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THE "LAST MILE" INCLUSION ECOSYSTEM MAP

DIAGNOSIS / PLANNING

VET design

1. AT A GLANCE

Tool name	*The "Last Mile" Inclusion Ecosystem Map*
Activity Type	*Individual or Group (ideally involving local stakeholders)*
Purpose	*Diagnosis / Planning*
Challenge	*Reaching Underrepresented Learners: Designing VET for migrants, NEETs, and other adult learners.*
When to use it	*Empathise / Define stage.*
Time to complete	*60 minutes.*
Materials Needed	*Large Map Canvas (A3 or digital), Multi-coloured markers, Regional transport/digital infrastructure data*

WHAT YOU WILL HAVE AFTERWARDS

- A map of the real journey from a learner's home to your VET centre
- A list of barriers (friction) and support opportunities (flow) in four layers
- One priority action to make the course reachable in practice

DESIGN THINKING STAGE

Empathise | **Define** | Ideate | Prototype | Test

2. DESCRIPTION

Course planning often stops at “what the course teaches”. This tool helps VET managers map the “Last Mile” – the real and the hidden journey a learner takes from home to the classroom or workplace.

The map looks at four layers of the learner’s world: physical access, digital access, social trust and support allies.

2.1 WHEN TO USE IT

Use it early in programme design, so the VET offer is not “perfect on paper but impossible in reality”. It shows where to place information and how to schedule classes to avoid drop-out traps such as transport dead zones.



- Go local: if possible, walk the “Last Mile” yourself. Is the path lit at night? Are the signs clear?
- Look at the full picture: don’t only list what learners lack – also note what the community already has, e.g. strong informal peer networks.

2.2 THE FOUR LAYERS OF THE MAP

🚌 PHYSICAL

Transport routes, timetables, travel costs and safety on the way.

Ask: Can the learner actually get here – and home again – in time?

📶 DIGITAL

Wi-Fi, mobile data, devices and online-only forms.

Ask: What if the learner only has a shared phone and no private space?

🤝 SOCIAL & TRUST

Trust hubs (cafés, religious centres, libraries) and fear points (offices, security, jargon).

Ask: Where does the learner already feel safe?

🧭 SUPPORT ALLIES

NGOs, mentors, peer networks, childcare and other helpers.

Ask: Who could walk the last mile together with the learner?

3. STEP-BY-STEP INSTRUCTIONS

The execution of Tool 1: The "Last Mile" Inclusion Ecosystem Map is designed as a two-part process: first, a visual, spatial mapping exercise (the "Map"), followed by a strategic synthesis (the "Template / Canvas").

The map is where you perform the creative work of empathy and discovery, while the table is where you organize those findings into actionable "Friction" and "Flow" points for your VET project.

PART A: The Visual Mapping:
Think of this as a "field investigation" on paper or a digital whiteboard (like Miro). You are literally drawing the world through the eyes of your learner persona.

1

THE BASE MAP

Mark the learner's home on one side and your VET center on the other.

2

LAYER 1: PHYSICAL INVESTIGATION

Using a red marker, trace the route between them. Research actual bus/train schedules. If the last bus leaves before a class ends, that is a "Transport Shadow"—a physical barrier that makes the class "impossible" for that persona.

3

LAYER 2: DIGITAL INVESTIGATION

Mark "Digital Dead Zones." This isn't just about signal; it's about context. If a learner only has a shared family smartphone and no private space, an "online-only" registration form becomes a point of digital friction

4

LAYER 3: TRUST ANCHORS

Identify where your persona actually goes (cafes, religious centers, libraries). Don't just place your posters at the job center; place them where the "Trust Hubs" are.

5

LAYER 4: GATEKEEPERS

Identify "fear points." If your enrollment office is in a sterile government building with security guards, it may be an institutional gatekeeper for a migrant learner.

3. STEP-BY-STEP INSTRUCTIONS

PART B: The Canvas:
The table provided in the Template / Canvas section below is the summary document. It translates the drawings and messy notes from your map into a structured plan that you can present to your team or include in a project report.

How to fill the Table using your Map findings:

1. Find the Barrier: Look at your map. Where did you draw red lines or "fear points"? Write these in the Specific Barrier (Friction) column.
2. Design the Solution: For every red line, brainstorm a green "Opportunity" line. If the bus schedule is a barrier, your Support Opportunity (Flow) might be "Mobile VET Bus" or "Asynchronous Video Lessons."
3. Layering: Organize these by the four layers (Physical, Digital, Social, Support) to ensure you aren't just solving for transport, but also for social trust and digital access.

Example of the Execution Flow:

- ·**The Map observation:** You notice on the map that the learner persona (Elena) lives 45 minutes away, and the bus stop near the VET center is poorly lit at night.
- ·**The Table entry:**
  Map Element: Physical / Transport
  Specific Barrier (Friction): Safety concerns and long commute for evening classes.
  Support Opportunity (Flow): Move the first 3 sessions to the Trust Hub (the local library) which is closer to her home.



Do not skip the visual map. Actually drawing the "Last Mile" often reveals barriers—like a lack of signage or intimidating architecture—that you would never think of if you just started by filling out the table.

4. THE TEMPLATE / CANVAS

Learner persona: _____ Home → VET centre: _____ Date: _____

LAYER	MAP ELEMENT	SPECIFIC BARRIER (FRICTION)	SUPPORT OPPORTUNITY (FLOW)
PHYSICAL	Transport / Location	Last bus at 4 PM; expensive fares.	Mobile VET bus or gas stipends.
DIGITAL	Hardware / Data	Shared phone; no home Wi-Fi.	"Data-Lite" WhatsApp learning.
SOCIAL	Trust Hubs	Fears government buildings	Information sessions at local cafes.
SUPPORT	Allies / Mentors	No childcare during training hours.	"Buddy" system or on-site care.

🔴 **FRICTION = red lines and "fear points" on your map** 🟢 **FLOW = green opportunity lines**

NOTE: Texts in Blue are only examples- must be removed before use of Template.

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