



Strategic Community Relations, Engagement, and Development

21 – 25 June 2027
Cape Town (South Africa)



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Ref: 121866_1055496 **Date:** 21 – 25 June 2027 **Location:** Cape Town (South Africa) **Fees:** 5300 Euro

Introduction

The Strategic Community Relations, Engagement, and Development course explains how organizations build productive, responsible, and sustainable relationships with the societies in which they operate. It examines stakeholder expectations, community engagement strategies, corporate social responsibility, reputation, risk anticipation, and corporate communication. Participants explore practical approaches for designing community programs, integrating participation into organizational activities, and supporting education, health, safety, procurement, and capacity development. The program introduces community development processes, participatory learning and action, community volunteers, interpersonal communication, facilitation, and community mobilization techniques. It evaluates community initiatives through KPIs, performance measurement, and integrated reporting. Participants will connect community priorities with organizational objectives while strengthening trust, social value, stakeholder relationships, and long-term organizational reputation.

Targeted Groups

This Strategic Community Relations, Engagement, and Development training targets professionals seeking knowledge and skills:

- Community relations managers strengthen stakeholder relationships.
- CSR professionals align social responsibility with engagement.
- Sustainability officers address community expectations and risks.
- Corporate communication teams improve dialogue and reputation.
- Public affairs professionals manage stakeholder engagement strategies.
- Project leaders integrate community participation into planning.
- HR leaders encourage employee community engagement.
- NGO and partnership managers support community development.
- Executives oversee strategic social investment and reporting.

Course Objectives

Participants will achieve the following objectives by completing the Strategic Community Relations, Engagement, and Development course:

- Explain the foundations of community relations and society engagement.
- Distinguish CSR activities from strategic community engagement.
- Identify stakeholders, expectations, influence, and reputational risks.
- Design structured stakeholder engagement programs.
- Develop community engagement plans with clear priorities.
- Apply budgeting principles to social investment initiatives.
- Strengthen corporate communication with local communities.
- Integrate health, safety, education, procurement, and capacity development.
- Compare community contribution and community-driven projects.
- Explain participatory approaches to community development.
- Apply PLA principles and participatory tools conceptually.
- Demonstrate effective presentation, communication, facilitation, and role-play skills.
- Define community volunteer responsibilities.
- Plan community mobilization events and communication activities.
- Establish KPIs for community programs and assess outcomes.
- Connect evaluation findings with integrated reporting and organizational reputation.

Targeted Competencies

Participants will gain the following competencies during the Strategic Community Relations, Engagement, and Development program:

- Stakeholder mapping and expectation analysis.
- Community engagement strategy development.
- Corporate social responsibility alignment.
- Reputation and risk assessment.
- Community program design and budgeting.
- Corporate-community communication.
- Local procurement and capacity development planning.
- Participatory community development analysis.
- PLA tool selection and process understanding.
- Presentation, facilitation, and dialogue skills.
- Volunteer coordination and employee engagement.
- Community mobilization planning.
- KPI development, evaluation, and reporting.

Studying Scenarios

In this Strategic Community Relations, Engagement, and Development training, participants develop skills through the following scenarios:

- A company identifies key stakeholders before a project.
- A community raises concerns about environmental hazards and reputation.
- Managers design a local procurement and education initiative.
- Leaders coordinate disaster support with communities.
- Teams conduct a participatory dialogue using PLA tools.
- Employees plan a community mobilization event.
- Executives review KPIs and prepare an integrated community report.

Course Content

Unit 1: Society, Stakeholders, and Strategic Engagement

- Define society engagement and its strategic value.
- Compare CSR with community engagement.
- Identify stakeholders, expectations, and concerns.
- Assess reputation and stakeholder impacts.
- Analyze social risks and anticipate threats.
- Build a strategic community relations framework.
- Evaluate engagement levels and relationship quality.

Unit 2: Building Effective Society Engagement Programs

- Examine models for community engagement.
- Design structured community engagement programs.
- Apply budgeting to community initiatives.
- Strengthen corporate-community communication.
- Practice effective community dialogue.
- Present organizational goals and community value.
- Establish milestones, feedback, and governance.

Unit 3: Integrating Community Participation into Organizational Practice

- Identify environmental hazards and community risks.
- Integrate participation into organizational planning.
- Connect health and safety with community needs.
- Support education and community development.
- Promote local procurement and inclusion.
- Strengthen reputation through capacity development.
- Align initiatives with organizational objectives.

Unit 4: Community Programs, Partnerships, and Mobilization

- Compare community contribution and community-driven projects.
- Connect leadership with community priorities.
- Examine foundations, giving, and social investment.
- Support neighboring communities during disasters.
- Coordinate cross-functional leadership collaboration.
- Strengthen employee community engagement.
- Coordinate partnerships, events, and communications.

Unit 5: Community Development, Participatory Tools, and Evaluation

- Explain community development principles and levels.
- Map the community development process.
- Understand PLA principles and tools.
- Apply PLA activities and participatory methods.
- Develop communication, presentation, and facilitation skills.
- Understand volunteers and community mobilization methods.
- Establish KPIs, evaluate results, and report outcomes.

Final Insights & Key Takeaways

Strategic community engagement aligns stakeholder expectations, organizational responsibilities, community development, and reputation. Effective measurement, participation, communication, and reporting build community value, strengthen trust, and support long-term performance.