



PROMENHANCE



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# Collaborative Futures

## Mastering Participatory Community Development

An e-learning modular curriculum  
prototype for future professionals in  
participatory community development



**Led by:**

**National University of Science and Technology  
POLITEHNICA Bucharest**



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## Before we get started

In today's interconnected world, the vitality of communities and the effectiveness of community development are paramount. Our course, "**Collaborative Futures: Mastering Participatory Community Development**," critically explores the methodologies and strategies underpinning successful community development. Designed for **students** and **new practitioners in community development, urban planning, sociology, and related areas**, this course emphasizes the essential skills and knowledge needed to foster resilient and sustainable communities.

Through a series of detailed **modules**, participants will learn to navigate and influence the complex systems of local governance, employ strategic planning, and engage communities in meaningful ways. The course addresses the pressing need for leaders and change-makers to understand and implement participatory approaches that lead to equitable and inclusive development outcomes.

Prepare to deepen your understanding of **community dynamics** and enhance your ability to lead and innovate in **community development**. Join us in cultivating the skills that make a tangible difference in the lives of communities and their members.

# Before we get started

**Collaborative Futures: Mastering Participatory Community Development** is a comprehensive e-learning course designed to equip learners with in-depth knowledge and practical skills in **participatory community development**. Spanning **ten modules**, this course delves into various aspects of local development, community assessment, strategic planning, and community engagement. Each module, structured to be completed in 1-2 hours, includes lecture videos, interactive books, and quizzes. Through this course, participants will gain a nuanced understanding of **local governance**, **socio-economic** and **environmental factors** in development, and effective strategies for **advocacy**, **collaboration**, and **capacity building**. This course is ideal for individuals looking to enhance their expertise in local development and community engagement, whether they are **early-career practitioners**, **students**, or **enthusiasts** in the field.

## Learning outcomes

Upon successful completion of this course, participants will be able to:

- Understand the fundamentals of local development and the role of a local developer.
- Grasp theoretical foundations and practical approaches to community assessment and analysis.
- Develop skills in planning and executing community development strategies, incorporating sustainable development principles.
- Engage and empower communities effectively, utilizing diverse partnerships and participatory methods.
- Manage local development projects proficiently, with a focus on resource mobilization, monitoring, evaluation, and risk management.
- Foster collaboration and networking with stakeholders, building strategic alliances, and advocating for community needs.
- Apply advocacy and political engagement techniques to influence policies and create persuasive messages.
- Identify and address capacity gaps, design training programs, and use mentorship and coaching techniques for empowerment.
- Engage in reflective practice and professional development, with an emphasis on ethical decision-making and personal growth.

# Before we get started

## ★ Skills

Community Assessment, Strategic Planning and Implementation, Stakeholder Engagement and Management, Advocacy and Political Engagement, Project Management, Capacity Building and Training, Collaborative Leadership and Teamwork, Effective Communication, Reflective Practice and Ethical Decision-Making, Research and Analysis

## 📄 Course format - How is this course structured?

This course consists of 10 modules that treat 10 general topics related to participatory community development. Each module is designed to take 2-4 hours of study to complete. Each module consists of short introductions and video lectures. Some of the modules include interactive books. Most modules close with a review quiz.

### Lecture format

- per module: on average 1 lecture video (8-10 min.) and one interactive book (30-40 min.)

### Assignment format

- 1 quiz per module, 6 in total

**Exam format:** the final exam will consist of 30 multiple-choice questions

## 🗨️ Requirements - What resources do I need?

### Prerequisites

This course is perfect for those aiming to deepen their knowledge in local development and community engagement, including early-career practitioners, students, and enthusiasts.

### Study resources

Essential reading materials for assignments will be provided. Additionally, throughout the course, further reading suggestions will be offered, though participation in these extra materials is optional.

# Who created this course?



**Your dream job is closer than you think.**

## **Module 1: Who is involved in participatory local development?**

### **Learning objectives:**

By the end of this module, you will:

- Grasp the professional's role in local development along with the essential traits of the professional profile.
- Familiarize yourself with the interdisciplinary aspects of local development projects and the various professions that are involved.
- Comprehend the professional's role within the local ecosystem, which both influences and is influenced by local development strategies.

### **Module description:**

This introductory module is the starting point of this course providing an understanding of the **professional aspects** of individuals involved in participatory local development. Learners will be informed about who is involved in **local development plans, projects, and policies**, revealing the wide spectrum of professionals dealing with these aspects. **Planners, architects, policymakers, academics, and local associations** are only some groups that can be part of the local interdisciplinary teams that need to be addressed for local sustainable development to be planned effectively. Insights will also be provided in terms of their profile and characteristics, mentioning key competencies connected with the rest of the designed course. In addition, participants will learn how these professionals are involved in such projects and what the specific activities are, stressing the importance of participatory approaches to this end. In this way, the necessity of including a participatory mentality in this profession will be stressed highlighting at the same time local development critical concerns. Finally, to understand their role better a description of the **decision and planning environment** in which they are operating will be presented highlighting complexity and interconnectivity issues that demand a strong collaboration mindset.

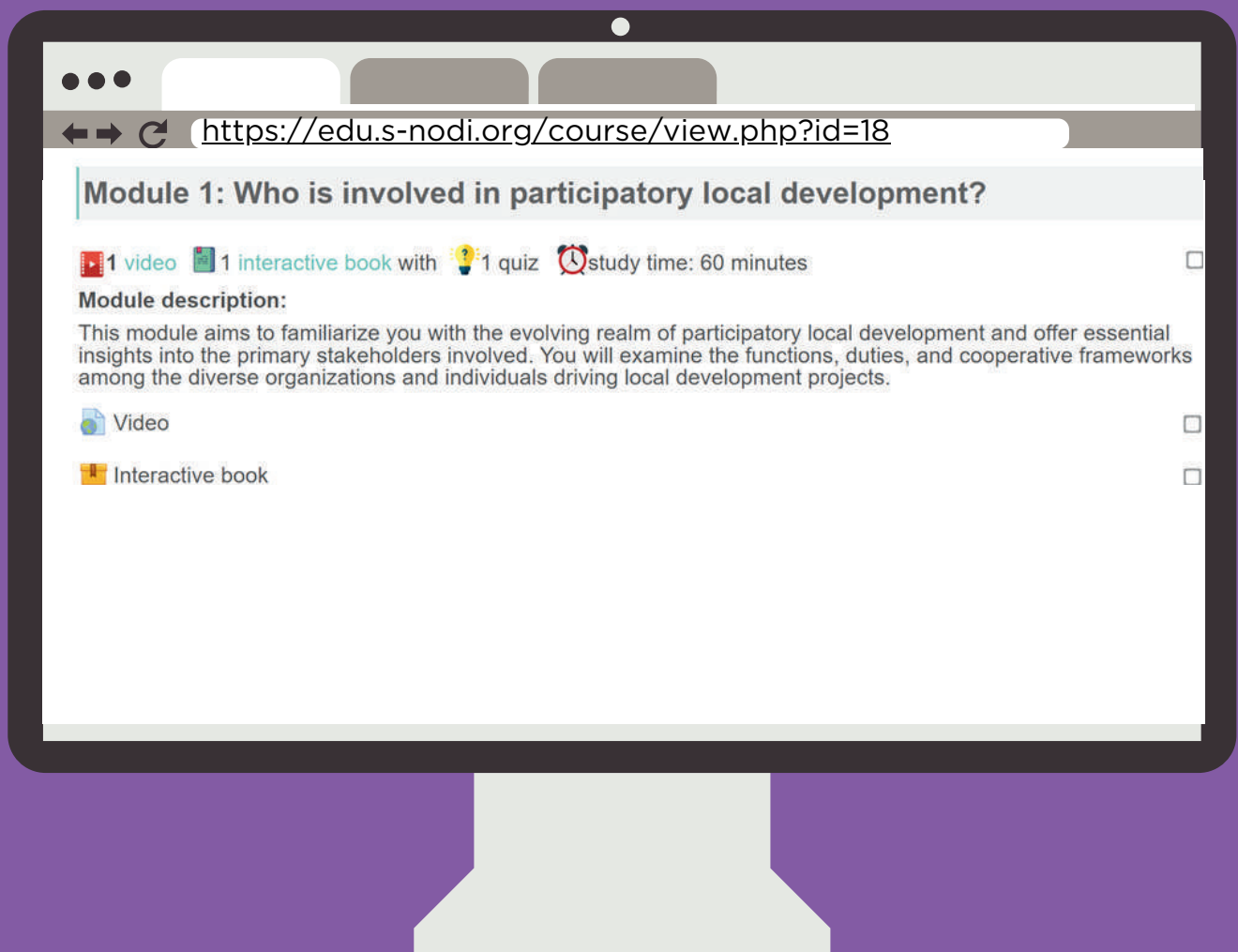
## Topics

- Introduction to Local Governance Structures & Policies
- Identify and address capacity gaps
- Reflect on personal values and biases
- Possess knowledge of career pathways



## e-Learning Platform

To enroll in this module, visit <https://edu.s-nodi.org/> and set up an account. Self-enrollment is open for all modules within the Collaborative Futures course.



# Module 2: Theoretical Foundations

## Learning objectives:

By the end of this module, you will:

- Develop a comprehensive understanding of the theoretical dimensions connected with participatory local development.
- Foster an appreciation for the integration of sustainability principles in local development, encouraging participants to consider the environmental, social, and economic dimensions of their initiatives for long-term impact.
- Develop an understanding of participatory local governance theories, structures, and mechanisms, enabling participants to identify and analyze the key factors influencing effective governance in community-driven development.

## Module description:

This module focuses on the **theoretical foundations** of **participatory local development**, exploring **principles** and **frameworks** that guide community initiatives. Participants will learn about **local and regional development definitions**, the integration of theories like **place-based** and **integrated approaches** into policy, and the emphasis on **sustainability** in planning. It examines governance structures, including both formal institutions and non-governmental actors, and their critical roles in local development. The module also covers participatory governance and inclusive planning, highlighting current global trends in sustainable practices.

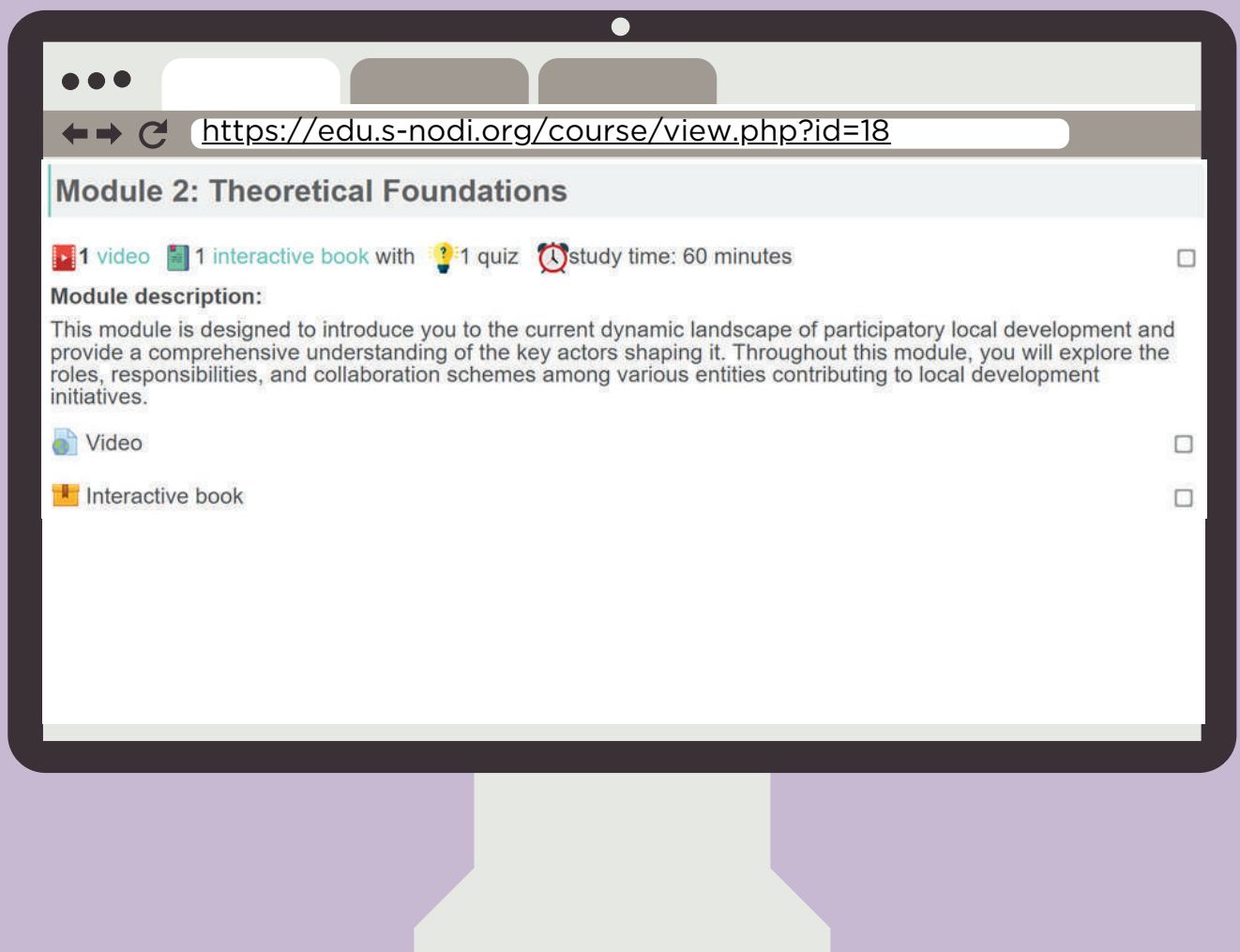
## Topics

- Community Engagement (CE) Theories and Concepts
- Introduction to Local Governance Structures & Policies
- Socio-Economic and Environmental Factors in Local Development
- Awareness of cultural diversity



## e-Learning Platform

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# Module 3: Community Assessment & Analysis

## Learning objectives:

By the end of this module, you will:

- Gain and improve understanding of what community assessment is defining its role in community development
- Learn how to design a process of community assessment analysis
- Become competent in identifying and selecting appropriate data sources for community assessment from a diverse and inclusive perspective.
- Become proficient in using data collection methods to gather information about community needs and assets
- Learn how to analyze, interpret, and communicate data to identify patterns and trends
- Become proficient in participatory methods and facilitating techniques that help community members in taking part in community assessment processes through appropriate capacity building methods and co-design approaches.

## Module description:

The Community Assessment and Analysis module equips students with systematic, multidisciplinary **methods** to evaluate **community needs** and **assets**, focusing on **data-driven community development**. It emphasizes participatory techniques to enhance **stakeholder involvement** and covers principles, methods, and tools for effective assessment. The course is designed for students and early-career professionals in various community-oriented roles.

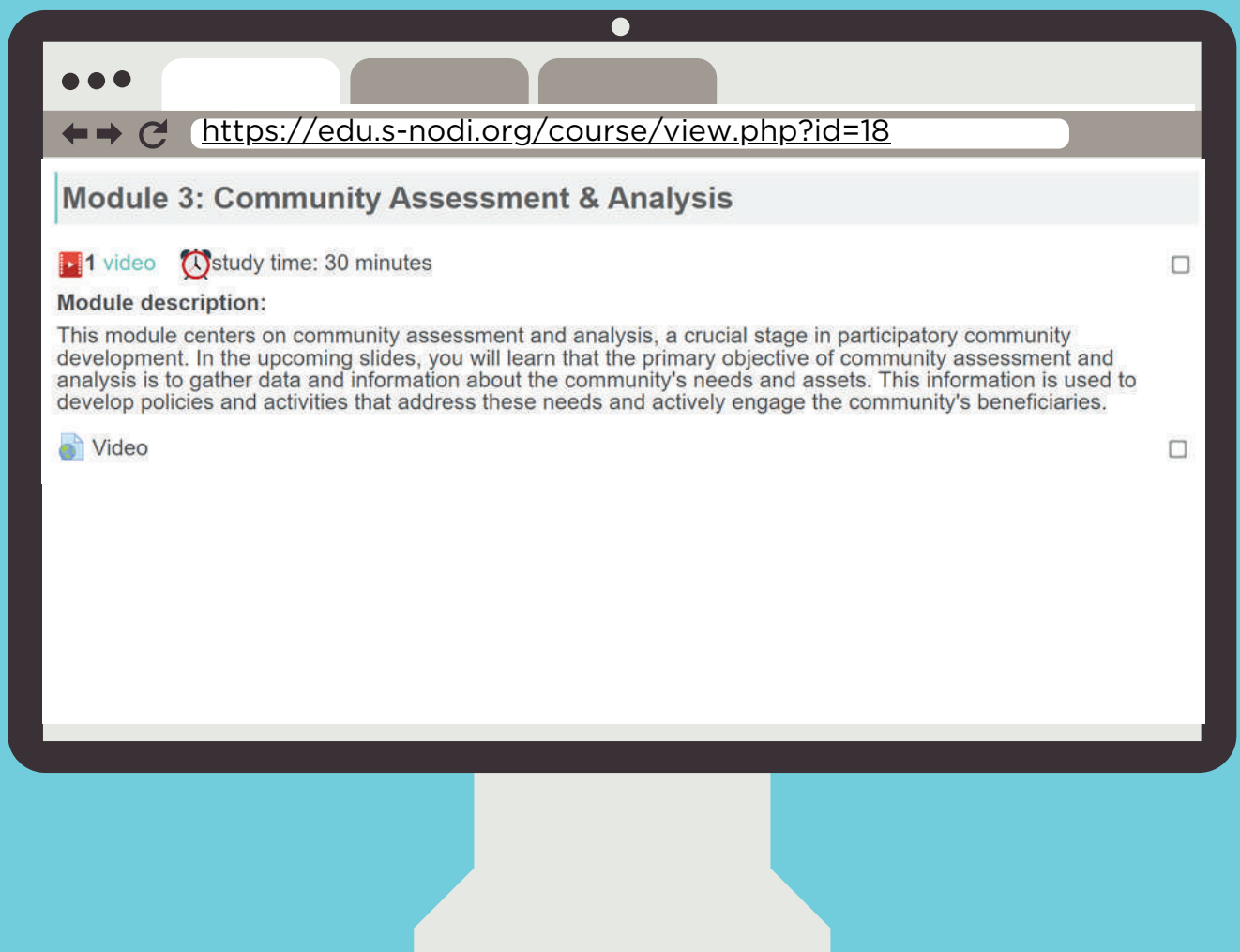
## Topics

- Definition and purpose of community assessment
- Design a community assessment and analysis process
- Design data search and selection for community assessment
- Types of data used in community assessment
- Methods of data collection
- Data analysis techniques
- Communication and dissemination of assessment findings



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# Module 4: Planning and Strategy Development

## Learning objectives:

By the end of this module, you will:

- You will be able to comprehend the various phases and scales of planning.
- You will learn to identify territorial plans and programs in different situations and understand their functions.
- You will understand how to incorporate development strategies into existing planning instruments.
- You will be able to integrate public participation into the development of territorial plans effectively.
- You will learn to design monitoring systems based on the definition of specific indicators.
- You will understand the significance of sustainability and learn to integrate it as a core objective in development strategy.

## Module description:

**Territorial planning** relies on adaptable principles. Understanding **planning theories** enables the design of community development **strategies**, regardless of each territory's administrative specifics. Creating plans requires knowledge of various phases—from **analysis** to **management**—considering the territory, environment, society, and administration collectively. Recognizing the purposes of planning—whom it serves and involves—is crucial for formulating effective community development strategies.

The Planning and Strategy Development module aims to provide training in understanding **territorial planning** and **management instruments**, knowing what they are and how they are designed, enabling, from a theoretical and conceptual approach, the design of **development strategies** including references to sustainability and the design of **monitoring strategies** through the construction of management **indicators**. As the applicable standards are different in each country, the approach will allow an understanding of the territorial planning and management system principles.

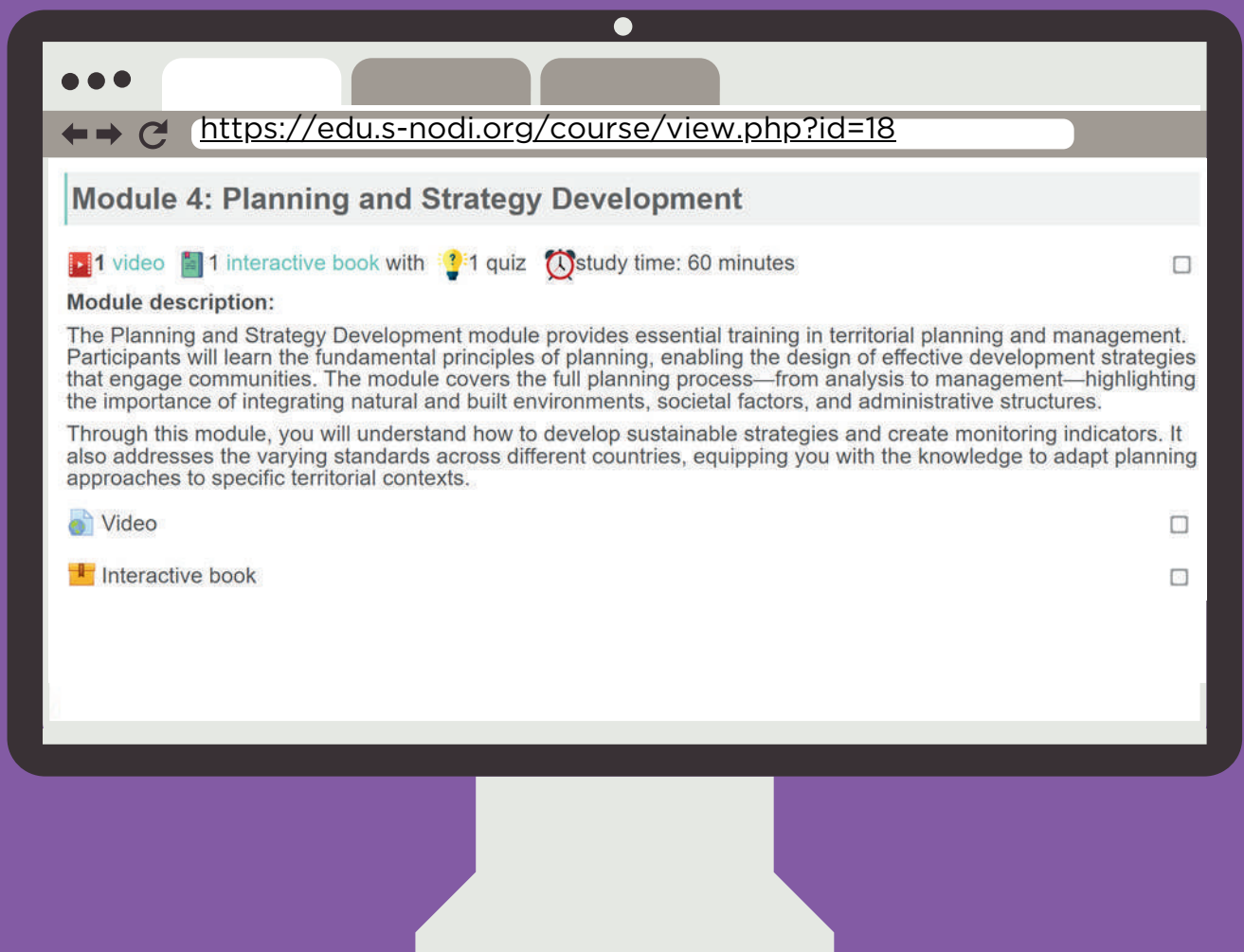
## Topics



- Understanding Territorial Planning. Phases, purposes, and methods
- The analysis as support for designing plans (with people and for people)
- Designing Strategic Community Plans
- Setting Objectives and Impact Indicators
- Integrating Sustainable Development Principles

## e-Learning Platform

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# Module 5: Community Engagement and Participation



## Learning objectives:

By the end of this module, you will:

- You will become knowledgeable about the various definitions and approaches used in community engagement.
- You will acquire a comprehensive understanding of how community engagement and participation are integrated within the policy framework of the European Union.
- You will be able to identify the key principles and essential elements of community engagement.
- You will become proficient in designing a community engagement process and learn about vital tools such as stakeholder mapping and the theory of change.
- You will develop proficiency in designing community engagement impact assessments and evaluating their effects on individuals, communities, and society as a whole.

## Module description:

New forms of governance and engagement, along with innovative methods of building social cohesion through community participation, are transforming structures in local governments, welfare organizations, and educational institutions. This module explores the concept of "community engagement," used variably across professional, academic, and political realms. It aims to identify key elements, provide knowledge of tools for designing community participation in development processes, and how to assess the impact of these engagements.

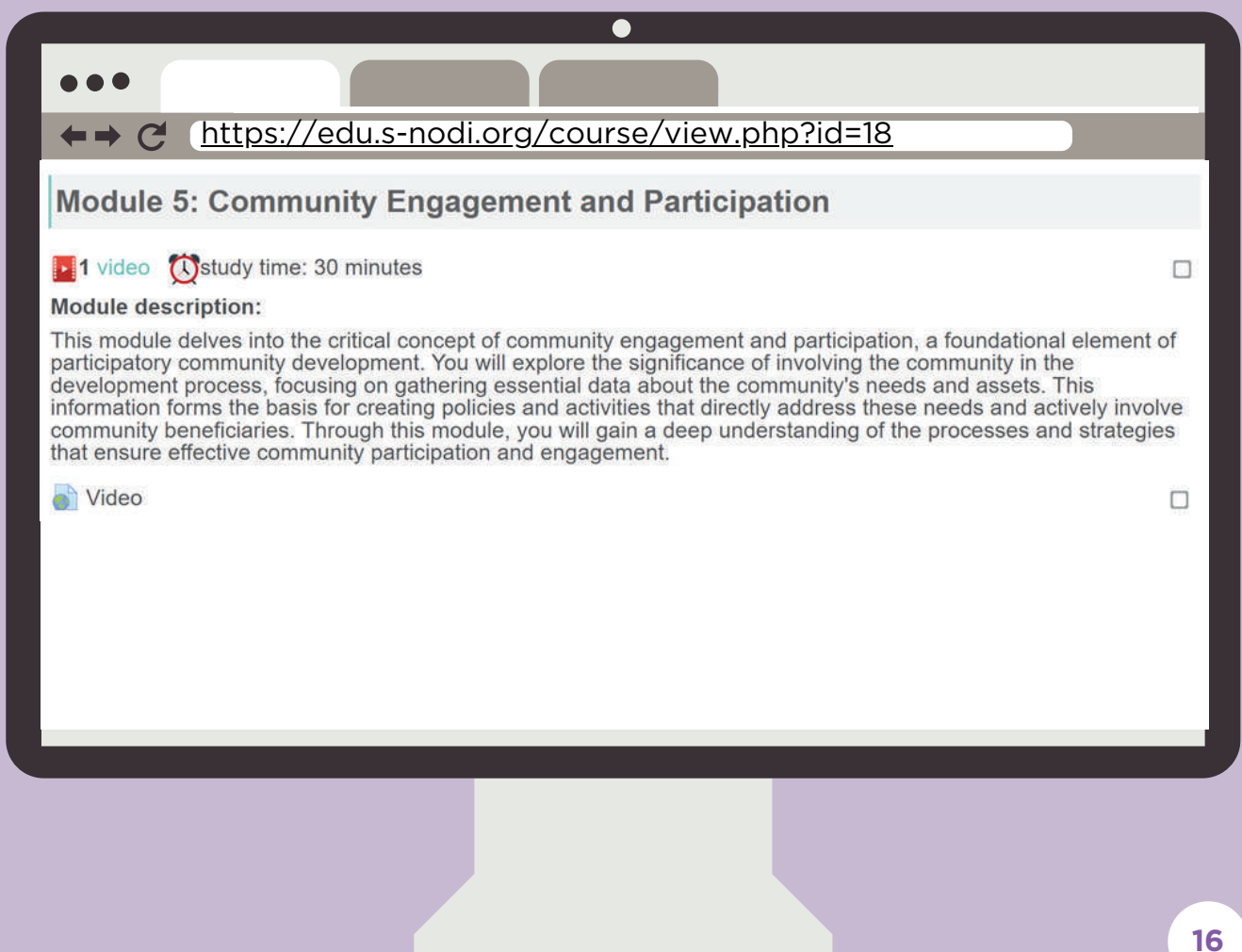
## Topics

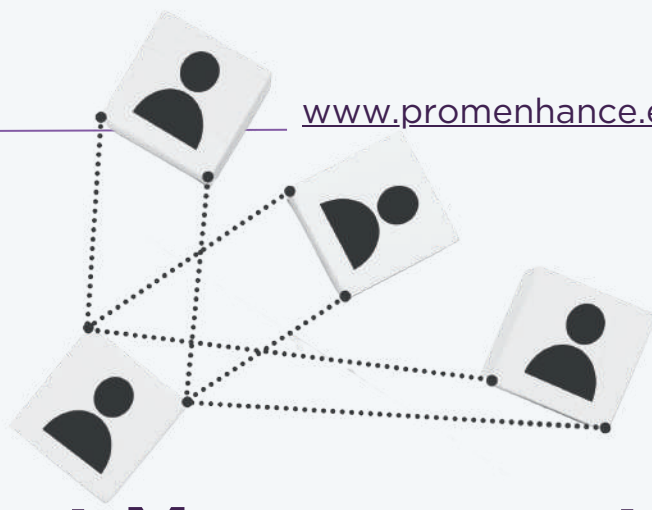
- Community engagement definition and approaches from the most recent academic literature
- European policy framework
- Key elements and principles of a community engagement process
- Stakeholder mapping
- Theory of Change
- Impact assessment design applied to community engagement processes
- Communication Techniques for Community Engagement



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# Module 6: Project Management and Implementation

## Learning objectives:

By the end of this module, you will:

- You will be able to define the most appropriate method(s) for managing a specific project.
- You will learn to initiate and plan a project, including activities, timelines, and budgeting, using suitable tools and techniques.
- You will acquire the skills to control project deliverables, work, time, and costs effectively.
- You will be able to implement typical project management tools and conduct effective project meetings.
- You will understand and be able to use the technical language and terminology specific to project management.

## Module description:

The key objective of the project will be to create **processes** and **solutions** that derive from substantial research pieces for each partner country as well as provide **innovative tools** for the target group to be able to utilize those outputs. Regarding project management and coordination, we define that keeping communication flowing between all partners and stakeholders is crucial for the success of the implementation, and to create an impact in the final beneficiaries' lives. Project Management, Monitoring, and Quality Assurance intend to be an overarching work package that monitors the project activities' timely and high-quality implementation within the predetermined budget.

**Quality and impact assessment** are central to our activities, approach, and strategy. In this respect, the methodological direction of the project prioritizes the achievement of results and deliverables through means of knowledge acquisition; knowledge which is obtained at each stage and transferred to subsequent ones. The reason for committing to this approach is that it safeguards the efficient execution of the project's general and specific objectives

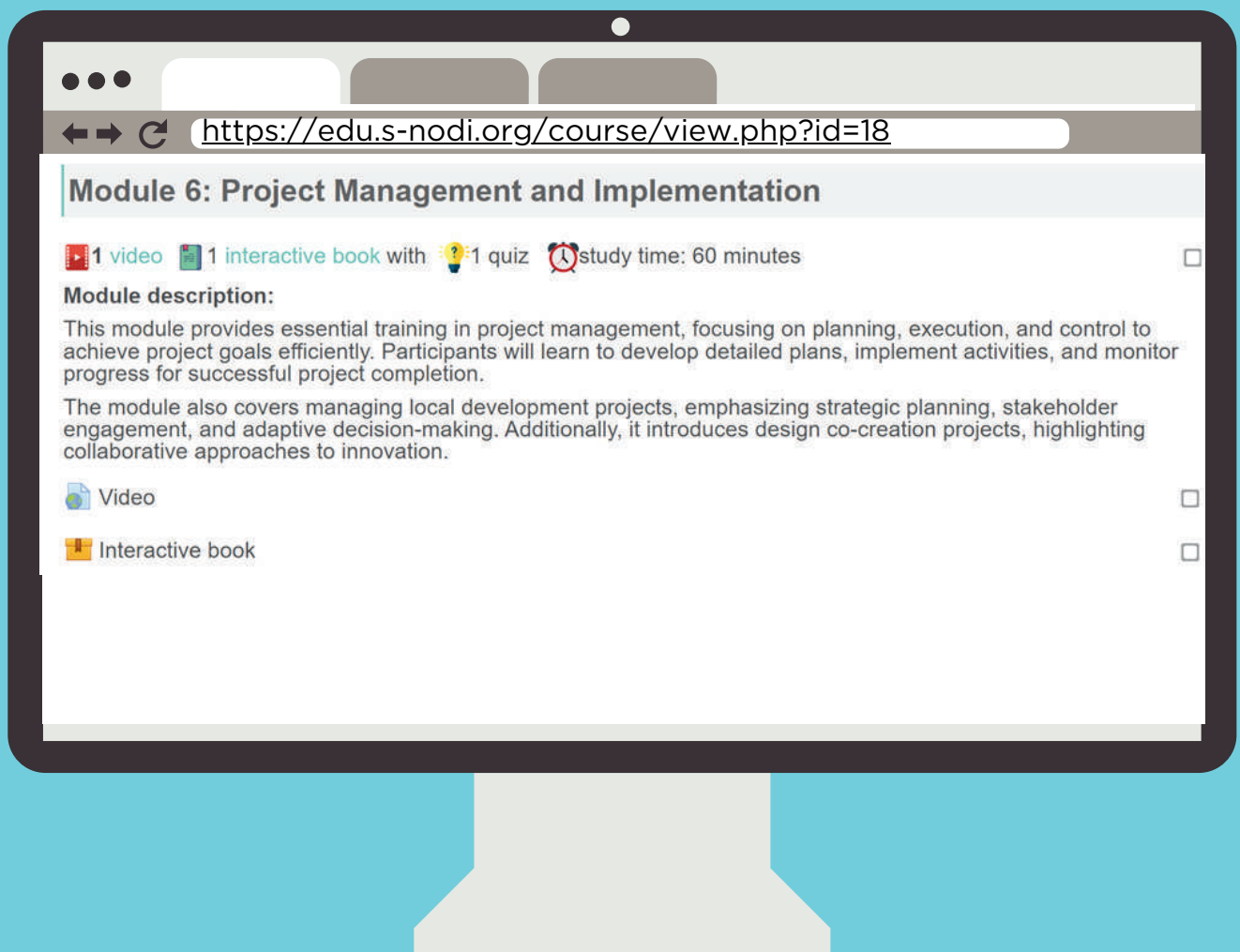
## Topics

- Conception, Design, and Organization of Local Development Projects
- Management of Local Development Projects
- Resource Mobilization Techniques
- Project Monitoring and Evaluation
- Risk Assessment and Mitigation in Projects
- Financial Management and Reporting



## e-Learning Platform

To enroll in this module, visit <https://edu.s-nodi.org/> and set up an account. Self-enrollment is open for all modules within the Collaborative Futures course.



# Module 7: Collaboration & Networking

## Learning objectives:

By the end of this module, you will:

- You will gain a comprehensive understanding of the theoretical foundations that support collaborative networking in local development.
- You will appreciate how sustainability principles are integrated into collaborative networking, with a focus on environmental, social, and economic dimensions for achieving long-term positive impacts.
- You will develop an understanding of collaborative governance theories and structures, which will enable you to identify and analyze key factors influencing effective collaborative networking in community-driven development.

## Module description:

Module 7 focuses on the theoretical foundations of **collaborative networking** in the context of **local development**. Participants will explore key principles and frameworks guiding effective collaboration and networking, with a specific emphasis on their application to community-driven initiatives. The module covers various aspects, starting with an introduction to **collaborative networking theories and models**, providing insights into how partnerships and networks can be strategically formed and sustained.

Participants will delve into the integration of **sustainability principles** in collaborative networking, understanding the importance of considering environmental, social, and economic dimensions for the long-term success of local participatory development projects and initiatives. The module also addresses collaborative **governance theories** and structures, shedding light on the **mechanisms** that contribute to successful collaborative networking in local development.

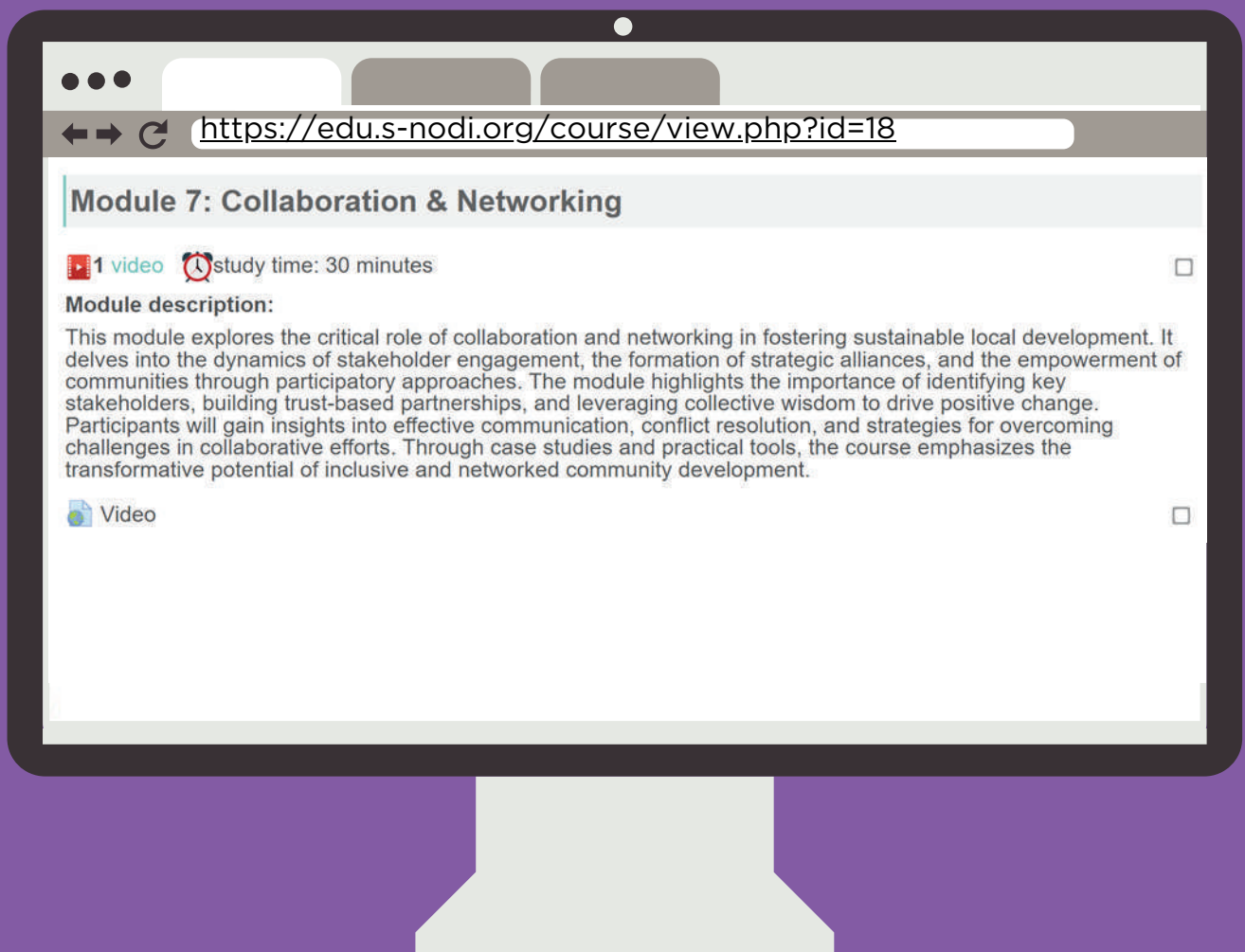
## Topics

- Theories and Models of Collaborative Networking
- Integrating Sustainability Principles in Networking
- Collaborative Governance Structures and Policies
- Cultural Sensitivity in Collaborative Networking



## e-Learning Platform

To enroll in this module, visit <https://edu.s-nodi.org/> and set up an account. Self-enrollment is open for all modules within the Collaborative Futures course.



# Module 8: Advocacy & Political Engagement



## Learning objectives:

By the end of this module, you will:

- Develop a deep understanding of the principles and practices of advocacy within the context of local development.
- Enhance participants' skills in advocating for community needs and interests at various political levels.
- Empower participants with the knowledge and tools to engage in meaningful political dialogue for community-driven initiatives.

## Module description:

Module 8 focuses on the critical aspects of advocacy and political engagement in the realm of local development. Participants will explore the principles, strategies, and skills required to advocate for community needs and engage with political processes. The module aligns with competencies to ensure participants gain practical insights and tools for effective advocacy and political engagement.

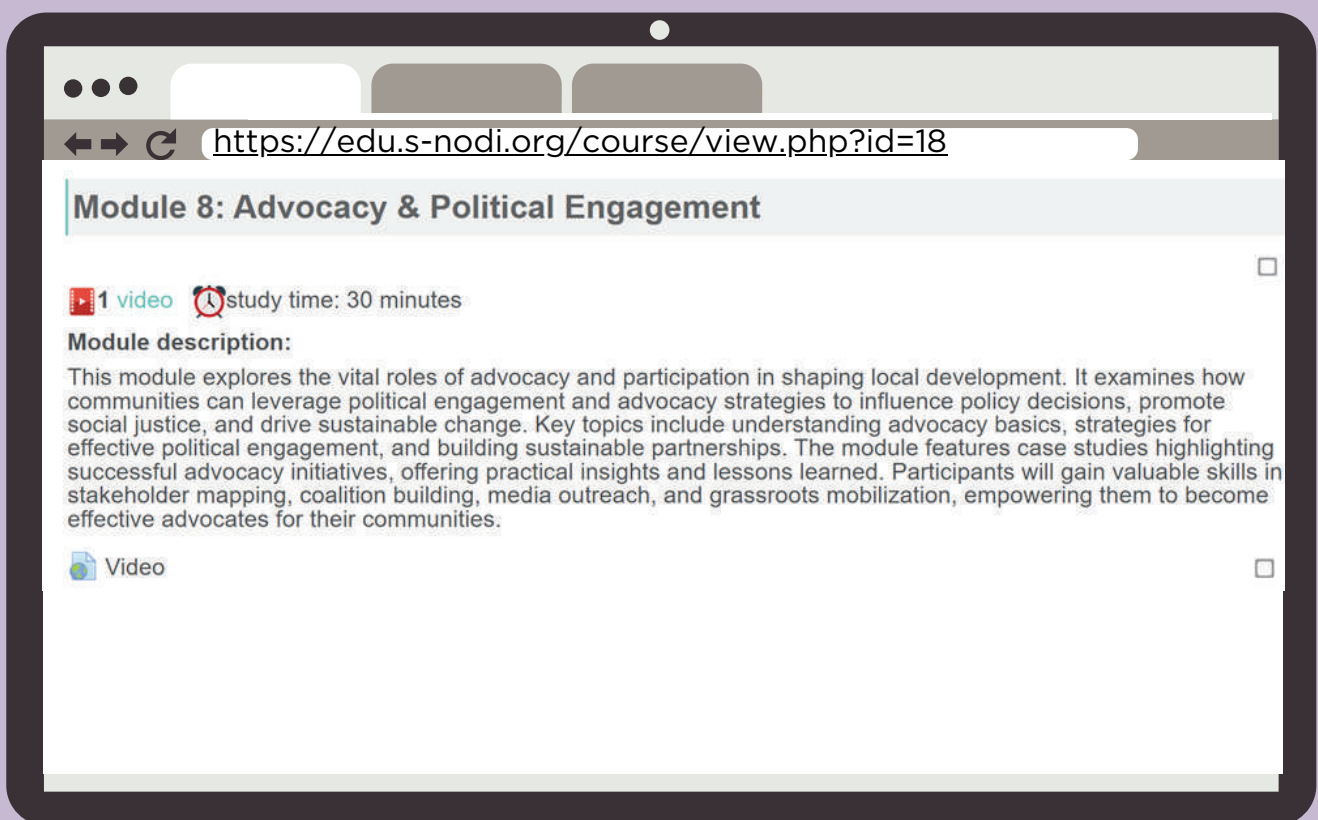
## Topics

- Fundamental Concepts and Importance of Advocacy in Local Development
- Strategies and Tactics in Effective Advocacy Campaigns
- Assessing the Effectiveness and Impact of Advocacy Efforts
- Ethical Considerations and Responsibilities in Advocacy
- Roles of Key Political Stakeholders in Local Development
- Mapping Political Landscapes for Effective Advocacy
- Enhancing Communication Skills for Policy Engagement



## e-Learning Platform

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Empower

Enhance

# Module 9: Capacity Building and Empowerment

## Learning objectives:

By the end of this module, you will:

- Gain the ability to identify key capacity gaps in community development settings and analyze their underlying causes and impacts on local initiatives.
- Develop skills to design and deliver effective training programs tailored to community needs, ensuring inclusivity and accessibility.
- Learn to apply empowerment strategies effectively in community development and acquire techniques for fostering leadership and civic engagement within communities.

## Module description:

In the "Capacity Building and Empowerment" module, learners will delve into identifying and analyzing capacity gaps within community settings and get familiarized with participatory **needs analysis methodologies**. This module equips participants with the skills to recognize these gaps and understand their impacts on local development initiatives, forming the foundation for effective community engagement strategies.

Furthermore, the course guides learners through designing and implementing tailored **training programs**. Emphasizing inclusivity and accessibility, participants will learn how to create **learning experiences** and materials that resonate with and are accessible to diverse community members.

Additionally, the module addresses **empowerment strategies** (especially **digital and green empowerment**) in community development. It focuses on fostering local engagement and participation, alongside nurturing leadership skills and civic engagement. This approach ensures that community members are not just recipients of development efforts but active participants and leaders in shaping their futures.

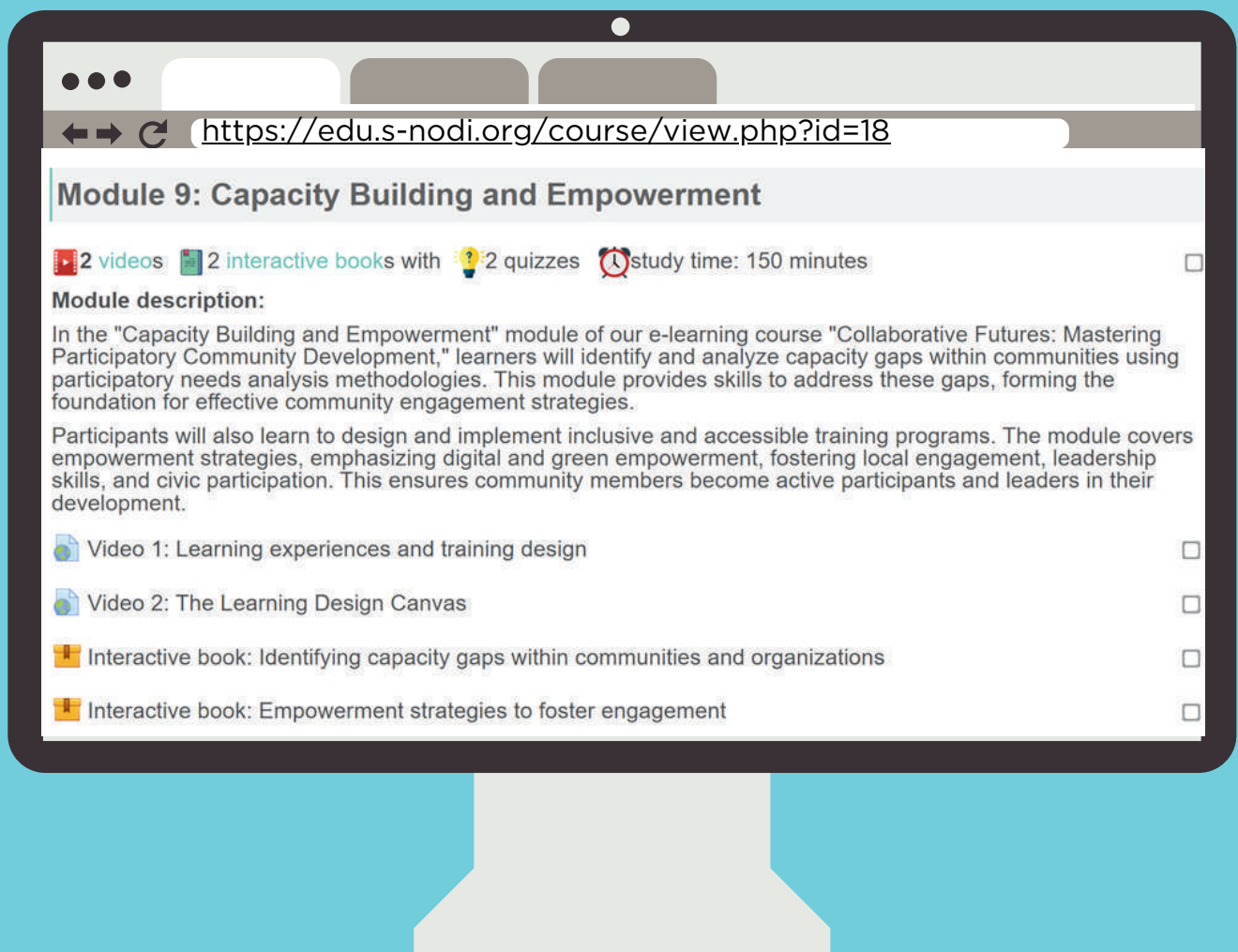
## Topics

- Identifying and Addressing Capacity Gaps
- Designing and Delivering Training Programs
- Mentorship and Coaching Techniques
- Empowerment Strategies
- Leadership and Civic Engagement



## e-Learning Platform

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# Module 10: Reflective Practice & Professional Development

## Learning objectives:

By the end of this module, you will:

- Critically self-reflect on your own values and biases, understanding how these personal attributes influence your engagement and decision-making in community settings.
- Assess your own learning and development, enhancing your ability to make ethical decisions in complex situations within the realm of community engagement.
- Effectively document and analyze your personal growth and professional achievements, and to identify and evaluate potential career pathways in community engagement.

## Module description:

In the "Reflective Practice & Professional Development" module, learners embark on a journey of introspection and growth, crucial for effective community engagement. This module is designed to deepen your understanding of how **personal values** and biases impact your involvement and decisions in community settings. Through critical **self-reflection exercises**, you will gain insights into your perspectives and how they shape your interactions and contributions. Additionally, the module emphasizes the importance of **continuous self-assessment** in learning and development. You'll acquire tools and techniques to evaluate your **progress**, enhancing your ability to navigate **ethical dilemmas** and make sound decisions in complex community engagement scenarios. A key component of this module is the focus on documenting and analyzing personal and professional growth. By engaging with various tools and methods, you'll learn to effectively track your development, recognize your achievements, and plan your career path in community engagement.

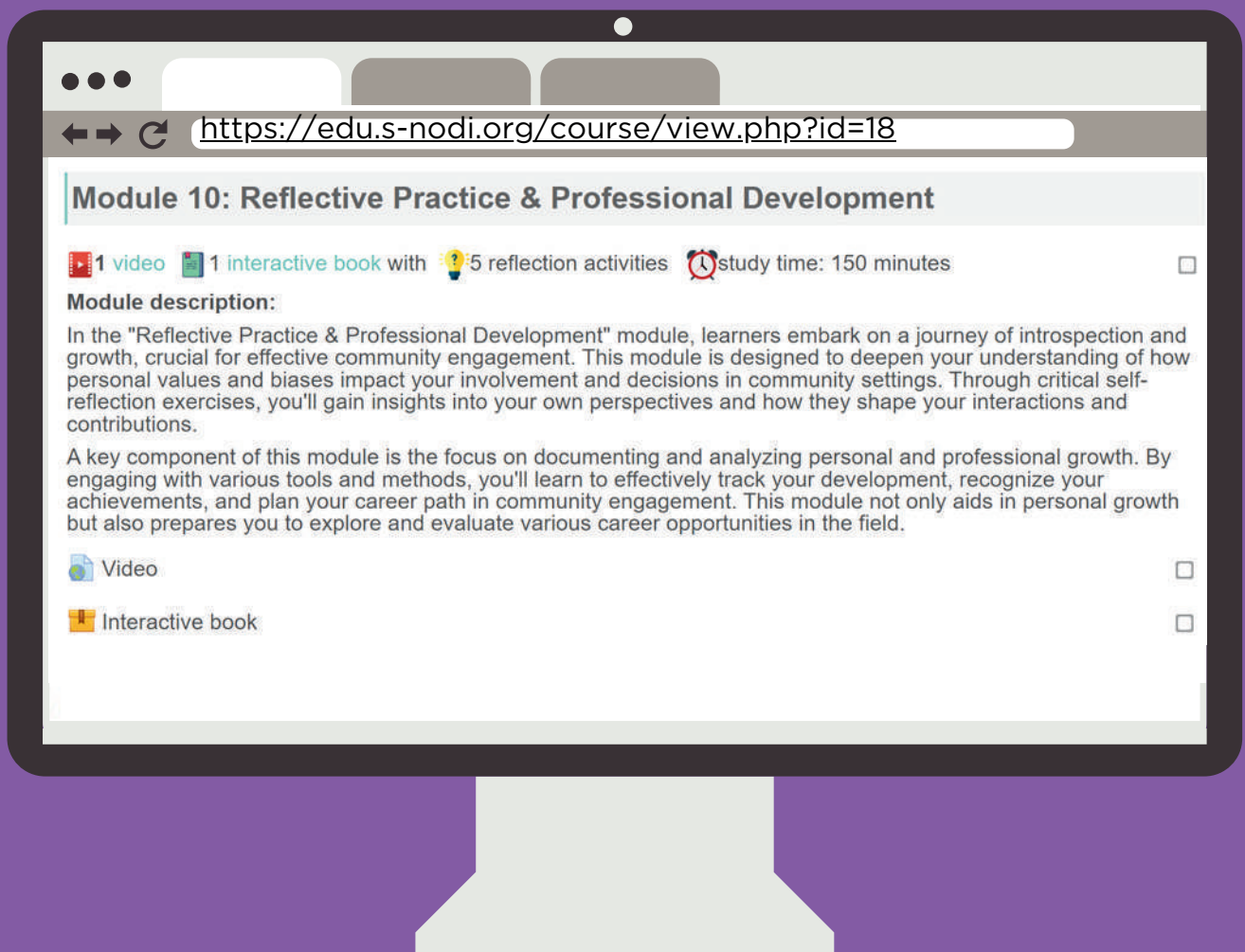


## Topics

- Self-Reflection on Personal Values and Biases
- Continuous Learning and Self-Assessment
- Ethical Decision Making
- Personal Growth Documentation
- Career Pathways in Community Engagement

## e-Learning Platform

To enroll in this module, visit <https://edu.s-nodi.org/> and set up an account. Self-enrollment is open for all modules within the Collaborative Futures course.



# Final exam

As you approach the conclusion of "Collaborative Futures: Mastering Participatory Community Development," you are invited to demonstrate your mastery through the final exam.

## Exam Format:

The final exam consists of 30 multiple-choice questions, designed to assess your understanding of the key concepts, strategies, and tools that have been covered throughout the course.

## Certification:

Upon successful completion, you will receive the PROMENHANCE Certificate, acknowledging your skills and knowledge in creating impactful community development initiatives.

We thank you for your active participation in this course and wish you the best of luck on your final exam. Your journey towards becoming a skilled facilitator in community development is just about to take a significant leap forward.

## Final exam & certification

### Final exam

Dear Learner,

This is the final test for the course **"Collaborative Futures: Mastering Participatory Community Development."**

The final exam will consist of 30 multiple-choice questions designed to assess your understanding and mastery of the key concepts, strategies, and tools covered throughout the course.

Good luck, and thank you for your active participation in this journey towards mastering participatory community development!

 PROMENHANCE Certificate



PROMENHANCE

# Thank you!

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PROMENHANCE**

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