

# LEARNING STATION



## WHAT IS A LEARNING STATION?

A dedicated space, usually at a project site, where project stakeholders display and discuss a completed project (or a project well into implementation), highlighting lessons and good practices emerging from their own work and experiences with respect to key project components.

## A LEARNING STATION ACTIVITY

### MAY BE ORGANIZED

- » Face-to-face –at project sites, preferably, or at a meeting venue if travel to a project site is not practical or possible;
- » For large groups of people to learn about a project by interacting with its stakeholders;
- » As a part of large conferences, workshops, and study tours.

### USE IT TO

- » Discuss multiple perspectives and ideas on a project component or topic;
- » Interact directly, face-to-face, with project managers, beneficiaries, co-financiers, and other relevant stakeholders;
- » Support collective learning and build networks;
- » Identify and demonstrate good practice approaches;
- » Experience the potential output of a project by touring, observing, and participating: seeing, touching, smelling, hearing, and even tasting goods produced by the project; looking through documentation (books, photos, maps, posters, etc.); watching audio/video presentations and photography exhibits; listening to expert presentations; engaging in role-playing exercises; taking photos and videos; asking questions; and providing feedback to the project stakeholders.

## HOW TO USE IT

- » Determine which project to showcase and identify key project stakeholders at all levels.
- » Identify key project components and decide how many Learning Stations need to be set up to showcase each component effectively.
- » Plan to hold Learning Stations at the project site or have project managers and beneficiaries bring the project components to the meeting venue to share with participants.
- » Engage an experienced facilitator to serve as a guide for each group and to moderate each group's interaction with stakeholders and among each other at the Learning Stations.
- » Consider documenting the engagement at each Learning Station by recording the activity and/or taking photos.
- » Divide meeting participants into small learning groups of 8-10 people.
- » Prepare and distribute "Knowledge Passports" that include information on the project, the agenda and timing of the Learning Station activity:
  - › Participants receive a passport stamp at each Learning Station to confirm that they have visited it.
  - › Participants can also document in their passport the knowledge sharing at each Learning Station and ultimately provide the organizers with feedback about the experience.



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- › Participants can keep their passports or submit them to the organizers afterwards.
- » Reconvene participants after they have visited all Learning Stations for debriefing on the key takeaways and share their observations with each other.
- » Ask each participant to complete an exit survey to rate the activity and provide feedback.

### EXAMPLE: GEF KNOWLEDGE DAY AND LEARNING STATIONS

The GEF has designed and used Learning Stations as part of its GEF Knowledge Days to facilitate learning and knowledge exchange during regional GEF Expanded Constituency Workshops (ECW). A GEF Knowledge Day is a full-day event that takes place immediately following an ECW that brings GEF Constituents together in a given region. This example shows how the GEF incorporates Learning Stations in their Knowledge Day activity.

When a field visit is part of the GEF Knowledge Day, Learning Stations are set up at a GEF project site. If travel to a project site is not possible, the Learning Stations are set up at the meeting venue in a space large enough to accommodate the various project components to be displayed and discussed.

Information materials that include a project summary, Learning Stations roadmap, and a GEF Knowledge Passport are distributed during the closing session of the ECW; participants are asked to review this material in advance of visiting the Learning Stations. Participants are also divided into smaller learning groups of 8-10 people in advance, and each participant is informed as to which group he or she is assigned.

The GEF Knowledge Day begins with a plenary session where the agenda and the learning objectives for the event are reviewed with the participants. Then, the participants divide into small, pre-assigned learning groups, and begin their tour of the project, moving from Learning Station to Learning Station, spending about 15 minutes at each station, listening to stakeholder presentations, asking questions, and engaging in discussions around lessons learned. Participants should be reminded to make good use of the passport as a reference tool for keeping notes, impressions, questions, and feedback.

At the end of the day, GEF holds a closing session where all participants come together to exchange their observations and share their takeaways from the Learning Stations. Before departure, participants are asked to fill out an exit survey, rating their experience with the GEF Knowledge Day. And with that final activity, the GEF Knowledge Day concludes.

For more information about the GEF experience with Learning Stations:

- » <http://www.thegef.org/multimedia/gef-knowledge-day>
- » <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jfLQqwAuqow>

