

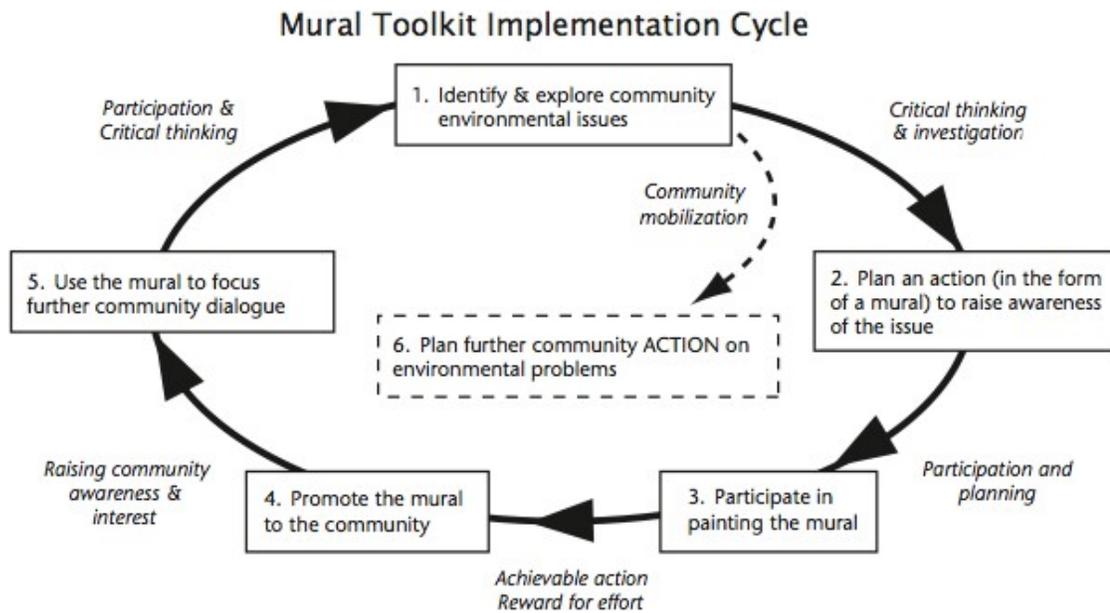
MURAL PAINTING

AREA/S OF FOCUS	Education; community building; reclaiming public space; beautifying
ACTIVITY DESCRIPTION	A <i>mural</i> is an artwork painted on a large permanent surface such as a wall where it can be seen by the public. Murals can be made individually or by a group of people who work together to communicate important messages about social and environmental issues.
TARGET GROUP	Students, community members, fishermen, parents, non-profits, general public
INTENDED OUTCOMES	To take part in participatory learning, decision making, planning and action; to mobilize community awareness and action about specific issues.
TOTAL TIME	Depends on the surface and number of participants.
NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS	Unlimited
MATERIALS	Big paper, markers, tape, acrylic exterior paint colors, brushes, charcoal, recycled containers to mix the paint, water containers, newsprint, rags, tarp or plastic
SETTING	Exterior or interior walls, fences, water tanks, piers, floor, etc.

INTRODUCTORY FRAME

Optional: share a slide show with images of different murals, subjects and contexts

Murals are intended to assist communities to raise awareness and inspire action around specific environmental problems. The mural is an effective way to involve people in an art project that is visual, achievable and rewarding. Environmental issues can sometimes feel too big or too difficult to handle, or sometimes they are just taken for granted as the way things are so we feel there is nothing we can do. Community murals can empower the community to take action. Participants in the project will develop knowledge and skills in participatory decision making and planning, as well as deepen their knowledge specific environmental issues.



(Source: Live & Learn Environmental Education and Ministry of Environment, Energy and Water)

PROCESS

STEP 1: Form a team

It will be an advantage to include people from various different backgrounds, ages, genders and ethnicities in your community. Participation of a diverse range of people will increase the groups' capacity to think creatively, broaden the skill base, share the workload, build trust and encourage people to feel ownership of the mural project.

It may be useful to involve leaders from the community – these are the people who have the power and capacity to get things done. Depending on what you want to do, you may need their support or permission. Ask them for support and involve them as much as you can.

STEP 2: Develop content

Facilitate activities that encourage participants to think critically and engage in dialogue about the environmental issues in their community to examine how they impact people's livelihoods, health and well-being.

Suggested activities: World Café, Six Colored Thinking Hats, Art Codes

STEP 3: Design the mural

- Decide on the key message(s)
- Design the appearance of the mural based on the message
 - *Materials needed:* pencils, mural design worksheets
- Ask the group to work together to produce a draft design or concept for the mural

Explain that it will be up to the group to determine how they will work together to create the mural concept. For example, they may want to produce many concepts together and then choose the best one, or they may designate a small team to brainstorm concepts and bring them back to the group.

STEP 4: Plan for action

- Develop an action plan to coordinate the logistics of painting the mural
- Utilize participatory planning processes:
 - Ensure that everyone in the group has a role to play.
 - Identify the tasks that need to be completed: buy materials, prepare the surface, wash the brushes, clean containers, call the participants, etc.
 - Decide who in the group will do each task
 - Decide when the task needs to be completed
 - Determine the resources that will be needed and how you will obtain them – try asking local businesses if they will donate supplies!

STEP 5: Prep and paint the mural

- Select the wall or surface and ask permission to use it.
- Clean it, scrub it, and brush it.
- Paint it with a first layer of white paint mixed with thinner so that it stretches.
- *Optional:* make a grid of your drawing and then on the wall.
- Draw and then paint the outline first.
- Paint from top to bottom so that if the paint drips, it doesn't ruin completed work. Try to use acrylic paint.
- Coordinate the community in different work groups: material preparation and maintenance, sketching, individual painting, working on different segments, clean-up, etc.
- Keep the work area clean. Cover the ground with a tarp or nylon about 6 feet in front of the wall and under the paint station.
- Teach respect for the materials! Make sure that wet paintbrushes aren't left to dry and harden in the sun; if they aren't being used, they should be stored in containers of water or cleaned immediately.
- Take photos and videos throughout the process and share on social media to broaden the 'reach' of your message. The mural will continue to communicate the message long after it is painted.

STEP 6: Unveil the mural

Organize an unveiling event to celebrate the achievements of the group and raise awareness of the issue in the community. This is also an opportunity to focus the attention of the broader community on the mural and the message that it promotes.

Some ideas:

- Invite special guests and the general community to a grand 'unveiling'
- Ask a high profile person to 'launch' the mural
- Invite experts from the field associated with the 'main message' of the mural to facilitate a dialogue with community at the launch – include ideas for how they can get involved and take action around the issue

- Organize entertainment – singing, dancing, drama or food around the theme (or message) of the mural
- Ask local media (TV, radio, newspaper, etc...) to report on the mural
- Share through social media
- Have a day of action along the theme of the mural. For example if your mural is about waste management, organize an island clean-up day.

STEP 6: Reflect and evaluate

Objectives

- Reflect on what was learned through the process
- Identify ways to stay involved and motivated

Reflection activity:

- Invite the people associated with the mural project to a meeting.
- Divide the participants into pairs.
- Ask each person to close their eyes and think about all the activities that they have done to create the mural. (Provide a couple of minutes for this)

- Provide each pair with a 2 copies of a reflection sheet :
 - *Because of the mural project, I know ...*
 - *Because of the mural project, I can...*
 - *Because of the mural project, I feel...*
 - *Because of the mural project, I will...*

Explain what is meant by each statement. The first statement relates to *knowledge* gained, the second to *skills*, the third to *feelings and values* and the final question relates to how the project may have influenced participants *future actions or behaviors*.

1. Ask the pairs to interview each other (using the statements on the reflection sheet). The interviewee must finish each statement read out by the interviewer, who will write down the responses. The interviewer should be instructed to listen very carefully and write down the thoughts of their partner without interrupting.
2. When everyone has finished the exercise, ask for volunteers to share their reflections with the whole group.

Mural Design Worksheet

Main Message:

Target Group:

