SMART INDICATORS GUIDE

WHY THIS TOOL MATTERS?

SMART indicators help you define goals and measure progress in a clear, structured and meaningful way. Whether you are planning a student project, NGO activity, community initiative or academic assignment, SMART indicators ensure that your objectives are realistic, trackable and aligned with your overall aims. Instead of vague or overly ambitious goals, the SMART approach turns your ideas into practical steps you can monitor and evaluate. This tool matters because it builds accountability, improves project planning, and makes it easier to demonstrate impact—skills especially valuable for students and young people working in informal groups or civil-society organisations.

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HOW TO USE IT?

How to Use It (Step-by-Step)

1. **Define the goal you want to measure**
   Write a general objective (e.g., improve participation, increase awareness, strengthen skills).
2. **Check if your indicator is SMART:**
   - **S – Specific:** Is the indicator clear and focused?
   - **M – Measurable:** Can you track progress with numbers or observable criteria?
   - **A – Achievable:** Is the goal realistic with your available time and resources?
   - **R – Relevant:** Does it clearly support your project's purpose?
   - **T – Time-bound:** Is there a clear deadline or timeframe?
3. **Rewrite the indicator until it meets all SMART criteria.**
4. **Test it with your team**
   Ask: *Would everyone understand how to measure this?*
5. **Use it to monitor progress**
   Collect data regularly and evaluate results against the SMART criteria.

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TIPS

SMART Indicator Builder Table

SMART Element	Guiding Questions	Your Notes
Specific	What exactly do we want to measure?	
Measurable	How will we quantify success? What data will we collect?	
Achievable	Is this realistic with our resources and skills?	
Relevant	How does this indicator support the overall goal?	
Time-bound	When will the goal be achieved? What is the deadline?	
Final SMART Indicator (1–2 sentences)		

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