



***Rally'nov, an innovative regional campaign
about Social Innovation***

*From : France – Region of France Comté
Pilote : Franche-Comté Agency for the
Improvement of Working Conditions (FACT)
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Background:

The first edition of Rally'nov, Rallye on Social Innovation (SI) is initiated by the French government in the region of Franche-Comté.

Originally, this action is enrolled in the Regional Innovation Strategy developed at the request of the European Commission. Particular attention is paid to social innovation insofar as it improves the quality of life at work. It is also considered as a factor of "business performance" especially in the private sector.

The realization of this project is assigned to Fact (Franche-Comté Agency for the Improvement of Working Conditions- ANACT network) in partnership with RIFC (Regional Innovation Network) and Cress (Regional Chamber of the Social and Solidarity Economy). Franche-Comté is one of the few French regions to address this issue with the support of those different networks, for which "social innovation" does not have the same resonance (definition).

Objectives:

"Rally'nov" aims to:

- Enhancing and promoting socially innovative companies in the traditional economy and the so-called "social and solidarity" economy on the regional territory.
- Expanding the network of actors involved on the issue of SI,
- Promoting the skills development of companies' stakeholders, associations and institutional players in the field of SI.

Description of the Project:

Implemented in 2012-2013, the main steps were:

- 1- The launch of the project (coordination with funders);
- 2- Definition and characterization of social innovation within the 25 structures representing the main regional partners; checkpoints on social innovation have been established and shared in between those players;
- 3- The organization of the "rallye" in itself with the development of practical tools (guidelines for analyzing social innovation , application form, leaflets, dedicated website...)
- 4- The forerunner of local events with voluntary partners ;
- 5- Communication and promotion around the call for applications
- 6- Organization of local " Rally's events". During these events , corporate players (managers, HRM , Work council reps) demonstrate their good practices ;
- 7- Definition of a selection procedure for the identified good practices . The jury was composed of representatives of the State and the Regional Council ;
- 8 - The transcript of the 59 good practices on a regional interactive map
- 9 - Organizing a good practices awards ceremony. During this closing event , the regional interactive map of social innovation was presented, and learnings on social innovation and were shared.

To maintain the project dynamics and promote stakeholder involvement, three "journey logbooks", a 4-pages document about the project progress, were widely disseminated to stakeholders as well as information by email.

Resources mobilized: Days (ARACT) / Funding / partnership :

- About two years campaign running,
- 155.50 days were devoted to this project
- Financial budget: 144.500 €
- The project activities have been supported with funding from the French Government, the Regional Council and the flow of Franche Compté regional agency for the Improvement of working conditions (FACT)

Results and impacts:

- 135 companies have been identified as likely to convey social innovation practices,
- 45 applicants were in competition and five companies were awarded,
- 5 awards were attributed
- 9 local événements were organised with over 600 participants
- 34 business representatives testified about their socially innovative practices
- 59 "fact sheets" were written and are published on the interactive map

More over, a new dynamic has been created.

A dedicated website provides practical tools, fact sheets, business practices, checkpoints on social innovations, guidance, and videos... <http://www.rallynov.fr/>

Key Concepts and conditions for success:

With regard to the concept, social innovation is not addressed in the same way in the "traditional" economy and the so-called "social and solidarity" economy.. For companies of classical economics, social innovation is often considered as "a mean" in order to further develop business. In this case, innovation practices are not so easy to identify. As a matter of fact, the social innovation may be seen as a competitive advantage, the company is then suspicious communicate about it and do not want to share and publish their practice.

What is social innovation?

This is a new response to a social need in relation with health, employment, working conditions, mobility, engagement, cohesion ... It is set up for an individual, a group of individuals or the population of a territory; It includes new practices, new products, new services ... It improves the quality of life (at work or outside work) and may also have direct or indirect impacts on economic, environmental, and social aspects. It requires risk taken investment as well as a democratic and participatory approach.

In light of these characteristics, Rally'Nov project focused to highlight any kind of social innovation or socially innovative practices:

- breakthrough innovation or incremental innovation,
- practices for the improvement of the quality of life of an individual or a group of actors,
- social innovation for a all territory population or a few people in a given context,
- practices requiring very significant risks or relative ones.

Social innovations identified inside companies from the "traditional" economy affect management, work organization, management of human resources, social dialogue, and change management. They respond primarily to the needs related to job security (access to employment, integration, maintain, security of professional path), work recognition, individual development.

For the companies from social economy, social innovation is understood in terms of final purpose. Practices are more common and have been easier to identify. Those practices provide new answers to the needs of insertion, mobility, access to healthy food, fighting against isolation for the elderly and dependent persons, and habitat issues.

Good Practices presented during this 1st edition of rally'nov, as well as the work of sociologists and economists, have allowed to learn about the essentials to promote social innovation inside companies both in traditional or social economies:

- Human qualities: temperance, courage, creativity, pragmatism, ...
- Humanistic values: ethics, freedom, meaning, transparency, ...
- Socio-organizational conditions: commitment, risk-taking, spaces for dialogue, cooperation ...

Regarding the management of the project, if the major phases were planned, the content has been built progressively according to the partners specificities (their roles, their interest, their expectations). Project management had to be flexible enough to meet the expectations of its different stakeholders while ensuring the consistency. It also requires the implementation of regular communication actions on the project progresses.

Output and deliverables :

Practical Tools, guidances, fact sheets, business practices, videos are available on www.rallynov.fr.

Follow up :

For further development, the State and the Regional Council undertakes a second edition of rally'nov in 2014 with three new partners. Its purpose is based on the identification of 20 new socially innovative initiatives, their dissemination on the web site and a celebration during a closing award ceremony.