4D Sustainability Canvas User Guide

Complete the 4 quadrants of the 4D Sustainability Canvas by answering the questions related to Community, Governance, Planet and Employees. For example under Community if the answer to the question “How do you contribute to the local community where you operate?” is “We do not contribute at all”, you may highlight it as an area where the company could take action.

What’s your expectation from taking the sustainability path?

It can range from obtaining a competitive advantage (which can lead to customer loyalty or attract impact investors) to a new source of revenue. It is important that every team member has that answer in mind when it comes to identifying and planning the actions that the company will decide to take.

COMMUNITY

Create a healthy and just society along the value chain including suppliers, partners, customers and local communities. Leave no one behind.

How do you contribute to the local community where you operate?

How do you engage in local development projects?

How could you engage local and marginalised communities as suppliers in the supply chain?

How does your company generate employment considering the population nearby?

How do you ensure transparency in your supply chain?

How could you improve the social and environmental impact of your suppliers/subcontractors?

Could your product solve an environmental or social problem for/through your customer?

Could underrepresented groups use your product/service? If not, how could they become your customers? (people of colour; people with disabilities; people from a lower socioeconomic status; LGBTQ+; people of a nondominant religion; and retirees)

How do you ensure that the impact and value created for the customer is real? How do you measure social impact?

EMPLOYEES

Unleash the power of a high-performing team through an inclusive, inspiring and diverse workplace.

Does your company pay minimum living wage to all employees?

How could you promote and have wage transparency in the organisation?

How does the management take care of employee health, well-being and safety?

What kind of continuous formation/training opportunities could you offer to the employees?

How could you prevent any forms of violence at work, including verbal and/or physical abuse?

How diverse is your company (considering gender, sex, gender-identity, disability, age, sexual orientation, religion, race, color, ethnic or national origin, nationality)?

How does your company ensure fair conditions and inclusion at the workplace? (inc. flexible hours, locations)

How could your company foster an entrepreneurial culture and support young entrepreneurs?

How could your company foster generational inclusion among existing staff and new hires from?

GOVERNANCE

Have structures and processes in place that will enable real impact creation, transparent operations and authentic leadership.

How does the mission and vision statement of your company convey a sustainable future based on shared value creation?

How the values of your company align with sustainability and equity principles?

How do you make sure all employees are aligned with the company values, mission and vision?

How does the management ensure an equal and just allocation of profits (e.g establish dividend policy, re-invest in a sustainability related projects or business-driven poverty eradication activities)

How do you ensure financial and operational performance transparency to employees?

How are you engaging stakeholders about your social and environmental performance (e.g impact reports, communication materials etc)?

How does your business model align with circularity and triple bottom line (People, Planet, Profit) principles?

How could you incentivise the successful implementation of sustainability measures among the staff? (e.g. commission, salary raise, extra holidays etc.)

How do you ensure an ethical business conduct? (e.g anti-bribery policy, anti-slavery act, ethics policy, data privacy)

PLANET

Operate within planetary boundaries. Reduce and mitigate negative environmental impact nd contribute to the regeneration of lands, biosphere and animal species.

How does your company measure and reduce the GHG footprint of its employees/operations/premises? (if you are service provider consider scope 3 emissions such as travel, financial services, purchase of goods and services)

Could you commit to net zero or climate positive business?

How much waste does your business produce and how could you reduce or eliminate it? (think of solid waste, food waste and electronic waste)

How could you ensure environmentally responsible and socially equitable water use? (e.g minimise fresh water consumption and discharges, avoid water pollution and protect water-stressed areas)

How could you step up from compliance to a stronger commitment to responsible sourcing practices? (e.g include environmental criteria in the selection criteria, educate suppliers on environmental protection and compliance)

Have you considered obtaining energy efficiency/eco/fair trade/B corp certifications?

How do you engage employees and suppliers in climate education and action?

Is your businesses committed to taking action on biodiversity restoration? How could your business activities contribute to the regeneration of species, habitats and ecosystems?

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small and growing companies
start their **sustainability journey**

4D Sustainability Canvas

COMMUNITY

GOVERNANCE

VALUE CHAIN

What are your main activities?
Who are your stakeholders?

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EMPLOYEES

PLANET

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