



SUM-UP IN ENGLISH FROM THE COMPLETE FEASIBILITY STUDY IN FRENCH

TRANSFER OF INNOVATION PROJECT

EASE: EMPOWERMENT APPROACHES and SOCIAL ENTERPRISE

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INTRODUCTION

In 2008 we met Basta, a Swedish Social Enterprise, through a Leonardo Partnership project, financed through the Lifelong Learning Program. The goal was to see a good practice model on how to work with inclusion and empowerment through a social enterprise.

It was so inspiring for our social organisation working on social and professional inclusion that since this date we have done other European projects to understand, follow, analyse and to be inspired through the Basta Model.

This EASE project finally gives us a great opportunity, to copy the model and try to implement it in France!

The EASE project proposes an innovative approach with regards to Europe's largest concern: unemployment. Through social enterprises that will allow for employability and entry to the labour market for marginalised groups there can be a solution.

This project started in October 2013 and will end September 2015.

During these 2 years, our task is to import the Basta Model of Social Enterprise into France. Also Diagrama will try importing it in UK. Basta, Diagrama and Elia are the core partners. Our other partners in this project make up the consortium, coming from 6 different European countries and they act as supporting partners. They are different social organisations that are good examples in running social enterprises and organisations. They also help with dissemination of the project and they will advise and help the core partners (Elia in France & Diagrama in the UK).

A complete feasibility study has been done in French for easier dissemination in our country. It is the first step of the process to implement the social enterprise-model. Here we will briefly sum up what was said in French, so English readers can also have access to our study.

Social and Solidarity Economy in France (ESS)

Definition

The first notion of the Social Economy in France started in the XIXth Century. It happened through the industrial Revolution process and was legally affirmed through our legal Status "Association Loi 1901" (law for non-governmental organisation). In 1947 it was linked to collectives and mutual initiatives. It was really in 1970 that it became more official rather than an alternative conception. It was considered as another kind of economy. France has designed a wider vision and definition of this Social Economy, and we call it Social and Solidarity Economy.

One of the main aims of the social economy is to strengthen social cohesion by creating opportunities for socially excluded groups. This is best achieved by using small, local,



neighbourhood groups and community organisations who can deliver services in a way that statutory authorities cannot or the by the capitalist economy.

(Eme and Laville, 1994).

Historically, the social economy has been allied to the big issues in French society, both on economic questions and, to a lesser extent, political ones. By having a prominent place in the area of health and the care of property and people, it gradually became one of the pillars of the Welfare state, in a country deeply attached to its social model.

The main laws that have shaped the social economy are:

- The law of 1867 allowing the formation of cooperative undertakings;
- The law of 1898 adopting the mutuality charter;
- The law of 1901 authorising the freedom of association.

The concept of social economy was officially recognised by decree in 1981. It was at that Time that the Inter-ministerial Delegation for Innovation, Social Experimentation and the Social Economy (DIIESES) was set up. It was the first recognition of the sector.

Since then it has gone faster and in 2008 the 1st edition of the National Social Economy month was decided. Then the Social Economy Lab came out with 50 proposals to make this economy a reality, necessary to adopt another scale. In 2011 the very innovative decision from the French government to design a Ministry Of Social and Solidarity Economy gave a wide range of possibility to this sector to develop.

Figures

Social Economy represents 2,36 million of employees in 2013.¹ One private job out of eight.

The main employment is in organisations set up under “Association Loi 1901”. These are NGO’s and jobs within these organisations represent 82% of the total jobs observed in the whole Social Economy sector.

Legal Status

4 main legal statutes are defined as part of Social Economy sector :

- Cooperatives
- Mutual Organisations
- Foundations
- Associations

They are all based on the same fundamentals: participatory governance, non profit organisations, reinvestment of benefits, and a free will to join.



French Particularity: Use Social economy as an answer to unemployment

In general, the “solidarity economy may be defined as all economic activities subject to the will of a democratic act where social solidarity relations over-ride individual interests or material gain. Thus it contributes to the democratisation of the economy based on citizen Commitments” (Hély, 2008: 2).

At the same time, the solidarity economy itself became the subject of a strong process of institutionalisation, particularly around the year 2000. First of all it was Martine Aubry, the Minister of Employment and Solidarity who conferred on the ecologist deputy Alain Lipietz a research mission on the SSE. His report pleaded in favour of the recognition of the growth of the « third sector », defined as the intersection point of the social economy and the solidarity economy.

A law on Social and solidarity economy was voted on July 31, 2014. This document unquestionably marks a turning point since, for the first time in France.

Through “Inclusion Labour Market” or “Inclusion through Economic Activity” (I.A.E. *Insertion par l'Activité Economique*) for unemployed people, France has organised a special range of structures for social organisations.

This third sector has the mission to give opportunities to unemployed people, meeting specific social and professional difficulties, to access a work contract, vocational training, for a better chance to go to labour market. Today there is a solidarity accreditation allowing the organisations concerned to have access to employee solidarity savings funds and entitlement to fiscal compensations.

This accreditation is granted by the prefectural authorities. Under the rule of law, it is open to three categories of stakeholders: on the one hand economic inclusion enterprises (IAE), on the other, organisations holding the traditional statute of « social economy» and finally commercial companies whose management are elected by their employees. To be approved, these three categories of stakeholders have to respect a system of wage differentials within a maximum range of 1 to 5. Organisations work with specific methodologies to welcome those persons and follow up on their personal and professional journey to job. They are a key to facilitate their professional inclusion.

Two mains groups in those social enterprises are tagged according French law. These are distinguished as follows:

- Organisations that produce goods or services : ACI - Inclusion Workshops (Atelier Chantiers d'Insertion); EI(Entreprises d'Insertion); Inclusion Social Entreprises
- Organisations that make available their employees to public or private sector; les associations intermédiaires (AI) Intermediary Associations, Les Entreprises de Travail Temporaire d'insertion (ETTI); Inclusion Temporary Work, et Les Groupements d'Employeurs pour l'Insertion et la Qualification (GEIQ); Employment Group for Inclusion and Qualification



Those are our cultural and legal differences in France to respond to the needs of the unemployment for excluded groups.

It is one of the models we have been looking at for starting our social Enterprise as a Basta model. Our concern is that choosing this legal tag, means depending on public money and subsidies; it then becomes different from Basta who claims being independent.

Part of our study is about choosing the right status to start.

The production within our Social Enterprise – or what can be produced to give work to people?

In our local and national context, unemployment and exclusion have a large rate of concern, as well as on a European scale. In this economic crisis France really focuses on possibilities, and social innovation to find a way to include people. Exclusion concerns a wide range of people, such as immigrants, youngsters, and people with disabilities, and older people.

Today in France, it is more than 5 million persons that are excluded from the labour market. Being excluded is not only being far from labour market, and incomes, but also margin from society. Through work you can meet people, extend your network, show you social utility and gain in autonomy or self esteem.

We have decided than following the Basta model is also finding an activity that could produce jobs for those people in need to reintegrate society with a job.

So after looking at our context of social economy, having understood who is our target group we will now define what profit unit we will develop to insure our aim.

Any profit unit linked to sustainable development is an answer to reduce waste. It gives also a second chance as well as for the object collected, as for the people to choose another life through rehab with work. *“ A second life to the object- a second life for people!”*

It is also answering to our mission defined in our legal status as “objet social”.

We will briefly analyse our national and local context for waste to explain how useful and necessary it is to take this subject in consideration, and how it could be a perfect opportunity to excluded people to find innovative jobs.

Waste laws, market and different figures :

In the French original feasibility study, we have described in detail the different levels of regulations from European level to local level.

We will not go into that range of detail here, as it is just a summary of our study.



But we can focus on the responsibility of each state, region or municipality to reduce waste for the future of our planet, and climate concern.

One of the aims of those international conferences that have run from 2000, is to reduce waste. We will focus on the first main one international pact that happened in 2000; the Grenelle 1 and 2.

From that starting point each local authority in France has prepared a plan to be applied to their waste, regarding each close context and adapted to demand and obligations from the overall report.

To give a picture in the decentralised laws that have been voted in regards this compact with emergency on this matter, here are some example of what is due to reach on a local context in our Alpes Maritimes region:

- Reduce house trash by 7% in 2015 and 10 % by 2020 (per inhabitant),
- Double the collection of dangerous waste (3 kg/hab. en 2015),
- Increase the recycling rate of organic waste from de 21 % en 2007 à 45 % in 2015,
- Stabilise bulk waste and highly raise valorisation
- Reduce waste that are incinerated or store of 27%. Those wastes managed and dealt with by Public Organisations and Services and municipalities must also decrease.
- Raise the re-use rate with all second-hand and recycling, upcycling organisations as the “Resourcerie” example and model.

The Resourcerie Model has been developed a little ahead of its time, around 2000, the first network involving 6 Resourceries was created to give opportunity to regulate and observe this model.

There are now more than 120 official Resourceries certified and labelled from the National network.

It is the Economic model we have chosen to start our Social Enterprise.



Presentation of our Social Enterprise

“La Ressourcerie les Féés contraires”

This organisation deals in a specific area, with collecting, value, trade and education to sustainable development and environment.

Regarding our vision to have this environment structure model to reduce waste as well as be inspired from Basta methodology, we will use waste to make incomes, and inclusion to readapt excluded people to social life through work.

It is a different context we have in France and we still think we can try to sell services to Public organisation, but we cannot make it as sustainable incomes. Each year we will have to renegotiate subsidies from our Public services, and we can consider those as support to salary costs in our economic model. Only specific services can be considered as sellable to public services, which means specific categories of excluded. Ex-prisoners, and people depending on the minimum social welfare allowance. As we consider everyone out of the labour market after one year of registered at the unemployment office, we cannot guarantee to only consider those supported by the state for our economic model.

Our Activities

Collect waste: from private homes, it means every person that allows us to come and collect but mainly those who want to have a volunteer approach to take care of waste for re-using instead of throwing to garbage. Of course the idea is to have a contract with Public authorities to have access to the Waste platform.

Valuate: recycling, repair, fix, or create new objects with what has been collected.

Trade and re distribute: in a shop, as well as on an e-shop through internet all our good will be accessible to be bought

Educate and welcome: it will be a nice welcome place, at the shop where people have time to take a coffee, talk and get information about environment concerns. It will be a place where you can make social link as well as learn how to sort out waste or to be involved in your daily life to be actor in environment. It will also be possible to buy service from the Recyclerie to school, or private companies to have information and education about waste control and environment.

Target group

Every person out the labour market for a minimum 1 year, and registered from Pole Emploi (Unemployment agency).



Customers

The good thing with our area is that we can have different range of clients that have different incomes. A lot of second house for holidays are present in Alpes Maritimes. So some customers will be with us during holiday seasons. Often other nationalities are already educated in environment and waste issues, so it is even easier to talk with them about our shop and work. On top of that private companies, their employees and inhabitants will be interested in an innovative shop to buy furniture, or affordable second hand goods, already fixed and repaired.

Also poor persons live in our area, through social services we will give access to those marginalised persons, with low incomes to have special rates for minimum dignity to furnish their apartment.

Marketing Strategy

As explained before we have good relation with the private sector, and this is very important to start business in the area. For publicity, for marketing but also to reduce costs of professional services and for support through CSR. Already 2 communications and ass/web agencies have supported us since the beginning in those matters.

In that sense we already have a very professional and visible marketing strategy, as well as marketing plan.

Then being part of a Social Economy network gives us access to a big amount of people interested in environment concerns and exclusion. They are good communication relay, and potential customers to spread the word about our activities.

All the network of environment and sustainable development organisations are an enormous potential for disseminating about our activity.

Finally the fact to be part of a large European Network through EASE, as also helps us in disseminate about our project and future shop.

Our Added Value

First of all there is not such a shop, neither organisation in Alpes Maritimes yet. So we will be the first one. If you look at France and European context unemployment is a big focus, and huge concern for us all. In France waste control is a big subject and topic that needs attention. If we link those two major concerns unemployment and waste it is easy to understand our added value is obvious.

So to transfer the Basta model and adapt to our context it is a great chance to mix the two concerns to offer job to excluded people and make a better planet all together. It is even better for all the green jobs that we will create and raise the profile of those jobs in the future. On the top of that those jobs will be accessible to women and it is not so often that women can have easy access to jobs under statutes of inclusion labour market. Only 14% of



women are today represented in those green jobs, it is then a good opportunity to raise this figure with our organisation.

Difficulties and obstacles to the transfer

First of all with no political will, it is very difficult to access our vision.

As waste is the responsibility of public services we need their support to have access to it.

If we look at Basta and the way they can get incomes in selling placement to the Criminal Justice System, we know here it will be very low support to give access to job through money to those people. We will employ them because they need a job to go back to society but mainly because they are convinced the green jobs is the future. Not because we have subsidies from the state.

The premises are the number one preoccupation for us. If we have no building to run the activity it has no reason to live! If you look at the prices of estate here you really understand that you need a donor, or a financial support from private or public to have access to premises.

Which does not mean it is not possible, but it means someone must believe in our project to give us access to a location to start the activity. Once you have said that it does not solve the problem of housing those people. Rules and laws are very strict and difficult to reach if you have not been housing people for decades already! So yes we can start a Recycling project but we must have premises to run it, but it will take a long time to transfer the model of Basta with lodging the people for their own safety! As we don't deal specifically on ex-users target, it is not a priority in our context to give access to a bed at night after work. This is another kind of job and organisation in our context.

The last obstacles we can think of are about recruitment. Not that it is difficult to find unemployed people, no! It is just that we can depend on specific contract with Public authorities to validate the inclusion contract to be approved. As some support money to salary will be linked to their statues we have to be sure Unemployment agency or all employment agency get approval to those contract to the people in need to fulfil their engagement to be included in the society through our organisation.

CONCLUSION:

As we have shown is the feasibility study the high rate of unemployment figures and the raise of waste production confirms us it is mandatory to act on those matters. It is then a society utility to act and invent in these areas. For that reason we are convinced we are on the right path.

Already acting with our project on a national, regional and local level we have been seen as a Social Economy potential organisation that will deal with environment concerns. We are answering to an identified need in our area.



Of course we know the road will be difficult, and we cannot guarantee to copy and paste the exact model of Basta. We have different contexts, different public services, and different target. The model will have to change accordingly. But from our feasibility study we know it is possible, and economically viable.

Today public authorities are looking for innovative social enterprises involved in social and environmental matter that can be transferable to other territories. If you think of money invest in welfare, we know it is a mistake and that it could be more clever to support more of those innovative social enterprise. If you look at social bound impact we know it is a good investment to support social economy, rather than stick people into their excluded statutes.

Basta and EU project Transfer of Innovation has offered us a great opportunity to prove there is other way to work with excluded people and keep in mind we can protect our planet.

We will adapt Basta in our French context, keep in mind the better life is possible for people through social enterprise, but also a second life is possible for goods that were supposed to go into garbage, that is our challenge, and we are happy to defend our idea and make every thing possible to access to it!

Our human values concerns, linked to an innovative way of reducing waste are essential elements to open our recycling centre in Alpes Maritimes.

/Elia

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