confident that you share the same objectives as your partners and that you both have a sense of ownership of the programme.

It is quite common in Nigeria that organisations will sign a Memorandum of Understanding to define the terms of partnership arrangement. While such a document can be useful to guide a relationship, it is important that the details of this relationship are discussed and agreed before work gets underway. You may want to use a Project Agreement to define a more specific workplan. In some cases, for example where partners do not have strong literacy skills or positive experiences with the law, legal documentation may not be required or may be counterproductive. In these cases, it is most important to communicate regularly with partners to make sure that you share the same goals and do not have conflicts of interest.

In their article on Strategic Partnerships, James Henderson and his co-authors share a useful matrix to help us keep in check what makes partnerships successful. Taking the time to make sure your partner has the same goals and values as you and that your relationship is governed through a formal or informal agreement will go a long way towards a successful partnership.

Stories from the Field

Pakam

Tell us a bit about your organisation:

Pakam is a digital marketplace that connects waste generators with recyclers. We began our operations by focusing on software as a service and are now introducing financing, logistics and other infrastructure services to support the development of local collection systems.



How did you assess which partners were needed to carry out this intervention?

Pakam is designed to connect waste generators with waste collectors, therefore it is essential that both generators and collectors are engaged with and using the platform. We made the decision early on to partner specifically with collectors as they are best positioned to engage with the relevant waste generators.

How did you work to identify partners?

We began our operations in Lagos State. Our initial strategy was to onboard as many collectors as possible. This is because the goal for Pakam is to achieve comprehensive access to recycling services across Nigeria. We identified collection partners using a number of methods. Firstly, and most importantly, we worked with the Lagos State Waste Management Authority (LAWMA), as they are the key regulator in Lagos that is responsible for waste collection. Through their support we were able to identify and onboard a large number of collectors. We likewise communicated very regularly with industry associations and other eco-system organisations to identify potential partners. In our first year we onboarded 89 collectors and facilitated 48 million Naira in transactions.

How did you get help to engage with partners?

Critical in our experience has been to develop relationships with all stakeholders, irrespective of whether they are a direct partner or not. It was especially important in the beginning to share our vision with LAWMA because they play the most critical role in waste management in Lagos, however, it is equally important to meet regularly and have strong relationships with other organisations working in the sector. This is not only important for partner referrals but also to help us understand the needs of collectors and how we can work with other organisations, such as financial services providers, to respond to them.

Can you share a bit of background story on the bottles for books intervention:

Central to our belief is that recycling is a business, so it is very important for us to work with organisations that share the same view. We look specifically for partners who see the opportunity to grow the volumes and types of materials that they collect through Pakam. We have learned that by working with partners who are committed to building their own collection capacity we are able to co-develop solutions that can help them grow. For example, we have found that many collectors do not have the resources to purchase vehicles which allow them to collect higher volumes of materials so have now introduced logistics-as-a-service, which enables collectors to lease or rent affordable electric tricycles to support collection.



Can you share a story of a failed partnership and how you learned from that?

I think as long as you are focused on moving forward, there are no failures, just learning experiences. Our initial approach, to cast the net wide in terms of onboarding many collectors, was a learning experience. In our first year of operation we found a high level of variability of collection rates. Some collectors registered on the platform had very few transactions, maybe just a few kilograms, whereas others were collecting many tons. From a business standpoint, it is not efficient for Pakam to manage low volumes of transactions, so we are now focusing on deepening relationships with collectors who are willing to invest in building their collection capacity; we want to make sure that this is as easy as possible for them. I should also emphasise that while we have shifted from our early strategy, I believe we gathered a lot of important information about the market and its needs and this has helped to strengthen our services and product offerings.

Stories from the Field

RESWAYE

Tell us a bit about your organisation:

RESWAYE started out as a social enterprise in 2019. We focus on creating income-generating opportunities for young people, women and vulnerable groups across coastal communities in Nigeria that will also lead to direct social environmental improvements where they live. Recycling is one among a number of activities that we support to meet this goal.

How do you assess which partners are needed to carry out an intervention?

While we develop and implement many different types of activities, broadly speaking we follow a similar process to identify partners in the communities that we work. First, we look for people who have compatible interests with the project goals. For example if we are working on a fashion project, we would look for those who may be repairing or making clothing as opposed to fishermen. Once we share a common understanding of the project's goals, we engage with the leadership of the local community, most often through a community head, with the support of the partners in the community that share a common interest in the project. We believe it is really important to carry everyone along in this respect, so after our project receives a go-ahead, we make sure to communicate regularly with community leaders and of course our partners we work directly with in the community.



How do you work to identify partners?

Our focus is working with communities along the coastline. We have found the governance structure, behaviours and challenges related to waste management across these communities are quite similar, which is why we apply the same methodology across projects to identify and assess partners. But I would emphasise that partnership is a two-way street; it is about appreciating the needs and interests of people and communities we work with and demonstrating through action that we understand them and are working as equal partners. For example, there is no water or electricity in one of the fishing communities that we work, so whenever we visit, we make sure to bring a cooler of cold water and purchase fish. These small gestures, if they are sincere, can help to build a strong common ground

How did you get help to engage with partners?

I believe if you follow the process of engaging first with people and organisations that share a common interest in your project goals and working with them to get the support of decision makers you are in a very good position to work productively with others towards a shared objective. Inevitably, projects encounter challenges; one experience I remember was in respect to a planting project, where livestock in the community began eating the plants. An approach to solve this challenge was developed directly by community members, who determined that old fishing nets could be used to protect the trees. I think what is important in this case is that if everyone is committed to the same goals there is also shared motivation and creativity to address challenges that lead to practical solutions.

Can you share a story of a failed partnership and how you learned from that?

As I mentioned, our approach is to identify key project partners and then to seek support from community leadership to drive the project forward. There is a specific community that we work with that I feel very passionate about, so when an opportunity to deliver a clean up project with them materialised, I was very excited. However, the demographics of this community were more diverse than the ones we typically work with; instead of a centralised hierarchical structure, there were several community leaders, each of whom had different interests. Some groups didn't really appreciate the value of a cleaner community and were unwilling to allow external waste collection services which we had paid for to haul waste.

This was definitely a learning experience for me, teaching me first that I should not start any project with assumptions about the structure and different interests of groups within any community and that mapping the key decision makers and engaging with each one separately is a necessary step to keep all groups within a community engaged and informed.



While I would say that this particular project was not successful, I wouldn't hesitate for a second to work with diverse communities again, even if it may be more time consuming to get everyone on the same page

Stories from the Field

CyclePlast/NCIC

Tell us a little bit about CyclePlast:

CyclePlast project is a pan Nigeria PET plastic waste management program executed in 6 states of Nigeria, representing the 6 geo-political regions in the country to collect a total of 9,000 tons within 24 months. These project states include Edo, Kwara, Abia, Kano, Adamawa, and Abuja (FCT). The project is supported and financed by The Coca-Cola Foundation in partnership with the Nigeria Climate Innovation Center (NCIC) as a technical partner with the mandate to drive the deliverables of the project.

The project runs on an inclusive model designed to bring both the informal and formal sector players to work in tandem to sustain and enhance the plastic waste recycling value chain in the 6 project states. Each project state is managed by an aggregator who is called a Regional Champion (RC). Each RC is tasked with the responsibility of recruiting 165 waste pickers in their regions, bringing a total number of waste pickers to 990 across all project states.

The waste pickers source plastic waste and sell directly to the RCs who in turn bale the plastic waste and sell directly to off takers or recycling companies for further processing into various applications or finished products.

To enable this transactional flow along the value chain, Each RC was supported with grants to enhance their financial capacity to purchase plastic waste from the waste pickers, and secondly each RC was supported with a vertical baling machine to bale plastic waste fit for collection by the off takers or recyclers. In addition, a radio program aimed at sensitising the communities in these project locations was aired for 13 weeks as a behavioural change campaign aimed at informing and educating people on the opportunities within the plastic waste ecosystem.

This model has sustained the value chain in these project locations creating jobs for over 900 informal workers of which about 40% are women and so far over 6,000 tons of plastic waste has been collected and recycled as of October of 2023.



How did you assess which partners were needed to carry out this programme?

Firstly, we matched the objective of the program with the resources required to meet those objectives and the following procedures were employed:

1. Survey and mapping: We did a survey to map out the right vendors and service providers that would be responsible for specific project milestones.
2. Bifurcation of project components: We broke down the project into components and were able to better identify the right parties or entities to leverage for specific deliverables on the program.

Historical Performance: We leveraged historical data on performance before any form or kind of recommendation. External parties must have demonstrated competence in areas we intended to engage them to manage our expectations.

How did you work to identify partners?

We had inception meetings with the project partner and funder (Coca-Cola) to essentially identify the project deliverables and we matched each deliverable with the right partner that is best aligned with meeting the project key goals and objectives. For example, we partnered with Recyclers Association of Nigeria (RAN) to select eligible aggregators for the project; we also partnered with an Original Equipment Manufacturer (OEM) to produce the right type of baling machines fit to bale targeted plastic collection volumes.

In order to get best results on partnerships, we informed each partner with our expectations and requirements to ensure all project milestones were successfully attained.

Were potential partners who were unfamiliar with your organisation responsive to your requests?

Absolutely. Every partner wants to be a part of something great!

How did you get help to engage with partners?

We leveraged our network and Coca-Cola as well. Coca-Cola worked very closely with us in ensuring that we were partnering with the right entities to achieve the program goals and objectives.

What do you do to make sure that you have the same goals and values as your partners?

We studied any potential partner to understand the nature of their work and track record on similar projects or undertakings and we were able to establish benchmarks and the basis to establish a relationship that will drive the success of the project.



Can you share a story of a failed partnership and how you learned from that (from this or other projects)?

I was new to the ecosystem some five years ago in 2018 and I was approached by a prospective partner for a green youth empowerment program. I began working with this partner until we got to the stage of program execution, and that was when I realised that the partner expected me to fund the program while they will support with program implementation.

The lesson learnt for me is to ensure that the roles and responsibilities of both partners must be clearly spelt out and identified from the partnership inception, so each party is aware of their obligations.

Who can I call or refer to if I need help?

[Project Partner Analysis Template](#) and contact CBP to review
[Memorandum of Understanding](#)
[Project Agreement Template](#)
And schedule a call with the CBP.



Project Planning

What is it?

Project Planning involves defining the scope, objectives, activities, and timeline of your community development programme. It includes creating a roadmap (such as a spreadsheet) for your project and identifying the resources and tasks required for its successful execution. The project plan takes into account the budget, logistics, materials, and human resources you need to execute your project. By following a project plan, you may evaluate whether you are meeting your objectives and adjust them.

Why is it important?

Effective planning ensures that your community development programme is well-structured, stays on track, and meets its goals. It helps in resource allocation, risk management, and ensures that the project remains focused on its mission. A good project plan will also make it clear who is doing what and when, which helps to make those involved in the project more accountable.

How do I get started?

- **Project Planning:** Start by clearly defining your project's objectives, scope, and activities. Create a project timeline with milestones. Identify key team members and their roles. Consider potential risks and mitigation strategies.
- **Budgeting:** Estimate the costs of each project activity, including materials, labour, and overhead. Develop a detailed budget that outlines income sources, expenses, and funding gaps. Ensure that your budget is realistic and flexible.
- **Logistics:** Identify the resources and materials needed for your programme. Develop a logistics plan that outlines how these resources will be procured, stored, transported, and distributed. Consider factors like transportation, storage facilities, and supply chain management.

- **Measurement and Evaluation:** Define clear and measurable objectives for your programme. Identify key performance indicators (KPIs) that will help you track progress. Develop data collection methods and evaluation criteria. Create a timeline for regular assessments.

How can I tell if I am doing it well?

Your project plan should be the central document that is used in meetings with your key implementing partners. They should be able to understand the tasks and their responsibilities. A good project plan helps you move forward with your project.

Stories from the Field

Empowering Collectors Initiative (ECI)

Your name and your organisation:

My name is Ayodele Oyediran and I am the project manager for the Empowering Collectors Initiative (ECI) of the Growing Businesses Foundation.

Can you describe the intervention?

ECI is an environmental sustainability programme from our environmental pillar that is focused on removing plastics from the environment, with a focus on PET (Polyethylene terephthalate). Our intervention is currently spread across nine states, covering all six geopolitical zones. The idea behind the intervention is to empower aggregators with some level of equipment so that their collection capacity and processing capacity would increase as compared to what was there before we came. Also, to empower and onboard about 3000 collectors who are women.

The plan is for the women to begin to pick up plastic waste from their environment, which becomes their own business opportunity and empowerment. The project was funded by the Coca-Cola Foundation.

What tools and frameworks do you use for your project management? Project managing ECI?

We're actually using two different approaches. A blend of both traditional and agile.



The reason for these two approaches is because of the structure of the project. The project is structured in such a way that it has to do with interacting with unorganised stakeholders. Due to these unorganised stakeholders, the first thing we do is deploy the traditional approach, which involves having a one-on-one conversation with the women and trying to understand their pain points, as well as how to tailor our solutions around their challenges.

Also, at the beginning, we focused on just developing our capacity to execute, which included having interviews with the aggregators to understand their current situation and pain points with the collectors. We provided proper documentation on these findings for future reference. Subsequently, we created a project planning document armed with the necessary information. We were able to identify and understand different stakeholders and also started implementing, building our technology, and purchasing our equipment. We spent the first three months building momentum for the project before we launched.

In terms of tools, we've switched between different tools. There are many tools you can use as a project manager. WhatsApp can even work. It depends on how you communicate. We used Slack at one point to communicate. We use Google Workspace too

How do you think project management has helped you succeed in the initiative?

We all know that anything we do is a project, and if it is a project, it can either succeed or fail. A project can fail if you don't manage or plan it properly, which means you're already setting up the project for failure. For a project to succeed, it calls for proper management because this ecosystem is very dynamic. It's not a straight-line method where you have to wake up in the morning and sleep at night. This type of project involves interacting with people, delivering some output, and not just making sure that your stakeholders deliver the output that you have set for them. It's just important to wear the hat of the project manager. Project management really helps you understand the scope of the project, understand how costs can also be properly managed, and understand the schedule. These are the three biggest elements of project management that have helped this project in terms of determining its scope, which I've mentioned initially. They are recovering some 25,000 metric tonnes of plastic in 24 months, onboarding 3000 women, and also partnering with ten aggregators, providing some equipment, and so on. It is very dynamic. Thus, the best you can do is to properly identify, schedule, manage the cost, understand the scope, and make sure that you set targets around those scopes.

On the other hand, the agile approach, which is what we eventually did when we started learning from even the targets we set, At some point, we set some targets that were extremely high, got feedback, and changed. That's really pretty much Agile because we didn't have to do any documentation. We just understood what the pain points were, and then we adjusted the strategy. That way, it just helps you manage every element of the project successfully.

I mentioned that the elements are very dynamic: managing the team, managing the stakeholders, managing the deliverables, managing the output etc. It got to the point where we're managing the kind of language that people speak because people were beginning to call these women poor women, and then we had to change that narrative—the kind of story we tell. So it's pretty much very dynamic, and that's why it was important that the project management guidelines and principles be applied.

How are you able to manage the dynamics of the budget, I mean, the intricacies of budget and logistics, considering how dynamic the project is?

Yes. This is why it was important for us to plan. We spent the first three months using the traditional method of cost planning. What is currently the cost of moving from point A to point B? What is the cost of deploying the equipment to certain areas? What is the cost of purchasing the equipment? Also, we needed to pay some of those costs early so that the intricacies of dollars and naira would not affect the project.

That is also a very key principle of project management. If you have a cost that you are clear on, pay for it at that point in time because you never know what will happen tomorrow. The dollar might rise, the value of the naira might drop, and then you might have to pay more.

It was really important that the first three months were focused on managing and understanding what the different costs would be. Although along the line, some costs change, for example, flight tickets to certain states. Likewise, we had some miscellaneous to cover, to buffer for unforeseen economic situations, and all of that stuff. That's how we managed the schedule. Like I mentioned, some other things can come up, but you just have to find a way to manage them to the barest minimum possible.

How are you able to monitor and evaluate? What are the practical steps you take to monitor and evaluate the success of the project?

It's very important that you constantly monitor. So mark the word constantly. Like I mentioned, because of how dynamic the project is, you cannot afford to relax because if one thing goes wrong, it affects all of the other elements. We have a monthly performance review alongside our almost daily conversations with the stakeholders. So sometimes you can find me calling the stakeholders to understand, Hey, what's happening? How is your business going? How is the economic situation affecting your business? So that we understand before it becomes a problem and affects the output of the project. Then sometimes, I would say quarterly, we travel to these different states to see for ourselves how the women are doing, how the equipment is doing, and how the aggregators are also doing. Also to understand how this project has helped them. That's how we monitor. And then we have a report that we send to the foundation every month. Initially, it used to be every week, but it's now every month because that's more effective. And we also have some reports that we send to the Coca-Cola Foundation every month. So many reports actually churn out every month.

How do you take learnings from fail points and how do you improve going forward?

I mentioned some things we cannot control. For example, during the election period, many collections could not happen because people were busy trying to vote for their candidates. Also during that same period, the cashless policy came on board, and the collectors were not being paid like we planned in the project for them to be paid. Our goal in the project is that these collectors be paid immediately. They drop the plastic and have value for their money immediately. So those things did not really happen at that time, and what we had to do was begin to issue some funds in cash so that at least some collectors would get them. We could not manage it because we also needed a lot of cash, which we didn't have. But some of these collectors and POS (point of sale) became prominent at that time.

Some of them had started opening accounts, and they started receiving those messages. Another instance is in terms of the equipment purchase. It was delayed; we forecasted three months, but it came in almost a year, which was a very big slap on our timeline because I remember that I had to always go to the vendor's place. We were always going there every time. We just wanted to know if the vendor was legit; maybe he took our money and ran away, but we discovered that the customs officers delayed. Then there was also some kind of Chinese festival happening, which also delayed the shipment of the product.

However, now, I know that if we're going to be purchasing next time, we should deal directly with the Chinese, because I think this was also a reason why we could not receive this one early.

In terms of aggregators uploading the numbers as quickly as possible, some of them had other engagements, some of them didn't have staff so they could outsource the work, and they were managing themselves, which was a very big setback. Imagine being a founder or CEO (Chief Executive Officer), managing the strategy, managing the finances, and also managing numbers and delivering numbers to the ECI. It's going to be a lot of work. This really affected how quickly these aggregators could upload their information, but eventually they did. I think one of the things that we've learned is that maybe next time we're also going to ask aggregators to get someone that will be dedicated specifically to the project.

But generally, it's just important to understand the business structure of the company so that you know how to engage them. We were more concerned about how they have collected and processed. We were not too concerned about what their business operational structure looks like, and that's one thing that we're going to be doing next time. Understand the business structure. Understand if they're organised or not. If they are not, they need to find somebody dedicated to this.



What advice would you give a project manager or someone that is managing this kind of dynamic project?

Because of how dynamic this project can be and this ecosystem can be very unorganised, many aggregators that are just starting up just want to make profits, not necessarily thinking about the welfare of the collectors. That's one thing that we found out when we're doing our due diligence at the beginning. Remember the first three months, you need to understand your partners, your stakeholders. Secondly, you need to extremely plan how you're going to execute.

In terms of understanding, what the scope of the project is, what are you delivering? If it's numbers, how many metric tons are you looking for? If it's impact, how many women and what level of impact is it? Is it in terms of income, is it in terms of health, is it in terms of all of those ESG kind of impacts? You also have to clearly clarify and document it and then before you begin to plan on how to execute.

In terms of what specification of equipment you need to get, how you're going to be interacting with stakeholders, how you're going to be reporting, what level of partners are you going to be engaging with if you want this project to succeed?

Then another advice I would give for a project manager coming to this space is to have this empathy for these aggregators. I know that you might want to focus really on the numbers, but really there are things that are happening in the country that are also affecting them. And there's really nothing you can do except to understand and help them grow their business. That's really why we think that some of these aggregators are still performing, because one thing we do is we reach out to them most of the time and we just want to ask them, how are you doing? How are you faring mentally? Because this thing can also be difficult for a founder especially in this economic situation, they are drained, they are frustrated.

Again, try to meet your impact as much as you're going to be empathetic. Let your focus also be on impact, on your goal. You need to achieve them. There are clever ways at which you can communicate to an aggregator to say, 'okay, so I understand that you're going through this, but you also have to understand that we have a target to meet and if you don't meet these targets, it means we will not be able to get future funds'. So emotional intelligence is also very important where you learn how to communicate properly, which is pretty much in the communication, because there's a communication element of project management.



Who can I call or refer to if I need help?

- You can access the link below for a basic project management and budget setting template.
- Project Plan/Budget Template
- You can take this simple project management course on Coursera here.
- You can reach the CBP secretariat through cbp@circularlagos.com.
- Seek advice from mentors or network with peers who have experience in community development projects. They can offer practical guidance based on their own experiences.

Fundraising

What is it?

Fundraising is the process of raising money to carry out your initiative.

Why is it important?

Without adequate resources, it is difficult, if not impossible to carry out your project.

How do I get started?

- It is critical that you properly go through each step in this guide before carrying out the fundraising process. Without knowing your objectives, how you will deliver them and with whom, it is very difficult to create an accurate budget for your programme. When you are ready to draft the budget, you may use this simple [budget template](#).
- Once you have drafted a compelling programme plan, complete with the budget, share it with people that you believe will give you honest feedback and advice to improve it. Early conversations with others can help you develop a stronger programme and identify both funding and delivery partners.

How can I tell if I am doing it well?

While you may think that getting money is the best indication that you are fundraising well, this is true, but only in part. Fundraising is a long and difficult process that involves identifying realistic potential sponsors and building relationships with them.



- Strategies such as cold calling and mass emailing may not be the most efficient way of reaching potential sponsors simply because many likely receive proposals that are similar to yours on a daily basis.
- This means you must work hard to really understand the needs of potential sponsors and how your programme helps to meet them. Understanding this will help you determine the individuals and organisations that have missions that are most compatible with your delivery objectives. While it takes time to raise money, receiving positive feedback and suggestions from new people to speak with is a good indication that you are on the right track. Where you fail to succeed with grants and other sponsorship proposals, don't be shy about asking for feedback. The more knowledge you have, the better position you are in to improve your chances of raising money for your project.

Stories from the Field

Rite on the Beach

Tell us a bit about yourselves:

Rite on the Beach are intersectional environmentalists. We currently focus on the intersection between education and plastic pollution. Our goal is generational change through education. We operate by designing sustainable scalable networks to socialise the problem with plastic pollution and literacy .

How did you develop the budget for your project?

We broke it down into specific functions required and timelines, we prioritised items on this list and worked out what the basic essential requirements are to proceed.

How long did it take you to raise money to deliver the project?

Seven months from inception.

What were the key factors that contributed to success?

There were ten key areas we worked on which contributed to our fundraising and project success. This includes:

- Identifying key players in the community who can support and play a role in the programme
- Having meetings with all possible participants in advance of and during the project.
- Identifying who is willing and ignoring the naysayers.



- Having meetings with the community in advance of and during the project.
- Having clear objectives, which we worked out as a part of our consultation with stakeholders.
- Focusing on low hanging fruits
- Letting the community design the project to deliver the objectives the way they see fit
- Setting clear goals and timelines around the objectives
- Being stationed on ground at the beginning to ensure goals are met
- Carrying out regular essential town meetings.

Have you failed to raise money to carry out your projects? How did you learn from this experience?

We have had funding issues. It is not easy to fundraise and even long term partners may change their objectives without much notice. To manage this we try to have a number of partnerships and are clear that we can cover our basic expenditure, so ensuring the project stays alive even if funding stops. Having clear timelines also means we can grow accordingly with the cash we have available and demonstrates that we are able to manage the uncertainty of cash flows.

What is the most important thing that someone should do when they begin to raise money for projects?

Identify the value of the project to the business you wish to raise money from. It must be valuable to the bottom line, not just emotionally.

Think Corporate Social Impact not Responsibility

Description of Intervention

How did you develop the budget for your project?

How long did it take you to raise money to deliver the project?

What were the key factors that contributed to success?

Have you failed to raise money to carry out your projects? How did you learn from this experience?

What is the most important thing that someone should do when they begin to raise money for projects?

Who can I call or refer to if I need help?

[Complete full programme plan with budget template and contact CBP](#)



Learning from your experience and from others

What is it?

Learning from your experiences and from others involves actively seeking knowledge, insights, lessons and best practices from both your own experiences and those of others who have tackled similar challenges to improve your community engagement efforts. It allows you to draw from a wealth of knowledge and avoid mistakes that others might have made in times past.

Why is it important?

When learning from your experience, you review your successes and failures with a goal to identify the things that worked well and areas to be improved upon. When you combine that with seeking insights and best practices from others, you become more effective in your delivery and make more impact. Below are a few other reasons why this is important:

- **Efficient use of time and resources:** It allows you to save time that would have been spent reinventing the wheel, enabling you to efficiently manage the resources available to you.
- **Knowledge Transfer:** It allows you to tap into the collective wisdom of your community or experts in the field, accelerating your learning curve and avoiding common pitfalls.
- **Problem-Solving:** Collaborative learning enables you to address unique challenges in your community by adapting successful strategies from other places.
- **Effective Solutions/interventions:** It helps in identifying effective waste management solutions that have already been tested by others, and creating innovative interventions drawing from proven strategies and best practices.

Learning from others is not limited only to experts in the field but also the team that works with you and the members of the community you want to engage with. Encouraging community members to share their experiences fosters a sense of ownership and empowerment, making waste management initiatives more sustainable.



How do I get started?

We have divided this section into two parts:

- How do you get started learning from your own experiences;
- How do you get started learning from others?

We have also added a list of questions that you can ask during the learning process, either during your self reflection process or interviews with others.

Learning from your experiences:

Step 1: Self Reflection-

Begin by reflecting on your own experiences and past waste management efforts. Identify what worked well and what didn't. You can also look through the list of questions at the end of this section and select those that apply when engaging in self reflection. It is recommended that you make this a habit or a part of your process when you carry out project activities. This self-assessment is the foundation for improvement.

Step 2: Documentation -

Keep a detailed record of your waste management interventions. Note the challenges faced, solutions implemented, and outcomes achieved. Documenting your experiences allows you to track progress and learn from mistakes.

Step 3: Data Analysis -

Data-driven insights are valuable for making informed decisions. Analyse the data you've collected during your waste management activities. Look for trends, patterns, and areas where improvements can be made.

Step 4: Goal Setting -

We constantly generate new experiences. One of the ways to take advantage of your experiences is to set clear objectives for what you want to learn from them even before they happen. Define specific goals and key performance indicators (KPIs) to measure your progress. This way, you are more likely to be intentional about your actions and activities.

Step 5: Lessons Learned Sessions -

Remember that you are a part of a team and it helps to also share your learnings with them and hear from them as well. Organise regular "lessons learned" sessions with your team or community members involved in waste management. Encourage open and honest discussions about what has been effective and what needs improvement.



Learning From Others:

There are a number of ways to learn from others, this can involve meeting them at networking events, seeking out online resources (blogs, forums, social media platforms like LinkedIn), conducting interviews and surveys, engaging in collaborative or joint projects with experienced stakeholders, getting a mentor to provide you professional advice, case studies and publications from libraries and community workshops.

To initiate the process of asking for insights, consider these steps:

Step 1: Identify Stakeholders -

Identify individuals, organisations, or communities with experience in waste management.

Step 2: Connect and Build Relationships -

Reach out to these stakeholders through meetings, social events, or online platforms to build trust and rapport.

Step 3: Ask Questions -

Develop a list of relevant questions and topics to discuss, focusing on your specific waste management challenges.

Step 4: Arrange Meetings -

Organise meetings, workshops, or interviews to facilitate open and constructive discussions.

Step 5: Record and Share -

Document the insights gained and share them with your community for further discussion and planning.

How can I tell if I am doing it well?

Measuring the effectiveness of learnings and applied learnings in waste management community interventions can be assessed through various key performance indicators:

Knowledge Gain: Measure how much new knowledge you have acquired over time.

Improved Practices: Assess whether your waste management practices have improved based on the insights you've gathered.



Feedback: Solicit feedback from community members and stakeholders to evaluate the impact of your efforts.

Collaboration: Determine the extent of collaboration and knowledge sharing within your community.

Resource Efficiency: Evaluate whether you are making better use of resources as a result of learning from others.

Stories from the Field

P.I.B. Global Services

Tell us a bit about your organisation:

P.I.B. Global Services was founded with the Environment at heart. We take environmental problems personally and are dedicated to providing sustainable solutions to environmental problems.

Who do you speak to in the process of developing and delivering interventions?

I speak to mentors, trainers, people in similar fields as me and more. I have a couple of people who serve as my mentors, there are others whose works inspire me and I let them know that I am inspired by their results. I try to build a relationship with a few of them and share plans that I am chasing. I keep them in the know of my progress as well. Amazingly, there are some that I have never met in person, but that doesn't matter because of the access that technology and social media platforms like Facebook or LinkedIn has provided us. I also speak to people that are doing similar things that I am doing. I have someone presently on my team who was one of the trainers that introduced me to the usefulness of water hyacinth when I was attending a UNDP programme in my community a couple of years ago. These people provide guidance for me at instances where I am stuck and even caution me when they sense that I am going off track.

Were potential partners who were unfamiliar with your organisation responsive to your requests? Tell us how you learn from the people you serve as an organisation:

Most of our projects are community centred, and for the products that we create as well are people centred. In the course of working on these two things, I have learnt to be patient and listen to what those who you are serving are saying.



Of course, not everyone accepts the innovations or the ideas we are pushing forward, and those that accept it won't all have the same level of acceptance, that's where being adaptable comes in, we have to still being able to we accept the reviews and weigh them internally as a team to see if there is anything we can learn from what has been shared and figure out a way to implement the parts that are a great fit from our vision.

Are there any practices that you engage in to reflect on the success and mishaps as you work with communities?

We have a practice to ensure that before we go out we have done some research to learn about what is appropriate and should be avoided. A lot of times too, the community might even be the one to tell you how they would prefer you go about implementing your solutions. For example, working with northern communities, you have to respect their culture and how they are very careful about addressing females, even if they would probably be the ones that would benefit most from the work we are doing at that time. Keeping things like this in mind, at the end of most of our initiatives, I always try to see what and record what went well and what didn't, and at the same time I consider how the culture around the community or even simple things like personal differences might have influenced the outcome. I think this helps to never make a mistake of generalising eventualities.

What would you identify as the most important thing when learning from others?

I would say openness and transparency is important. As much as you possibly can, you need to be able to give some context to the questions you need them to help provide answers on. Sharing areas where you are succeeding and the challenges you are encountering can help them rub minds with you to identify possible solutions.

Who can I call or refer to if I need help?

1. Use the questions here to help you reflect on your learnings or as a guide to preparing for an interview with someone knowledgeable in the space.
2. Reach out to CBP Secretariat.



