

Social Innovation for Active and Healthy Ageing

A Case Study Collection



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COLOPHON

Social Innovation for Active and Healthy Ageing – A Case Study Collection

A publication of the King Baudouin Foundation, rue Brederode 21,
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FOREWORD

Without doubt, ageing is one of the main societal issues we face at the start of the 21st century. An ageing population will change the pattern of demands on health and care services and has potential to compromise Europe's competitiveness and economic growth, unless new ways are found to embrace not only the challenges but also the full range of opportunities accompanying the demographic changes. Social innovation in the area of ageing is a promising approach to tackle these challenges and opportunities.

Ageing is a complex and multidimensional issue and both research and innovation efforts must reflect actual societal needs. Social innovation is an inclusive and multi-dimensional concept that emphasises specific aspects of the innovation process, the context, and the impact of innovations. Key elements include: orientation towards meeting social needs, problems and values; introduction of new social practices; user participation and acceptance and realization of both societal and individual benefits.

A recognition of the potential of social innovation in the field of active and healthy ageing was the impetus for King Baudouin Foundation, in collaboration with Fundación La Caixa, Erste Stiftung and UniCredit Foundation, to search for the most promising social innovations in this field and to analyze them regarding their impact, barriers and scaling-up potential. This publication is the culmination of this process and outlines 20 promising initiatives which underscore the power of social innovation.

The individual case studies presented in this report provide information which should be of interest to potential supporters. For most of the projects funding will offer the most significant support, however, other forms of assistance could have a major impact on many initiatives. These include legal/political advice, research/evaluation and network or organisational development. It is therefore hoped that these case studies will provide sufficient information and analysis to prompt potential collaborative engagement with these initiatives by a range of experienced stakeholders.

The King Baudouin Foundation and its partner foundations are committed to further support the initiatives, be it through fostering exchange between them, co-funding of individual projects or promoting the initiatives to other funding organisations as appropriate.

Without the commitment and excellent research work of our consortium partners this publication would not have been possible. We would therefore like to thank the Ageing Research Centre at the Karolinska Institutet (Sweden), AGE Platform Europe, Ashoka Innovation for the public, Centre for Social Innovation (Austria), the Italian National Research Centre on Ageing and the Netwell Centre, School of Health & Science at Dundalk Institute of Technology (Ireland) for their active participation in the past 1,5 years. Moreover and most importantly, we would also like to express our appreciation to the 220 initiatives which applied for the "Social Innovation in Ageing – the European Award". Unfortunately, we could only select 20 among them for further analysis, but the remaining 200 initiatives also deserve our attention and show the great wealth of activity in the field of healthy and active ageing in Europe. You can find more information about all the initiatives at <http://www.changemakers.com/innovationinageing>.

Finally, we would like to thank the implementors, staff, volunteers and users of the final 20 initiatives for their openness and cooperation during the analysis and evaluation process. Their daily work impressed us deeply and gives hope that our societies will be able to meet the challenges and opportunities of an ageing population. We look forward to watching their future growth and impact.

King Baudouin Foundation

August 2014

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INTRODUCTION

A range of responses have emerged to the health and social issues arising from age-related conditions and vulnerability. Concerns about future demand exceeding available resources has led to a growing recognition that innovative solutions are required, as public and private funding mechanisms come under increasing pressure. There is also an increasing emphasis on insuring older people can remain active, healthy and independent for as long as possible, thereby reducing care costs while releasing resources available from the experiences of older members of our communities. Active and Healthy Ageing (AHA) places the person at the centre and promotes the notion that each person should be facilitated to age with dignity and be supported to live an active, healthy and independent life for as long as possible. This focus on dignity and autonomy extends to all contexts within which older people live, and recognises the potential which older people retain to fully live their whole lives and to continue to contribute to society in a range of ways. The growing ageing population will affect all levels of society from individuals and families to communities and regions as well as national structures, policies and economies. Solutions with a 'potentiality', rather than a 'burden', orientation to ageing will require a shift in social attitudes and structures to effect long-term change. Sustainable solutions will need to be socially innovative to address such wide reaching and related aspects of society.

As a response to these challenges the King Baudouin Foundation in cooperation with Fundación La Caixa, Erste Stiftung and UniCredit Foundation initiated and funded the project "Social Innovation in Active and Healthy Ageing" and as a part of it "Social Innovation in Ageing – The European Award".

The award sought to identify and evaluate socially innovative initiatives responding to social problems and needs, within the field of active and healthy ageing, in a sustainable and socially accepted way. In combining the idea of social innovation with that of active and healthy ageing the main objectives of the project and the award were to collect, analyse and disseminate case studies in order to:

- Promote innovative approaches in the active and healthy ageing field.
- Provide relevant information on the initiatives for current and potential stakeholders to support development within four fields of activity: policy strategies, business ideas, potential investments, and incubator options.

This report outlines all aspects of the project development and reviews how it progressed from concept to conclusion. The enthusiastic collaboration between the various partners involved led to creative participation as well as lively negotiations on the difficult tasks of selecting finalists and ultimate award winners. The difficulties encountered in making such decisions reflects both the quality of the initiatives and the challenges constantly faced by decision-makers in the field, on how to choose between quality projects addressing different but equally important aspects of active and healthy ageing. Ultimately, finalists and winners were selected on the basis of innovativeness, social impact and scalability.

In addition to the foundations, the project consortium consisted of six renowned European organisations working in the fields of active and healthy ageing and social innovation:

- **Ageing Research Centre (ARC)**, Karolinska Institutet, Sweden
- **AGE Platform Europe (AGE)**
- **Ashoka Innovation for the public** (Ashoka)
- **Centre for Social Innovation** (project coordinator) (Zentrum für Soziale Innovation, ZSI), Austria
- **Italian National Research Centre on Ageing** (Istituto Nazionale di Ricovero e Cura per Anziani, INRCA), Italy
- **Netwell Centre, School of Health & Science**, Dundalk Institute of Technology (DkIT), Ireland

1.1 Social Innovation

Until recently, “innovation” was primarily understood as a new product or service successfully introduced into the market. In this sense, innovation has had meaning primarily within the economic world. New interpretations of innovation, however, have begun to emerge with a range of characteristics:

- Innovation is a complex process of social interaction, with the “results” of innovation extended from commercial products and services to non-commercial “practices” and “institutions”.
- Innovation is being related to societal challenges such as climate change, demographic change or social inequality that the free market economy is currently unable to solve or adequately address.
- Innovation research is examining how new solutions change and challenge existing products, services and practices. Innovation is a part of social change.
- The impacts are not only being assessed for markets and customers, but for society and the environment. Questions being raised include: How does innovation respond to societal challenges?

How does it change the way we communicate and cooperate? How does it answer our needs? Is it sustainable and will it enable us to protect the environment?

“Social innovation” is one of the key concepts inspired by this paradigm shift. The main focus of social innovation is to create new human and technological capabilities to actively respond to needs and problems in society. “Social innovation” thus introduces a shift in our focus on and our assessment of innovation. Consequently, “social innovation” may be technological or non-technological, commercial or non-commercial, driven by public, private or civil society actors. The relevant question is how the elements of an innovation need to be introduced and combined to respond to needs and problems while taking into account the complexity of modern societies. At the outset of the project we identified “guiding principles” for social innovation which helped us to develop the online application form of the award as well as the assessment criteria. They are outlined in the table below.

Guiding principles of social innovation	
Perspectivism	...to appreciate the existence of different perspectives and to attempt to comprehend their claim of validity
Dialogue	...to discuss and justify decisions in a free forum
Participation	...to enable stakeholders to take part in the process of defining and solving problems
Cooperation	...to combine competencies and resources to optimise the response to problems and needs
Transparency	...to share all relevant information with stakeholders and the public
Experimentalism	...to test new solutions on a small scale before scaling them up
Evaluation	...to assess new solutions on a small scale before scaling them up
Learning	...to continuously re-evaluate and adapt means and objectives based on new experience and knowledge

1. PROCESS AND METHODOLOGY

The project "Social Innovation in Active and Healthy Ageing" was comprised of 7 main steps. Each step employed different instruments and methodologies. The Centre for Social Innovation (ZSI) was responsible for applying these instruments and methodologies in close cooperation with the other partners. The award was implemented via the "Changemakers" platform (www.changemakers.com) – an Ashoka platform dedicated to hosting worldwide award competitions. The consortium would like to thank the Changemakers staff for their support in setting up and implementing the competition.



Step 1: Template for social innovation in active and healthy ageing

ZSI developed an online template to collect information for the award and a competition page was set up in collaboration with Changemakers at <http://www.changemakers.com/innovationinaging>. The platform remains active as an online archive where all original applications can be viewed. Initiatives directly accessed the online template which sought information on five main areas: 1) information on implementor, 2) problem and solution, 3) organisation and funding, 4) target group, scale and impact and 5) public information and strategy.

Applicants were required to meet the following eligibility criteria:

1. The initiative develops and implements a potentially innovative solution (product, process, service, practice) that responds to problems and needs of elderly people in a sustainable and socially accepted way.
2. The initiative is currently active and implements its solution in "real-life" settings.
3. The initiative has a long-term commitment to establish, spread and scale its solution.
4. The initiative is located in an EU or EFTA country and achieves its social impact mainly in Europe.
5. The initiative agrees to participate in a case study if selected by the Award committee.

The assessment criteria of the award were designed to address the most relevant dimensions of social innovation:

1. Relevance and consistency of problem definition

- o The addressed problem is well defined and directly relates to challenges in the field of active and healthy ageing.

2. Innovativeness of the solution

- o The solution is well defined and distinct from other existing solutions
- o The solution has clear innovative potential to respond to social problems and needs in a sustainable and socially accepted way.

3. Capacity to develop, implement, and maintain the initiative

- o Team composition and size
- o Knowledge and competencies
- o Management and coordination structure.

4. Impact generation and impact assessment

- o Type and scale of impact that has been generated
- o Evidence for generated impact.

5. Openness of the innovation process

- o Stakeholder participation (by users in particular) in problem definition and solution development
- o Cooperation with other organisations and combination of knowledge, competencies and resources

- o Implementation of trials, experimentations, pilots
- o Transparent public information.

Step 2: Launching “Social Innovation in Ageing - The European Award”

The award was launched on 15th May and closed on 31th of July 2013 (deadline for applications). The project consortium – research organisations and foundations – disseminated the invitation to participate in the award via different channels attracting 220 applicants from all over Europe.

Step 3: Selection of 20 finalists from 220 award participants

The Changemakers platform offers an online assessment tool available to the administrator and the jury. The quantitative assessment was based on the assessment criteria which were rated on a scale from 1 to 5 (1 = best). Applications were assigned to eight randomly composed jury groups each consisting of two representatives from different organisations within the consortium. Each group assessed approximately 50 cases. Each application was assessed independently by two jury members. The assessment tool calculated the mean score for each assessment criteria and applications were ranked accordingly. This led to a “shortlist” of 50 initiatives. The jury met for an intensive two day assessment workshop in September 2013 to review the 50 shortlisted initiatives in detail before selecting the final 20 initiatives.

Step 4: Site visits and case studies of 20 finalists

The research organisations in the consortium conducted in-depth, on-site case studies with the 20 finalists. The following researchers conducted the site visits:

- o INRCA: Andrea Principi, Georgia Casanova, Marco Socci
- o Netwell Centre: Suzanne Smith, Rodd Bond, Lucia Carragher
- o Karolinska Institutet: Krister Hakansson
- o ZSI: Victoria Holczmann.

The visits were conducted between November 2013 and January 2014.

The site visits and case studies had the following objectives:

- o Validation and extension of the information received via the online application.
Development of a more detailed description of the solution, its main elements and how it works based on observation and additional interviews
- o Collection of more information on the implementer
- o Identification of information on the strategy of the initiative with regard to solution development, diffusion and sustainability
- o Preparation of a SWOT Analysis of Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats to identify main challenges and ways of supporting the initiative.

The data collection instruments included an observation protocol, a user interview guideline, a staff interview guideline, an initiator interview guideline and a SWOT template.

The site visits were conducted over two or three days and included the following activities as appropriate to the initiative being visited:

- o Introductory Meeting with the implementor/initiator of the initiative
- o Observation of main activities
- o Focus group interview/s and/or individual interviews with users
- o Focus group interview/s and/or individual interviews with staff and/or volunteers
- o Interview with external stakeholders e.g. board members
- o In-depth interview with initiator.

Step 5: Selection of three award winners

Based on the additional information collected during the site visits, the jury made nominations for the three prizes of the award. At this stage the assessment criteria were reduced to three: innovativeness, impact and potential for scaling. The winners were selected by jury members.

Step 6: Award ceremony and exchange among finalists

King Baudouin Foundation hosted all finalists at an award ceremony in Brussels on the 25th of March 2014. The following day all finalists met for a "world café". The world café is a participative method for exchanging ideas on different issues. The research partners supported the facilitation of the world café where all finalists presented their projects and exchanged ideas and experiences on topics related to the assessment criteria of the award.

Step 7: Publication and dissemination of the final report

The publication and dissemination of the report is the final step within the Social Innovation in Active and Healthy Ageing project framework. It is aimed at supporters of social innovation in public administrations, foundations, incubators and research organisations.

2. CASE STUDIES OF THE 20 FINALIST INITIATIVES

Original submissions represented a broad range of types of implementors and thematic fields within active and healthy ageing and clearly showed an impressive range of work being done in this area. 220 projects were submitted via an online template. 5 projects were excluded as they did not meet the eligibility criteria, mainly because they were located outside of the defined area (EU + EFTA). From the remaining 215 projects from 29 countries (Fig.1), 20 exemplary initiatives were finally identified for in-depth analysis using a case study approach and a structured qualitative methodology.

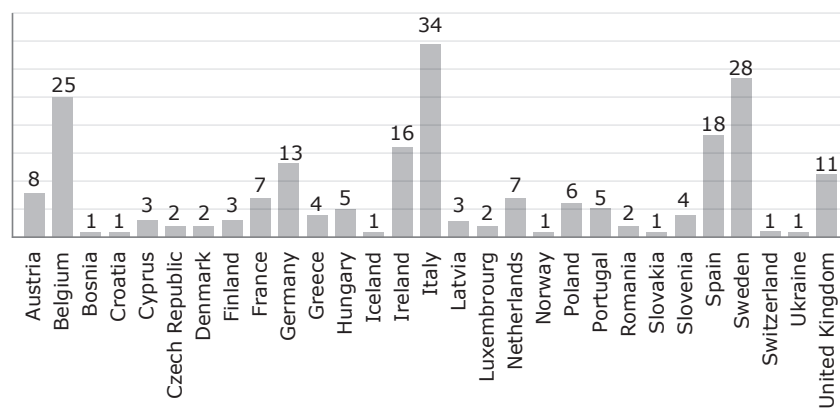


Fig. 1 Country of implementation of the original submissions for the award (total number: 215)

Most of the 20 finalists (as well as the majority of applications) came from the third sector – NGO/Non-profit organisations. For the NGO/ Non-profit sector the social innovation paradigm shift seems to have a specific relevance. This sector has traditionally focused on the needs and challenges of disadvantaged individuals and groups, providing support services to compensate for shortcomings in other societal areas. In many countries these services are predominately funded by the state – sometimes leading to somewhat rigid funding and governance structures. Consequently, the potential for innovation in this sector has been largely neglected. Innovation seemed to happen elsewhere – in particular in the economic world. With a shift in emphasis to *social innovation*, the third sector is becoming a focal point of innovation. In this section we review selected aspects of this shift as observed in the applications and particularly in the 20 finalist initiatives.

Changes in self-perception: From service provider to innovator?

That many NGO/Non-profit initiatives perceive themselves as innovators is borne out by the number of applications to the Social Innovation in Ageing Award. Of the 220 applications, 40% were situated in the NGO/Non-profit sector and another 10% declared themselves as “social enterprises”.

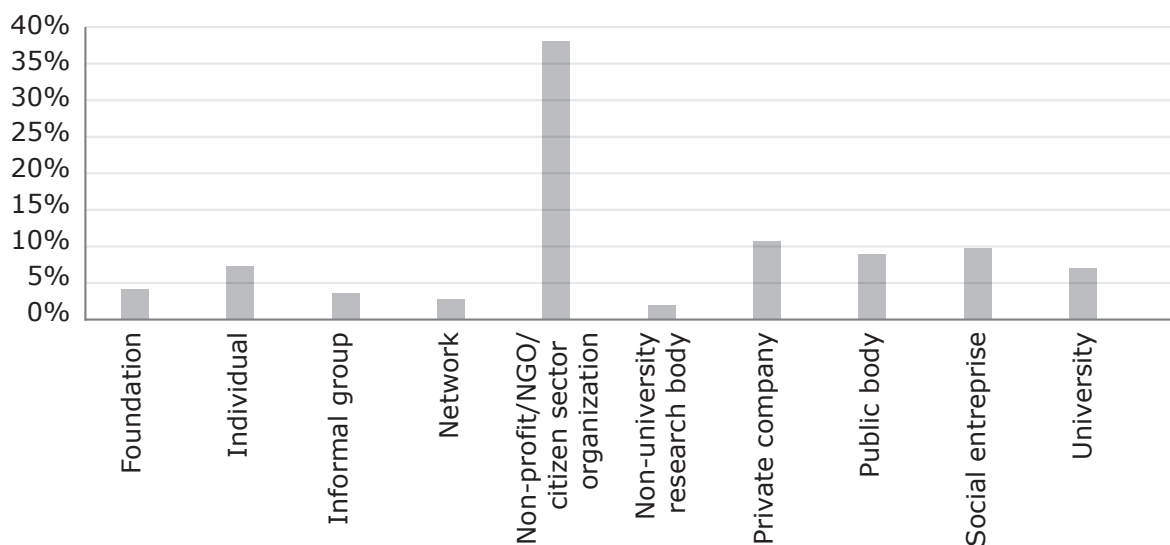


Fig. 2 Type of implementor

In discussions during the world café, initiatives critically reflected on the concept of innovation. All projects depend on a functioning organisation, solid funding and work routines while keeping responsibility for users and staff to the forefront. Initiative representatives concluded that only when this baseline is established, can innovation be pursued in a meaningful way but as a continuous process of reflection, learning and development rather than the introduction of radical change.

Collaboration, competition or a new trans-sectoral approach?

An innovative solution can relate in different ways to existing solutions/initiatives (for instance institutionalized public services). Four types were identified: complementary, adaptive, substitutive and discrete. These categories are not only instructive for innovation research, but also for the strategic positioning of initiatives.

Complementary solutions: do not directly compete with existing solutions – they rather attempt to “close gaps” in service provision and may operate in cooperation with the existing services it attempts to complement. They do not necessarily have to demonstrate superiority, but rather bring “added value”.

Adaptive solutions: build on existing solutions to improve them, by adding new elements or re-assemble existing elements. They have to prove their relative advantage over former solutions.

Substitutive solutions: are more radical as they are often driven by criticism of existing solutions, attempting to substitute and therefore stand in direct competition to them. Substitutive solutions may also be described as “disruptive” depending on how the substitution takes place. Due to their critical and competitive approach, substitutive solutions may experience strong resistance by established institutions, but may also lead to systematic change if successful.

Discrete solutions: are innovations which are unique in their means and ends, often working with a neglected target group and/or using new methods or promoting new aims. The main challenge for discrete solutions is convincing potential stakeholders of their benefits, the validity of their claims and their legitimacy.

Asking applicants to assign their initiatives to one of these categories was an experiment and we were aware of the complexity of the categories and possible misunderstandings. The majority of applicants assigned their initiatives to the category “complementary”. Surprisingly only a small proportion of applications assigned their initiative to the category “adaptive”. Given the high number of initiatives which reported to implement “substitutive” solutions we would have expected to find more radical innovations challenging existing solutions, however, the award attracted very few radical innovations. In the world café discussions this was reflected in the key statement that innovations do not need to be either big or radical to make a significant change. We interpreted this as due to the open and user-centred approach of most of the initiatives. Commercial innovations may be aggressive in their attempt to create or dominate a market. This aggressiveness was not evident in the active and healthy ageing initiatives we studied and presented. Most of what the initiatives do remains centrally related to their clients’ well-being and personal progress.

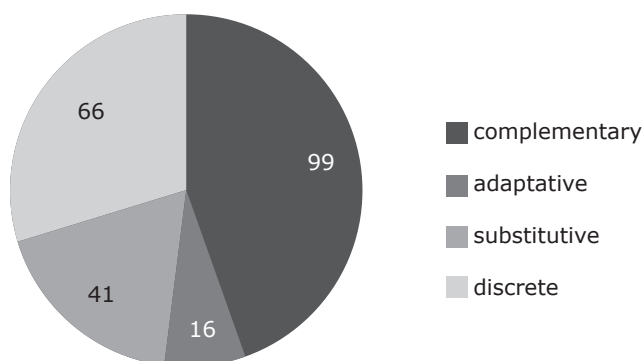


Fig. 3 Type of solution

Funding Sources

Receiving permanent funding is a primary challenge for initiatives and was identified as “external threat” in the SWOT analysis of many cases. In particular, the anticipated spending cuts in public budgets are troubling initiatives. In response to this concern, initiatives usually depend on a mix of different funding sources. Each of the selectable funding sources was indicated by about 50% of initiatives.

Sources of funding indicated by Initiatives

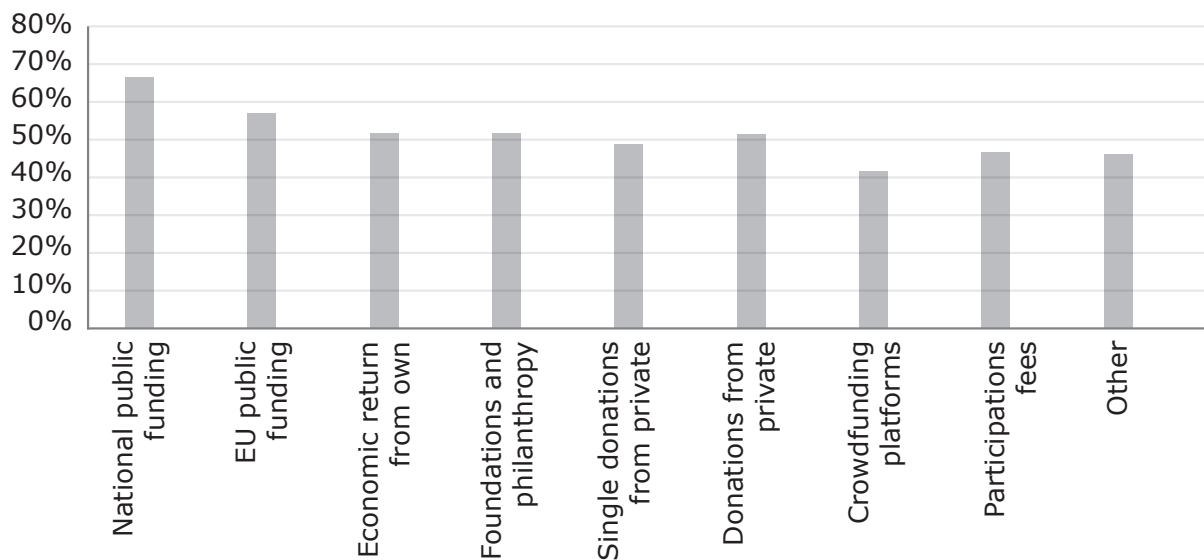


Fig. 4 Type of funding (multiple responses)

3. THEMATIC ACTIVITY CLUSTERS

Six primary areas of activity were identified from among the original submissions and finalists:

Habitation: Initiatives addressing living environment issues for older people, from solutions for remaining *at home* to extending the traditional concept of 'home' to innovative cooperative living arrangements.

Intergenerational: Initiatives with a primary objective to encourage and support relationships based on cooperation, learning and/or social responsibility between older adults and younger citizens.

Empowerment: Initiatives specifically seeking to facilitate and activate personal empowerment and responsibility in older people for improved or increased personal autonomy, independence and civic engagement.

Employment: Initiatives aiming to address aspects of employment for both employers and older adults including unemployment responses, entrepreneurship, business start-up, skill development, managing the potential of a maturing workforce and retirement planning.

Health: Initiatives focussed on strategies to address specific or general health concerns for older people including physical, mental and emotional health issues.

Volunteering: Initiatives engaged in promoting, nurturing and rewarding volunteering by and/or for the benefit of older people individually or as part of wider society.

A noticeable feature of the final projects reviewed was their inability to fit neatly into a single thematic category. Much rhetoric questions the ultimate effectiveness of a silo-driven approach to health and social care provision and these socially innovative initiatives suggest that crossing such boundaries effectively is both necessary and feasible. This holistic approach to problem solving is key to the effectiveness of many of the projects reviewed, while also presenting challenges for some projects in forming the clear self-definition often required by less flexible application processes for securing external financial and public administrative support. The case study reports are therefore presented in multi-thematic clusters in order to best represent the initiatives, by allowing them to retain their complex and sometimes multiple identities. The case reports are therefore presented in clusters as follows:

Health:

Siel Bleu: *Siel Bleu* offers research-based, inexpensive, individualized exercise programmes, combining physical, mental and social aspects of health for older people and their carers, within a group environment in the community or in institutional settings.

Learning Centre for Good Dementia Care: The *Learning Centre for Good Dementia Care* conducts trans-disciplinary methodological development and dissemination of research findings of relevance for care professionals, relatives and for people with dementia.

Kineage: *Kineage* is a serious 3D game for the elderly, promoting exercise and leisure, which is adaptable for a range of physical disabilities and for users in wheelchairs.

Health & Volunteering:

Good Gym: *GoodGym* connects people who want to get fit, with good deeds that need to be done in their area, such as pairing runners with isolated and less-mobile people in their community whom they can visit while completing their weekly run.

Silver Thread: A national volunteer service to help socially isolated older people through a toll-free telephone number and service, *Silver Thread* facilitates older people who ask for help to become part of the solution to their own problem by gradually becoming involved in the organisation's initiative through volunteering and linking with other people.

Health & Empowerment:

Passion For Life: Using a Plan Do Study Achieve (PDSA) approach, in a life café format, *Passion for Life* effects real and enduring change in older-peoples' lives by developing personal responsibility for healthy life-styles.

Age No Barrier: *ANB* aims to empower vulnerable older adults to deal more effectively with future life-changing events by helping them make physical, mental and social changes which will equip them to cope better and recover more quickly.

Intergenerational:

Kindred by Choice: In response to reduced and sometimes superficial contact between generations within families, *Kindred by Choice* provides joyful spaces for childcare, the care of older people, and civil engagement all under one roof.

Knitting Social Fabric: The *Knitting Social Fabric* project aims to reduce loneliness and social isolation among older people in the Netherlands by fostering creative social interactions between older people in knitting groups and young fashion designers, through intergenerational engagement in a social enterprise based upon designer knitwear.

Intergenerational & Volunteering:

Seniors in Action: *Seniors in Action* is an innovative grant competition which reinforces seniors' social activism through funding of socio-cultural projects for the benefit of local communities, such as initiatives promoting intergenerational cooperation, volunteer work among senior citizens and engaging older people in the life of local communities.

House of the Fruits of Society: Promoting intergenerational volunteerism, *House of the Fruits of Society* provides opportunities for older people to share time and attend activities with young people and vice versa, providing an environment in which to foster essential intergenerational solidarity and cooperation.

Young and Old in School: *YOS* brings together pupils preparing for careers and pensioners from mechanical and technical trades to work collaboratively on practical projects fostering intergenerational skills transfer and providing practical vocational education for teens.

House in the Park: *House in the Park* challenges stereotypical images of ageing and promotes a new perspective on growing older by providing structures to facilitate volunteering, participation and engagement in cultural and educational projects and activities for seniors and the wider local community.

Employment:

Kestrel: Offering targeted training programmes, *Kestrel* is making a meaningful difference to the experiences and opportunities available to people in the 50 plus age range, as both job seekers and employees, and also provides guidance in determining available choices following employment.

50-plus Entrepreneurs: *50-plus Entrepreneurs* provides professional support for business start-ups specifically tailored to older people, their interests and past experience.

Habitation & Health:

P3-Protocol 3: Offering an innovative range of care services *P3* aims to enable older people, aged 60 or older with complex care needs, to remain in their own home for longer, thus delaying or avoiding nursing home admission.

Habitation & Intergenerational:

Abitare Solidale: Facilitating cohabitation arrangements, *Abitare Solidale* links older people seeking someone with whom to share everyday life and individuals experiencing socio-economic difficulties willing to exchange companionship for accommodation.

Pari Solidaire: *Pari Solidaire* links young people who need an affordable space to live in Paris with older people living alone in family homes, with an aim to reduce the loneliness of older people and to improve intergenerational relationships.

Habitation & Empowerment:

Tubbemoddelen: Letting older people live the way they'd like to is central to *Tubbemoddelen* in an innovative care home being run and organized by the residents and supported by the staff instead of the other way around

Empowerment:

Gdynia Dialogue with Seniors: An initiative of the city government of *Gdynia*, Poland, which actively and purposefully engages in dialogue with citizens as a tool to promote social activity and respect for diversity, as a standard precursor to development and implementation of policies and initiatives impacting seniors.

HEALTH

SIEL BLEU IRELAND: KEEP YOUR BALANCE – WELLNESS THROUGH PHYSICAL EXERCISE

Researcher: Suzanne Smith, Netwell Centre, Ireland

Cluster	Health
Name of implementer	Siel Bleu Ireland
Type of implementer	Non-profit/NGO/citizen sector organisation
Implementer in operation since	More than 5 years
Implementer located in	Strasbourg, France
Name of initiative	Keep Your Balance – Siel Bleu Ireland
Initiative in operation since	1-5 years
Stage of initiative	Growth
Cooperation partners, type and primary function	Nutricia Medica (Private company): Nutricia specialises in the delivery of advanced medical nutrition for the sick, the infirm and the elderly. Arthritis Ireland (Non-profit/NGO): provides information and support for those with arthritis and engages in arthritis research. Move4Parkinson's (Non-profit/NGO): charity supporting and informing about Parkinson's disease. The Carer's Association (Non-profit/NGO): provides information and support for informal carers. The Ageing Well Network (Network). University College Limerick (University): research partner.
Staff *numbers represent the Irish project only	Regularly paid employees: 13 Volunteers: none (however charities hosting classes provide volunteers to assist) Trainees: 2 External advisers and experts: none
Funding sources	National public funding: none Economic return from own products/services: 10% Foundations and philanthropy capital: 30% Single donations from private individuals: 30% Donations from private companies: 30%
Webpage of initiative	http://www.sielbleu.com/

Organisational Background

Siel Bleu is a non-profit organisation originally founded in Strasbourg in 1997. By 2013 *Siel Bleu* were employing 230 professionals to conduct physical activities classes in over 1,700 establishments across four countries. *Siel Bleu Ireland* was established in 2009 and develops Adapted Physical Activity (APA) programmes in accordance with research trends and developments in the APA field. The CEO is supported by two office staff, a Communications Administrator, the Development Officer and seven Trainers. The Development Officer plays a key role in designing the training and education programmes,

facilitating and directing internal and external learning for all *Siel Bleu Ireland* stakeholders and managing the training team.

Problem Being Addressed

By 2025 the number of people aged over 65 in Ireland will have almost doubled. This unprecedented demographic shift brings with it a critical shortage of eldercare programmes. Life expectancy is increasing, but this does not automatically mean an increase in the quality of life. The risk of age-related degeneration, disease and loss of functional capacity all increase with age. Research has consistently highlighted the many benefits of regular physical activity and there is irrefutable evidence of its effectiveness in the reduction of falls and related injuries as well as primary and secondary prevention of several chronic diseases such as diabetes and cancer. Current policy makers continue to invest in costly curative care methods rather than affordable and accessible preventative care solutions, while many older or vulnerable adults become marginalized and socially excluded due to their physical or mental health status.

There is a pressing need for active ageing solutions in Ireland where 63% of older adults live a sedentary lifestyle and figures show that there is a prevalence of chronic disease. In 2012 the Irish state health expenditure reached €13.6 billion and Ireland spends the highest amount per capita in the EU on pharmaceutical products. Preventative care through physical activities could have a significant quality of life impact on participants, family members and society as a whole while saving scarce financial resources. *Siel Bleu Ireland* aims to be part of a positive social change by working together with all stakeholders to ensure scalable active ageing solutions such as their Adapted Physical Activity (APA) programmes.

Innovative Solution

Siel Bleu Ireland partners with research institutes and universities to base their work on latest findings and evaluate the effects of specific activities on participants' well-being. All *Siel Bleu* programmes focus on the individual's needs and abilities. Exercises are often designed to mirror tasks of daily living and take a holistic approach to well-being through the life course. The combination of physical, mental and social aspects of health represents a meaningful and integrated approach towards applied exercise; moreover, *Siel Bleu* offers inexpensive, individualized exercise programmes within a group environment, which is attractive to many people.

Programmes are provided in diverse facilities, including residential care, the community and on a one to one basis but their objectives are always to make sure participants are socially included and each person receives a measurable physical and mental benefit from the activities. To ensure classes are accessible and affordable *Siel Bleu* seeks to engage with all possible stakeholders working with and for older or vulnerable adults as well as actors in healthcare and sport. Charity partners, such as Arthritis Ireland, the Carers' Association etc. reach out to their members through *Siel Bleu* programmes, doctors

refer their patients to exercise classes, hospitals refer patients to *Siel Bleu* as part of their recovery processes, and church parishes set up *Siel Bleu* classes as part of their pastoral care mission to build confidence, well-being and local community spirit.

Through its innovative growth strategies *Siel Bleu* works to overcome structural and societal boundaries to participation, whether by involving health insurances to cover the costs for their clients, working with organisations to improve the health of their employees or partnerships, such as that with Nutricia Medica Ireland to spread the message that: "Eating well + Moving well = Ageing well".

Stakeholder Participation

As a charity promoting change within society *Siel Bleu* works closely with different stakeholders to maximize the scope and scale of solutions. Partnerships with charities include those with Arthritis Ireland, Move4Parkinson's and the Carers' Association who have run pilot programmes for their members with an aim to roll these out nationally. Furthermore, *Siel Bleu* is part of the Ageing Well Network, Age Friendly County Initiatives and Older People's Networks working to increase awareness of the benefits of APA as part of active ageing strategies. Through the partnership with Nutricia Medica, the project has received a 3 year sustainability grant which supports pilot programmes so that participants can experience firsthand the benefits of APA. In partnership with the University of Limerick, *Siel Bleu Ireland* is engaged in a research programme involving local GPs and measuring the benefits of APA on their patients, besides running two additional research programmes endorsed by the European Commission. Partners have been strategically selected to collaborate on specific elements of the initiative. *Siel Bleu Ireland* are also supported by the founding organisation in France and branches in Belgium and Spain.

Target Group

The charity reaches out to adults, who cannot participate in main stream physical activities, due to age, illness and structural or societal boundaries. Nursing homes participants range in age from 70-95 years while within the community participants are mostly between the ages of 55 and 85 years. In pathology-based classes, such as for adults with arthritis, diabetes or cancer, participants can range in age from 25 years. *Siel Bleu* reaches around 1,400 adults per week across 13 counties in Ireland, with growing demand identified throughout the country.

Impact

There are physical, mental and social impacts on the target group resulting from the programme. Physical improvements such as strength, flexibility, endurance and balance are often accompanied by enhanced mental well-being through reduced anxieties, stress and depression. Increased motivation

and social well-being is experienced through social connectedness, verbal communication and reduction of isolation. APA reduces the risks and impact of chronic diseases, prevents illnesses, falls and fractures and enables adults to live happily and healthily as long as possible. A study conducted by McKinsey showed that if *Siel Bleu* was implemented in 4 European countries, health care cost savings for 2 illnesses alone could amount to €69 billion between 2012 and 2015.

Siel Bleu contributes to an increased awareness of the impact of applied physical activity as a preventive solution to health and wellbeing for older adults and aims to create a society in which everyone can grow old as independently, autonomously and socially included as possible. This will not only benefit the individual, but their families and society as a whole. It will help reduce the financial and emotional burden of chronic disease, freeing limited resources for other pressing social needs. The goal for *Siel Bleu Ireland* is to reach 5,000 weekly service users by 2016.

Evaluation

All activities and projects within the initiative are grounded in research and are monitored and evaluated on an ongoing basis, with health and social wellbeing shown to be positively impacted by participation in *Siel Bleu* activities. Evidence has shown the benefits of physical activity, appropriate nutrition and motivational support on the reduction in risk of breast cancer recurrence, while for older participants, pilot and study results have shown an increase in physical abilities from *Siel Bleu* class participation. Participant feedback highlights the positive effect of the social interaction on mood and loneliness, as well as heightened health self-awareness.

The stigma associated with disease is reduced as all participants integrate in class groups. Furthermore, participants report experiencing positive physical and mental changes, joy through social inclusion, increased ability to perform tasks of daily living and reduction of suffering from pain or anxiety. Several evaluations show an increase in participants' strength, flexibility, and balance. Improvements in confidence, mood levels, verbal communication and social interaction are also reported as participants realize that they can positively influence their health and regain/retain their independence. These results were measured in a 6 month pilot programme in 3 nursing homes.

Siel Bleu Ireland conducted an 8 week pilot for people with dementia and their carers and are currently partnering with the University of Limerick where the effects of the APA on body composition and physical abilities are being measured. Other evaluation projects include a European research programme on the effects of APA on participants, staff well-being and the nursing home itself, and development of a web-based training portal through which people can increase their knowledge and interact with a trainer from their home. In Ireland, *Siel Bleu* has noted an impact on families and communities with improved social connections, reduced isolation and loneliness, improved mobility and an increased awareness of the benefits of exercise. It is conceivable that these individual and social

changes have the potential to influence self-perceptions of older people in relation to ageing, due to the impact of improved mobility on the definition of 'older' and assumptions about ageing.

Competition

Siel Bleu is the only charity in Ireland using APA as a preventative care solution. Only 15% of older adults engage in levels of physical activity sufficient to achieve health benefits. *Siel Bleu* makes sessions accessible and affordable and helps overcome the structural or other barriers to becoming active. The project addresses a global issue and has ensured that the 15 year long experience in France can be replicated easily and cost effectively. There are for-profit organisations providing physical activities in care and community settings, but given the percentage of sedentary adults in Ireland all approaches to increasing awareness of the benefits of physical activities will support *Siel Bleu* in creating positive change in society.

Barriers, Challenges and Solutions

Currently policy makers and society do not promote APA as a form of preventative care. *Siel Bleu* will thus continue to raise awareness through partnerships, research programmes and sample sessions so that stakeholders can directly experience the many benefits. To fund these pilot programmes, the project is actively looking for organisations to partner with and continues to apply for grants until sustainability is reached. Research based pilot programmes in different settings, such as nursing homes, day care centres and within the community will highlight the *Siel Bleu* approach to healthy and active ageing and increase awareness for the project's service with potential stakeholders such as the Department of Health, Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport, the Health Service Executive, and the Irish Sports Council. *Siel Bleu Ireland* will further utilize existing partnerships with other organisations, such as charities which specialize in providing information and support for people with chronic illnesses or services for the older adult. This entails publicizing in their newsletters, linking websites, offering talks on the effects of adapted physical activities and providing information on how to easily access *Siel Bleu* groups or one to one programmes.

Siel Bleu Ireland successfully operates a significantly greater percentage of its time directly in the community and working with grass-roots charities and volunteers than it does in France, where there is a greater focus on care facilities. The Irish adaptation of the *Siel Bleu* model shows that for replication in different national environments, local contextual needs and solutions will define how the initiative would be best implemented and sustained. Reflective engagement with stakeholders in each new context will be key to successful replication. Furthermore, financial and networking support are important elements while replicating the essential components of the initiative in new areas.

Funding

The total yearly budget of €145,000 is currently made of 15% European Union public funding, 55% foundations and philanthropy capital, 1% single donations from private individuals, 11% donations from private companies and 18% through participation fees. The business model for *Siel Bleu Ireland* aims for full financial sustainability by 2017, without dependence upon public funding.

Conclusion

Siel Bleu Ireland offers a simple and innovative solution within a complex health service and community care environment. Key to their success to date has been the vision and commitment of the director and the team, as well as the strong knowledge base upon which the initiative is founded. A solid business plan and strategic activities provide a roadmap for the growth of the initiative but essential to this growth is the openness and ability of the project to remain flexible and responsive to the needs of identified service users and to the opportunities presented for growth and learning. Their success is evident in the quantifiable data gathered but it is undeniable when witnessed in the joy and pleasure visible on the faces of class participants and their enthusiastic insistence that *Siel Bleu* has 'changed their lives'. Replication of this initiative should be relatively easily achievable if effective roadmaps are followed, and the wider impact of such replication is potentially game-changing.

LEARNING CENTRE FOR GOOD DEMENTIA CARE (SWEDEN) – DISSEMINATING DEMENTIA KNOWLEDGE

Researcher: Krister Hakansson, Karolinska Institute, Sweden

Cluster	Health
Name of implementer	Municipality of Linköping, Leanlink, Lärcenter
Type of implementer	Network
Implementer in operation since	More than 5 years
Implementer located in	Linköping, Sweden
Name of initiative	Learning Centre for Good Dementia Care
Initiative in operation since	more than 5 years
Stage of initiative	Scaling (the next step will be growing impact on a national scale)
Cooperation partners, type and primary function	International Centre for Social Franchising
Staff	Regularly paid employees: 6 (Project Team) Volunteers: none Trainees: none External advisers and experts: none
Funding sources	National public funding: none Economic return from own products/services: none
Webpage of initiative	www.linkoping.se/leanlink/larcenter

Organisational Background

The Learning Centre (Lärcenter) is located within the municipality of Linköping, Sweden. The overall goal of the Learning Centre is methodological development and dissemination of research findings of relevance for care professionals, relatives and for people with dementia. In the municipality of Linköping several providers of elderly care exist. Cooperation across boundaries is required to provide the best possible care for each recipient in accordance with the national guidelines specified by the National Board of Health and Welfare.

Problem Being Addressed

The prevalence of dementia is growing but a lot about the disease is unknown by the wider public as well as by practitioners and care providers. In addition, dementia is still heavily stigmatized and new approaches to treatment and interaction with patients is needed. People with dementia often become isolated and alone because of fear and ignorance encountered in their environments. The *Learning Centre for Good Dementia Care* in Linköping wants to raise awareness in society of what the situation is for people with dementia and their families. The centre also aims to increase knowledge and understanding of policy makers. It stresses the importance of increasing the visibility of victims of

dementia and promoting understanding in society, that they have the same right to dignity as any other person. This is accomplished by talking openly about the disease and by supporting those affected and their families. Moreover, it is often difficult for new knowledge to reach care professionals, in order to have an impact on practical work and to transform theoretical knowledge into practice. Experienced professionals need to update their previous knowledge and new co-workers need to learn and benefit from the experiences of others. The model of the *Learning Centre for Good Dementia Care* makes new knowledge and research more available and encourages professionals to contribute as researchers themselves. The model also transforms theoretical knowledge and practical experience into concrete methods and tools, including taking advantage of existing experiences in the field.

Innovative Solution

The National Board of Health and Welfare (Socialstyrelsen) in Sweden has specified national guidelines and core values for good dementia care. These emphasize a person-centered care approach. The methods used by the Learning Centre are evidence based and carefully chosen to be consistent with a person-centered care approach. An important issue the project is tackling considers the measurement of autonomy and quality of life for people with dementia. The national guidelines further recommend a multi professional team based work organisation to facilitate evaluations, identify problems and find solutions so that care needs can be met in a holistic way. The project promotes trans-disciplinary cooperation to provide the best possible care to each single recipient, in accordance with the national guidelines specified by the National Board of Health and Welfare.

The Learning Centre is an essential resource for providers of elderly care in the municipality of Linköping by acting as a support to maintain a progressive and positive process for those working most closely with clients and their relatives. By working together, including care recipients, relatives and employees, a stimulating and meaningful intervention can be offered through the implementation of different Learning Centre models. In order to enable a person-centered care approach and maximum autonomy for people with dementia, several models and projects have been developed so far. Some of these (including several in the form of research and development (R & D) projects) include:

- Development of methodology to support relatives (R & D projects)
- Dementia education for all staff in care work, developed and run by the Dementia Care Developers
- Documentation of dementia training for care work staff (R & D projects)
- Tutoring for all employees working with housing for people with dementia
- Start-up of an Alzheimer's cafe, for newly diagnosed people with dementia
- Operation of the Dementia Platform for all actors and care providers in Linköping
- Day activity services for younger people, under 65 years of age
- Reference group with people suffering from dementia
- Choir for people with dementia and their nursing staff

- Supply and maintenance of various animals such as rabbits and chickens
- Projects with cultural events in collaboration with the museum and library.

Besides joint planning through monthly meetings with all care providers and bi-annual meetings with all other stakeholders, the Learning Centre has also established a network for assistant nurses to get continuous feedback about the implementation of the different methods and tools - and to develop them further. In order to facilitate and encourage the implementation of new methods and tools, one assistant nurse in each network is assigned an extra responsibility as "inspirer". Inspirers have a key role to encourage and motivate implementation of new tools and methods through a process of participation on all levels, from persons with dementia and relatives to care unit directors. Some of the tools and methods are:

- The Life Story (a documentation of previous and present life experiences of each patient)
- Music and dancing (a tool to stimulate mobility and language skills)
- Family Council (regular meetings with representatives of families of persons with dementia)
- "Service map" for persons with dementia (now developed into a clickable web based tool where available services at different stages of dementia can be identified).

Out of the available lectures offered by the Centre, the one about using the Life Story tool is the most popular. The centre also tries to meet different needs as they arise in a flexible way. One example is provision of supervision concerning aggression, where massage is an efficient tool. When working with reminiscence, the Life Story is a very important tool. Based on the person's life story, it is often possible to present objects of significance to the person, objects that associate to previous experiences and interests. Sometimes such objects can be unexpected based on stereotypes about different categories of persons. As an example, a woman could have a special interest in hunting, if she previously worked with taking care of the meat after the hunting. For one man it was handicraft as it was related to memories of his mother. The Life Story can also be used to arrange suitable activities for individuals. Each individual Life Story document is also an important tool to optimize care and to facilitate transition of persons with dementia between different care units and care providers.

Stakeholder Participation

One important characteristic of this initiative is that it originated from a perceived need by people working directly in the care of people with dementia. The initial initiative came from assistant nurses, not from management or from external experts. The inclusion of various stakeholders (e.g. care patients, personnel, relatives) with the dementia platform has been crucial to facilitate dialogue. The platform can be understood as a network of representatives: from all care providers, directors and also from all other actors in their network. The assistant nurses have their own network with representatives

from each unit among the providers. Going forward it is hoped to have all people working with dementia included, as well as people who work in home care. Alongside home care, an expansion of the networks should also include social workers, work therapists, nurses, assistant nurses and operational managers, home instructors for vision and hearing and others.

Target Group

The target group of the *Learning Centre for Good Dementia Care* includes health professionals, people with dementia and their relatives. Through the person-centred approach, work with patients also includes close collaboration with their relatives and care personnel.

Impact

The *Learning Centre for Good Dementia Care* raises awareness in society of what the situation is for people with dementia and their families, to help combat stereotypes and increase knowledge about the disease. By talking openly about the disease and by supporting those affected and their families, the centre helps those affected to manage the significant changes dementia brings to their lives. The Learning Centre model further enables dissemination of new research findings and knowledge, and encourages nursing and care employees to participate in research. The Learning Centre model transforms theoretical and practical knowledge into practical methods and tools. Through contact with a reference group with the disease, and their relatives, constant feedback is assured on how new knowledge can impact the field.

By the year 2011, the dementia three step training programme had been offered to more than 1,000 people. Tutorials are offered continuously to around 200 employees. In the beginning the Learning Centre provided education for all twelve care providers in the municipality working with dementia care. In approximately 2009 the Swedish government invested nationwide to improve dementia care and these resources helped to provide training arranged by the *Learning Centre for Good Dementia Care* in Linköping. In total over 1,000 staff from all the different care units completed a three-step course during a total of 4 days. New staff are presently offered a mini-version of this course, over 1.5 days. Working with colleagues and these established tools, as part of daily care routines in their units, is providing staff with valuable learning opportunities. In addition, over 200 staff have received care tutoring and continued training through the Learning Centre.

Evaluation

The project has been evaluated through experience-based self-assessment, feedback-based self-assessment, self-evaluation, external evaluation of impacts based on qualitative methods, external evaluation of impacts based on quantitative methods.

The *Learning Centre for Good Dementia Care* has been part of permanent activity in elderly care in the Linköping municipality since 2012. It began as a Research and Development project with a supervisor from the university for a period of three years, beginning in October 2007. Later, the Learning Centre operated with the support of funds from R & D Incentives and from Lean Link to Elderly Care. In 2011, the Learning Centre was assigned by the Elderly Board to build a dementia platform for all actors and providers of senior care in Linköping. Assistant nurses with specialist knowledge and training, and assigned as Dementia Care Developers, have built and are operating this project with a management / steering committee and experts in the field of dementia. The assistant nurses in the Learning Centre workgroup also work directly with people with dementia in a range of activities.

To illustrate the changes these tools can bring about, Pia Fransson, one of the initiators tells a story about a troubled unit that wanted the Learning Centre to help out. The persons with dementia were generally worried, aggressive and, in spite of increased medication, the situation was very difficult for both the staff and the persons with dementia. They also had experienced a high turnover of directors at the unit. The Learning Centre provided a two-day training course in good dementia care, followed up with regular staff supervision. The centre also carried out planning meetings with all staff on how to implement the changed routines and other changes, such as rearranging the internal environment in the unit for its residents. The concept of person-centered care and how to work with the different tools described above was discussed and demonstrated. They also decided to have a dog available at the unit for the residents to care about and to introduce music therapy once a week. Other consultants worked with the social relations among staff and changing the diet at the unit. According to the evaluation made, the following effects were observed:

- Levels of aggression among the persons with dementia were markedly reduced
- Extra staff during nights was no longer needed
- Medication could be reduced
- Relatives said the atmosphere was friendlier
- Staff reported that some of the elderly who were non-communicative before the changes had started to talk after the changes were implemented.

The *Learning Centre for Good Dementia Care* has been highlighted in various ways for their work. In 2010, the Dementia Care Developers received Linköping municipality's personnel policy programme award for their dedicated work to inspire and impart knowledge to other employees. The Swedish Association for Cognitive disorders awards an annual scholarship to a person or persons who progresses dementia care. In 2011 the Learning Centre received this award.

Competition

In Sweden there is a relatively free market for establishing care organisations. When a new actor appears they need to be integrated into something that others have created, which may not necessarily be the approach they wish to take. One element of the programme of the *Learning Centre for Good Dementia Care* that is now obligatory, following a local parliament decision, is the specific way they work with the Life Story tool. This suggests that the *Learning Centre for Good Dementia Care* is recognised as a leader in dementia care in this area.

Barriers, Challenges and Solutions

Possible barriers encountered by the project are financial and time-related problems. By continuing to work on making the Learning Centre more visible and highlighting the positive results already achieved, the project team aspires to gain more public attention and financial support. Another potential challenge lies in the change of providers which can be a critical event. Some newer providers may not want to implement the programme of the *Learning Centre for Good Dementia Care*. One solution has been that politicians have decided that at least one of the models must be implemented by all and be part of dementia care in our municipality: the model of the Life Story.

With regards to varying needs and care scenarios the *Learning Centre for Good Dementia Care* has developed models and manuals for a variety of situations. These have been evaluated by the research and development unit. In the future the project team aspires to have a digital bookshelf, to be electronic and web published, a kind of virtual library so that relatives can also access this information to better understand care strategies and research findings and contribute to further developments. In order to enlarge the discussion to care in general, many of the models created by *Learning Centre for Good Dementia Care* have potential for application to other categories of long term care in addition to dementia.

A future challenge identified may be the scaling of the education concept through distant learning methods. Perhaps some parts may be communicable using computer technology such as introducing a specific scenario then letting practitioners test it and discuss experiences afterwards. This approach to dissemination of learning is part of the consideration of expanding the initiative.

Funding

A group of assistant nurses, working with dementia care in the municipality of Linköping, observed a potential to improve the care of persons with dementia. Three of them had attended a university course on health care and were inspired to implement some of the ideas in the municipality. Following discussion with colleagues and persons with dementia, the operation manager, Pia Fransson, wrote to the Council for Elderly Care in the municipality and presented some of the ideas they had discussed. These ideas were further developed in dialogue with the council. The group of assistant nurses received

a grant (SEK 40,000, appr €5,000) from the council to make a larger application to build a Learning Centre with the aim of spreading and implementing ideas for dementia care improvement in the whole community. One core idea was to involve different stakeholders (such as all public and private care providers in the municipality), the department for research and development in the municipality, researchers in social sciences at Linköping University, patient representatives and representatives from relatives of people with dementia. A number of additional municipal departments were also involved. The application was successful and the group received 1,2 million SEK (appr €150,000) over three years, covering expenses for 1.2 full time salary for an assistant nurse. After three years, the grant was renewed in 2010 and again in 2013 the project was consolidated as part of the dementia care organisation. Funding covers the salaries of five persons, all assistant nurses with specialization in dementia care, working between 5% and 50%. They all now have the title dementia care developer (demensvårdsutvecklare).

Conclusion

The *Learning Centre for Good Dementia Care* showcases innovative approaches with regards to assisted daily living and dementia. A researcher from the Research and Development Unit at the centre points out that he has seen many initiatives come and go through the years, but this is the only one that has sustained and led to permanent change in the municipality. The Learning Centre strives to have a major influence guaranteeing quality in dementia care through operational development locally, regionally and nationally. In the future increased use of ICT and current technical developments are anticipated within the project. The development of a virtual library and the use of the iPad as a living photo album are only two examples of how new technologies can be used.

Another idea concerns a web portal for relatives, to quickly access material and documents. More collaboration is also planned with teachers and researchers at the Health College Linköping in the field of care, health and dementia. The Elderly Board has requested a "Dementia Platform" with aims and goals in line with these guidelines. To develop and sustain such a platform, a unifying and coordinating actor is needed that could also function as a driving force in the work that lies ahead of the *Learning Centre for Good Dementia Care*. In conclusion, a lot has been achieved so far, including innovative models and approaches in care for people with dementia, and many plans have been formulated for the future of the initiative.

KINEAGE (SPAIN) – ADAPTED KINECT GAME

Researcher: Krister Hakansson, Karolinska Institute, Sweden

Cluster	Health
Name of implementer	Deustotech-Life (eVida) from the University of Deusto
Type of implementer	University
Implementer in operation since	More than 5 years
Implementer located in	Bilbao, Spain
Name of initiative	Kineage – Adapted Kinect game for exercise and fun
Initiative in operation since	More than 5 years
Stage of initiative	Established (past the previous stages and has demonstrated success)
Cooperation partners, type and primary function	None
Staff	Regularly paid employees: 30 Volunteers: none Trainees: none External advisers and experts: 2
Funding sources	National public funding: 100%
Webpage of initiative	http://www.deustotech.deusto.es/

Organisational Background

The Deustotech-Life (eVida) research team from University of Deusto (UD), comprised of telecommunications and computer science engineers, has been recognised since 2010 with a B category of Excellence by the Basque Country Government for the high quality of their research work. Deustotech-Life (eVida) has been in operation for more than five years and employs 30 regularly paid employees. The activities of the team focus on developing technological solutions for active ageing and independent living as well as for people with disabilities and neuropsychological disorders. The fields of emphasis are tele-diagnosis, tele-rehabilitation and Serious Games for Health. The research team has participated in more than 50 national and international research projects since 2002. One of their priorities is Serious Games for Health, with several projects financed by the Basque provincial and regional Governments.

The initiative addresses the fields of personalised health management, prevention and early diagnosis of functional and cognitive decline and independent living solutions. The head of the research group is Begoña García. She coordinates the other researchers in the design and development of the solution. *Kineage* is implemented in Misacordia Nursing Home in central Bilbao. The nursing home became involved following a visit from Deusto tech to present and discuss new information technology of potential interest to the nursing home. The staff was initially sceptical, as they had no previous knowledge of this kind of technology, but they soon recognised the potential of the *Kineage* solution.

The team working on *Kineage* collaborates with external experts from the nursing home, thus forming a multidisciplinary group that includes a physiotherapist and a psychologist. Additional support is provided through collaboration with public and private research and funding institutions and companies for the development of the initiative.

Problem being addressed

The current increase in the ageing population and the lack of knowledge many older people have of new technologies implies that older people may not be able to participate and are therefore excluded from digital society. Many new technologies that could improve their quality of life are not easily accessible to them. Smartphones, computers, video games, etc. are examples. Older people are thus impacted by the digital divide.

It has been proven that the use of games can benefit quality of life, health and wellbeing for older people, as they reinforce cognitive and physical exercise by means of accessible leisure. One of the latest trends in the field of video games is the use of devices such as the Kinect sensor that do not require use of remote controls. This sensor recognises the movements of the user who controls the game with their body. There already exist various Kinect products aimed at older people. Nevertheless, users in wheelchairs and other older people with physical disabilities, such as muscular dystrophy, where low mobility in either of the upper extremities is present, are not able to use this type of games as they are not adapted to their specific needs. There is, therefore, a lack of technological resources adapted to the specific needs of each user, leaving a great part of the ageing population without access to products that can improve their health, quality of life, and the enjoyment of their leisure time.

Innovative Solution

The solution is a game in 3D to help the elderly exercise while having fun being together. *Kineage* is a serious game for the elderly, configurable to different physical disabilities and valid for users in wheelchairs, promoting exercise and leisure. What distinguishes this solution from other products available on the market is that it can be used even by those in wheelchairs, and it can be adapted to the particular needs of the user. This way, exercise, rehabilitation and the enjoyment of an accessible leisure is promoted while also reducing the digital divide. A Kinect sensor is used, which captures the users' movements and permits control of the game without need for remote control.

Loneliness and social isolation are common problems among older people. Playing the game in a group and competing against each other in a relaxed and friendly manner addresses this problem. In this group setting team members can give hints and encourage each other as they play.

The game consists of three different levels in which the user collects various objects appearing on the screen by moving their arms, in order not to let the objects fall. This way, both the cognitive processes

and the mobility of the user are activated during the training (game play). The game allows for specifying the typology of the user, e.g. with or without any movement in their legs (use of the wheelchair), and giving the player the option to play standing or sitting. Additionally, users may present limited mobility or even absolute absence of movement in either arm. Thus the game is configured that the user can choose to play with either one arm (left or right) or both arms. The game displays three different levels of three minutes each to avoid fatigue while training. In the first level, the objects – cupcakes and bottles of wine – follow a vertical path. In the second level, the number of these objects increases and in the following level the objects follow a horizontal path. At the end of each level, the user's goal is to earn a piece of cake, until earning a whole cake as a final reward after finishing the three levels.

The *Kineage* application also offers a more cognitive version, with different tasks to handle. Both versions were tested several times. Following the feedback the team adjusted the application.

Even by having a total lack of knowledge of new technologies, the users are able to play the game, learn about its use, provide feedback to the programmer and thereby participate in the development of the *Kineage* application.

Stakeholder Participation

The project is carried out by experts from different areas. On the one hand, the Deustotech-Life (eVida) research team from the University of Deusto (UD) is composed of computer scientists and telecommunications engineers. On the other hand, the team from La Misericordia nursing home is composed of psychologists and physiotherapists, acting as external partners. The problem was identified through a series of meetings between both groups where the experts from the nursing home presented their ideas regarding the real needs of the older people in their care. In order to address these needs, the Deustotech-Life (eVida) research team examined the range of technological solutions existing on the market. After analysing the advantages and disadvantages of each, to identify if any of them addressed the desired needs, they decided to create a new tool based on their experience. The UD team designed and developed the game adapting the Kinect sensor to the specific needs of the project. During the process of creation, the both experts from the nursing home and the end users participated, thus ensuring that their needs were effectively addressed by the solution.

Target Group

The initiative aims to reach all older people aged approximately 65 and over, although it can be used by adults of any age. *Kineage* is specifically designed for people in wheelchairs or with any type of physical disability. The game is designed in an accessible way, so that people with little knowledge of new technologies are able to use it. As it is a solution designed to be used in leisure time it is appropriate for people in all situations, however, the targeted environment for the solution is nursing and private homes.

Impact

Older people who suffer physical disabilities such as low mobility or who need a wheelchair have the potential to use games to improve their quality of life in terms of health and well-being. By using this game older people will be accessing new technologies, thereby reducing the digital divide. This game was developed by including the views and observations of the end users and experts during all stages of the project, including its design phase. The validation of the game was conducted by active participation throughout the design and development process and not simply by feedback questionnaires, suggesting a wider impact should be achieved from its dissemination.

One desired social impact is the reduction of the gap between generations by bringing new technologies closer to older people. Moreover, the initiators want to make these technologies accessible to people with disabilities, since currently people with certain physical or cognitive impairments are not able to access these particular type of solutions. The initiative also aims to promote active ageing through leisure, physical exercise, social stimulation and the use of technology.

The initiative has already achieved introducing new technologies to older people, thereby reducing their fear and lack of knowledge about them. It has also succeeded in helping those people to maintain a healthy lifestyle by performing physical exercise while having fun. As a result, users are doing more exercise than they actually realise while also gaining the proven health and wellness benefits of having fun.

Case Example:

Leire, a physiotherapist, reports she has made some remarkable observations concerning differences in behaviour when the residents are working with her and how they behave in the Kineage game room. She describes individuals who say they are unable to do different forms of movement such as using one of their arms or lifting an arm to a certain position. "It is as if they forget their limitations when they are playing Kineage. They are so concentrated and they want to gain as many points as possible. Sometimes I have refused afterwards to help residents with something they say they are unable to do, because when they are playing Kineage I can see that they can do it".

Evaluation

The impact of the initiative has been assessed through external evaluation of impacts based on qualitative methods, such as interviews, focus groups, etc. and through external evaluations based on quantitative measurement of impact indicators.

Competition

Studies conducted by Ganesan and Anthony in 2012 reported a work in progress focused on older adults, aimed at finding the factors that play an important role in motivating them to maintain a physical exercise routine. There are various Kinect based products developed by different organisations

and research centres which are aimed at promoting active ageing. Kinelabs (University of Hong Kong) is one example which benefits people with motoric disabilities after a stroke for rehabilitation and improvements of their quality of life. ROGER (Realistic Observation (in) Game and Experiences (in) Rehabilitation) is another serious game developed by Fishing Cactus, using Kinect for medical rehabilitation and developed for patients suffering from a lack of logic and organisational skills. Yet another game-based rehabilitation tool is available for balance training. *Kineage* remains the only solution, with a strong social component, developed for use by people in wheelchairs with an application to adapt the exercise to the user's specific physical needs.

Barriers, Challenges and Solutions

It is with some ease that *Kineage* can be implemented in nursing homes since health-care professionals are available to help people, who have a higher level of difficulty, to start the game. This solution is designed to also be implemented in private homes. In a case where a person with a high level of disability wants to use the game it would, however, be necessary to depend on someone else to support the user in starting the game. To overcome this barrier, the plan is to develop new technics to make this solution more accessible to these users.

The rapid development of new technologies means that systems quickly become obsolete. The *Kineage* research team is continuously working with cutting-edge technologies and developing new solutions to address identified needs. The involvement of public and private institutions in supporting this research work is also fundamental to ensure financial sustainability for this work.

Financial constraints for nursing homes present a challenge for dissemination of the solution. The Misericordia nursing home, the pilot site where the prototype has been developed, only has one Kinect sensor being used with a computer borrowed from the university. Although the cost for the whole package (sensor + computer) is only approximately \$1,000, this may be beyond the reach of many facilities who could benefit from it. More residents at the pilot site want to participate with the *Kineage* project but without additional equipment more sessions cannot be provided and the participating group cannot be facilitated to grow, thus restricting replication of the impact of the solution.

Funding

Deustotech-Life (eVida) collaborates with public and private research and funding institutions and companies for the development of their initiative. This project is specifically funded by the BIZKAILAB programme of the Regional Government of Biscay (Social Services department) and the yearly budget is €30,000.

Conclusion

Kineage is a serious game for the elderly, configurable to different physical disabilities and valid for users in wheelchairs, promoting exercise and leisure. This initiative offers a solution for older people who suffer physical disabilities such as low mobility, or those requiring a wheelchair, to use games to improve their health and well-being. By accessing new technologies in this manner it is also hoped that the digital divide between older and younger technology users can be reduced. The scepticism of staff at the pilot study location in Misericordia Nursing Home in central Bilbao gave way quickly as they recognised that participants enjoy *Kineage* and it benefits the mobility, health and wellbeing of the target group, improving their exercise ability and even making them move in ways they usually cannot. Financial resources, however, limit the ability of the nursing home to increase the number of *Kineage* units which in turn limits the number of residents able to avail of the solution. Minimal funding would be required to improve the impact of the initiative within the existing nursing home while enabling ongoing development of the product.

Where the solution is applied in a private home context, dependence upon someone else to help to start the game challenges the objective of broad based implementation of the solution. The *Kineage* team recognises this challenge and continues to work on developing new technics to make this solution more accessible to users in all environments and with a wide range of disabilities. The rapid pace at which new technologies become obsolete is another area of focus for the team who maintain an emphasis on continuously working with cutting-edge technologies to develop new solutions to meet emerging needs. *Kineage* is a unique and innovative tool promoting accessible leisure while offering a solution to encourage older people with physical challenges to engage in essential regular physical activity.

HEALTH & VOLUNTEERING

GOODGYM (UK) – RUNNING FOR SOCIAL GOOD

Researcher: Suzanne Smith, Netwell Centre, Ireland

Cluster	Intergenerational & Volunteering
Name of implementer	GoodGym
Type of implementer	Non-profit/NGO/citizen sector organisation
Implementer in operation since	More than 5 years
Implementer located in	London, United Kingdom
Name of initiative	GoodGym
Initiative in operation since	1-5 years
Stage of initiative	Scaling (the next step will be growing impact on a national scale)
Cooperation partners, type and primary function	Local Authorities
Staff	Regularly paid employees: 5 Volunteers: 2,000 Trainees: none External advisers and experts: 12
Funding sources	Member donations Grants Service contracts Economic return from own products/services: Member donations
Webpage of initiative	http://www.goodgym.org/

Organisational Background

GoodGym is a company limited by Guarantee operating in the United Kingdom. The organisation has two non-executive Directors, Paul Miller and Ruth Scott. It is run by founder Ivo Gormley and CTO Ian Drysdale and local trainers in the areas in which they operate. *GoodGym* is currently available to people in Tower Hamlets, Hackney, Camden, Lambeth and Westminster in London as well as Bristol.

Problem Being Addressed

The project addresses major societal problems and current challenges in cities, including loneliness and isolation among the aged, alongside obesity related health concerns. Approximately 13% of people over 65 in the UK say that they always or often feel lonely, and 17% of those living alone see family and friends less than once a week. At the same time obesity is rapidly ascending with 50% of people in the UK and USA likely to be obese by 2030. Hence affordable exercise and increased motivation to exercise

is desperately needed. *GoodGym* responds to these challenges, by connecting people who want to be more active with isolated older adults within the same local community.

Innovative Solution

GoodGym connects people who want to get fit with good deeds that need to be done in their area. Runners are supported by a personal trainer. Runners are paired with isolated and less-mobile people in their area (referred to as coaches). Runners jog to their house, have a chat and are on their way again. Runners are trained in falls prevention and supporting the well-being of older people. It thus helps runners get fit by providing a good reason to exercise and it helps the person being visited by providing them with some friendly human contact and a newspaper, library book or some fresh fruit. *GoodGym* has been developed with older people in Tower Hamlets. It emerged as a collaboration between one runner and one older person as a solution to both of their needs. The project has an older person's representative on its steering group and is always seeking older people's advice, on where impact can be increased improvements made, from their perspective. *GoodGym* is a community of runners and aims to continue to be led by those that use it. Beyond bringing together young and older people in local communities, *GoodGym* also organizes group runs in which groups of people tackle challenges such as clearing wasteland or planting trees and missions to complete such as household and garden tasks. It thus creates a collective spirit to achieve common goals e.g. become more active and clean up an area/get in touch with an older resident and so forth.

Stakeholder Participation

The main stakeholder participation is guaranteed through a steering group installed by *GoodGym* that includes representatives from all stakeholders. These main stakeholders are runners, funders, National Health Service, older people as well as partner organisations.

Target Group

GoodGym mainly targets housebound and isolated older people. Until now, the main beneficiaries have been adults over the age of 50 who are less mobile, often with long term conditions. The project is currently expanding its operational range to 7 urban areas within the next year, aiming to reach 250 older people in each area for whom isolation and loneliness is a concern. Additional target groups are people who want to get more active or are already enthusiastic about running and sports in general.

Impact

GoodGym puts forward a new and innovative attitude about effective strategies to reduce loneliness and isolation. Instead of needing to be complex, costly or highly professionalized it creates a low-cost,

bottom-up and demand-driven approach to tackle both isolation among older adults and increasing obesity. It further contributes to a general change in expectations of the mutual responsibility of members of a community to each other by also improving intergenerational understanding.

GoodGym uses the Warwick Edinburgh Wellbeing Score and the EQ5D health score to evaluate their social impact in their operating areas. The impact on the local target group in East London for instance showed that 250 older people have benefited from *GoodGym* activities. Over 170 older people have had runners visit them as part of a mission, to perform household maintenance and deliver important supplies, and 73 were registered to receive regular weekly visits from a *GoodGym* runner. Of all *GoodGym* coaches 73% either agree or strongly agree that they help their runner to stay motivated to do their exercise while 60% agree that *GoodGym* helps them feel more connected, and 33% strongly agree with this statement. Warwick Edinburgh Scores also show a significant increase in wellbeing. *GoodGym* further creates long term relationships between isolated older people and runners with an average retention of over 18 months.

Evaluation

GoodGym has been evaluated through experience-based self-assessment and self-evaluation. Evidence-based outcomes have shown that the wellbeing measures (using the Warwick Edinburgh Wellbeing Score) have improved for both runner-volunteers and older people (coaches). In addition, available data on activities show a significant volunteering impact and a wide range of community projects that are supported by the group runs and missions.

Competition

When considering gyms and other sports facilities one might say that *GoodGym* operates in a highly competitive environment, however, *GoodGym* is the only 'gym' that aims to channel member's energy into social good instead of spending time alone on a treadmill. While there are many other good projects in terms of both forms of exercise and enterprises that support older people, it is this combination of these issues that gives *GoodGym* a unique position within the competitive environment. Additionally, *GoodGym* aims to make regular contact with older people become a part of day-to-day life for younger people. It positions volunteering with older people as exciting and attractive.

Barriers, Challenges and Solutions

One challenge *GoodGym* faces is how to locate and involve motivated young people and how to form a team that is driven by local demands. The enthusiasm and momentum of the team and volunteers have been essential in pushing the initiative forward. In order to spread information and continue to have momentum IT and social media skills support the current platform for growth of the initiative.

GoodGym strives to be fundamentally demand and response driven and structured to ensure maximum flexibility and responsiveness to needs and feedback from all stakeholders. The development of a process that will allow anyone to set up the project in a bottom-up, demand-driven way while ensuring quality and sustainability has resulted in the testing and development of a number of formats for effective replication. Other solutions to ensure quality and sustainability of locally driven projects encompass the application of CQI methods to project development. This approach also promotes staff competencies. Furthermore, a narrow service definition ensures focused delivery in response to identified local needs. Thus, instead of predefined action plans, *GoodGym* follows a demand driven approach which ensures responsiveness of service where need and capacity are identified.

Funding and financial stability is another challenge, long term support for the national office administrative functions is required but not yet guaranteed. The possibility of corporate sponsorship is currently being explored in addition to continued submission of philanthropic and public funding applications. *GoodGym* identifies that through further scientific research on how to quantify the project's impact longer term access to funding may be easier.

Funding

Funding comes from the following sources:

- 10% from member donations: 75% of all members donate £7.95 / month
- 60% from foundations and philanthropic capital
- Local authority grants & service contracts (30%)
- Startup grants / service contracts with Local Authorities to start the project in new areas.

The current overall budget for central administrative costs is £160,000. *GoodGym's* central operation is mainly supported by grants. Central administrative staff members are also local group trainers with responsibility for all aspects of their local branch. Local trainer/organiser positions are funded from local membership donations as well as start-up grants and/or service contracts with local authorities supporting the setting up of local branches of *GoodGym*. Prospective new local branches are currently required to show a minimum number of start-up members, raise sufficient funds to support their costs for an established period of time, and meet criteria to show projected self-sustainability within three years, through member donations. Central administration is funded from private and/or public funds, small local branch contributions and other sources such as fundraising activities, donations etc. As the initiative grows, the central operation will become sustained solely on the member donations and corporate sponsorship.

Conclusion

GoodGym is a dynamic, exciting, and innovative initiative run by a group of enthusiastic and passionate

young people with a clear vision about making a difference in their communities. The simplicity, low overall cost, and highly efficient platform combine to support an agile and promising project delivering real benefits to its various stakeholders. When the initiative is set up in a new area, local branches are designed to be self-supporting within three years. All areas are on target to achieve this. The simplicity and relative low cost of the initiative lends itself to ease of replication, as does the self-sustaining nature of the local groups. Future plans include the expansion to 2 new UK cities within the next 12 months, as well as new areas outside of the UK in the coming 3 years. Clearly, the simplicity and efficiency of the model supports a long-lasting and easily adoptable model. *GoodGym* has great potential to rapidly and successfully expand worldwide with modest financial support.

FILO D'ARGENTO (SILVER THREAD) (ITALY) – NURTURING SOCIAL CONNECTIONS

Researcher: Marco Socci, INRCA, Italy



SOLIDARITY
THE THREAD THAT LINKS US TOGETHER



Silver Thread: 800.99.59.88

“...If I had my life to live over I would travel lighter than I have. I would start bare foot earlier in the spring and stay that way later in the fall. I would go to more dances. I would ride more merry-go-rounds. I would pick more daises.

I'd try to have nothing else: just moments, one after another, instead of living so many years ahead of each day.”

Nadine Stair, “If I had my life to live over”

“...There is a difference between having friends and having some volunteers who take care of you”

Laura Centemeri: “In search of relational city”

www.auser.it

Cluster	Volunteering & Health
Name of implementer	AUSER ONLUS
Type of implementer	Non-profit/NGO/citizen sector organisation
Implementer in operation since	More than 5 years
Implementer located in	Italy, Rome
Name of initiative	Filo d'Argento (Silver Thread)
Initiative in operation since	More than 5 years
Stage of initiative	Scaling (the next step will be growing impact on a regional or even global scale)
Cooperation partners, type and primary function	Cooperation with AUSER associations, public institutions, financial institutions, NGOs
Staff	Regularly paid employees: 100 Volunteers: 20,000 Trainees: not possible to estimate this at national level External advisers and experts: approximately (estimate) 2 or 3 experts in each Italian region, engaged in planning activities and in the realization of the training for volunteers
Funding sources	Single donations from private individuals: 45% National public funding: 40% Other (including fees of AUSER's members): 15%
Webpage of initiative	http://www.auser.it

Organisational Background

The implementer of the initiative Filo d'Argento (*Silver Thread*), AUSER ONLUS is an Italian NGO located in Rome operating for over five years. It aims to promote the right of older people to play an active role in social and cultural life through the self-management of services and actions aimed at solidarity through support. The mission of the AUSER Association is to promote older people's work as volunteers in several areas of activity such as social utility services, training and education and international solidarity. AUSER has about 1,300 local associations in the country that perform various activities. Their network includes over 300,000 members and 45,000 volunteers.

Problem Being Addressed

Today in Italy over 11 million people, approximately one fifth of the population, are over 65 years of age. Three million of these live alone. Statistical estimates suggest that this will grow to 15 million in 12 years and 18 million people over age 65 by 2051. This growth statistic exposes the risk of social exclusion and isolation for older people in the coming years. AUSER's *Silver Thread* initiative, and the supporting volunteers, are engaged to help older people who live alone. A network of support allows older people to remain living in their own home, makes sure that they are supported in ordinary life, provides friendship, listens, and provides them an opportunity to participate in an active social life.

Innovative Solution

Silver Thread was born as a telephone service to combat loneliness. At the beginning AUSER considered it as a rather marginal activity. Indeed, besides *Silver Thread*, AUSER carried out several other activities for helping people, with a focus on social accompaniment and transportation. The initiative sought to put these two elements together and include them in a national vision. It developed a thematic focus on building a national volunteer service to help frail older people. At the same time, the implementer wanted to affirm the principle that older people should be facilitated to live as long as possible in their own homes. A toll-free telephone number and service, open every day of the year from 8am to 8pm, was created. The phone system was articulated in decentralised telephone districts in the territory. Thus, a network of listening points coinciding with the local AUSER associations was established. The toll free number allows phone calls to be directed to the initiative's local offices, creating the opportunity to address older people's needs throughout the country.

The basic idea was to let older people know that they are not alone, because at *Silver Thread* there is someone to listen at the other end of the phone every day of the year. A technology platform has also been created to support a database providing information on local services. This information allows the initiative to better respond to the local needs of older people (e.g. telephone company, transport, meal delivery, drug delivery). Using this framework since 2002 *Silver Thread* has been revitalised and become more responsive to the needs of the older people it supports.

The core strengths of *Silver Thread* are its organisational structure and the innovative project strategy including; the toll free telephone number, network of listening points, AUSER offices active in local communities, and the initiative's IT platform. Furthermore, volunteers skilled in assessing the needs of older people and providing targeted activities and services to meet those needs represent invaluable assets of the initiative. The project has grown through the solid connection between these elements based on replicating the organisational strategy throughout the country, enhancing networks, developing collaborations with institutions and other stakeholders (e.g. cooperatives and other voluntary associations), and implementing shared work projects on activities for older people.

The initiative emphasises that people who have few social relationships represent both a need and a resource. Older people who ask for help become part of the solution to their own problem, since they are gradually involved in the organisation's initiative through expressing themselves and linking with other people. The initiative gives them the opportunity to play an active role on a social and cultural level by making the most of their specific experiences, skills and abilities. Often older people are engaged as volunteers in several areas of activity such as social utility services, training and education, and international solidarity activities. From an earlier focus on protection of people the initiative has expanded to include the promotion of social inclusion of older people. A key to enhancing the solution is the emphasis placed on "taking care of the user" by crafting individual social plans for and with him/her.

Stakeholder Participation

AUSER has about 1,300 local associations, around 800 of which are directly involved in the implementation of *Silver Thread*. Aggregate data from calls received by *Silver Thread* enable AUSER to compile detailed national and local reports about the needs of and opportunities for older people. AUSER's *Silver Thread* initiative is therefore an important resource to local institutions, policy makers and media. Whenever possible, *Silver Thread* collaborates with public institutions to connect different actors in civil society, including services and non-profit organisations, aiming to offer the right solutions to meet the needs of older citizens. Over time the initiative has fostered collaborative relationships especially with social cooperatives and institutions, such as municipalities. In some areas they engage with the initiatives of these stakeholders' such as projects for developing volunteering and network services for older people (e.g. house cleaning, meal delivery or volunteering aimed at fostering the socialisation of older people).

The initiative also has partnerships with banking foundations and as its network includes collaborations with other Third Sector associations, such as Anteas, Arci, Caritas, Acli, and the Community of Sant'Egidio. The development of such a collaborative framework of operation holds future benefits for the wider dissemination and implementation of *Silver Thread*. The institutions mainly provide financial resources for the implementation of the initiative, for example through economic agreements. Moreover, they help in promoting relationships between the initiative and local social services. This enables the initiative to better understand the services available to seniors in the community and to better read the needs of older residents. The banking foundations fund initiatives for creating partnerships between voluntary organisations, social cooperatives and institutions. In conjunction with social cooperatives and associations, *Silver Thread* has developed a working relationship to better structure and coordinate local support activities for older people. The local associations provide volunteers with resources to implement *Silver Thread* in the community. Volunteers and staff members are encouraged to participate actively in the initiative, providing input concerning the improvement of the activities and services offered.

Target Group

The initiative is targeting the growing number of people aged 65 years and over. It seeks to identify and meet the needs of this group.

Impact

A key strength of *Silver Thread* is their ability to understand the demands of users and to find an effective solution for their needs. The initiative promotes and supports independent living for older people at home through such services as transportation provided by volunteers at no charge to the user. Older people like to develop a trusting relationship with those providing regular services for them

and in addition to being able to depend on the social telephone service to provide a friendly voice offering emotional, psychological and informational support at any time, volunteers of the telephone service often become familiar to users and a trustful relationship is built. Hence, users even discuss private and personal problems and family issues with the volunteers.

Evaluation

The impact of the initiative has been assessed through external evaluation based on qualitative methods, such as interviews, focus groups, etc. and external evaluation based on quantitative methods, such as quantitative measurement of impact indicators. Specific strengths identified for *Silver Thread* include:

- *Silver Thread* is a unique and innovative initiative in Italy aimed at helping older people and based on a national toll free number and an integrated telephone system throughout the country, offering several activities and services in order to provide effective responses to older people's needs.
- A huge number of interventions are provided (2 million); a large number of older users of the services (23,000), and a large number of contacts are received through the toll free number (800,000).
- A high number of volunteers are involved in the initiative (20,000). Older volunteers' develop relevant skills for the effective assessment of older people's needs, and gain experience in providing suitable and "tailored" responses to users' needs through several activities and services (e.g. telephone company, meal delivery, transports to health care centres).
- National coverage of the initiative, through the availability of an integrated telephone social service (toll free number and phone numbers of local offices of the association), 145 listening points of *Silver Thread* and 1,300 local offices of the association.
- A clear strategy for further developing the initiative, giving more emphasis on social promotion activities, on expanding networks and developing collaborations with several stakeholders in order to innovate the welfare system for older people.

Competition

For *Silver Thread* it is hard to address other competing solutions implemented by other organisations, since *Silver Thread* brings relationships to older people who call it, more than practical and social support. From the point of view of social support, 92% of the users of the *Silver Thread* are still not included in any other public or private structured support programme. 6% of them are engaged with public social services and just 2% are also supported by other private organisations.

Barriers, Challenges and Solutions

The initiative faces challenges in a range of areas where solutions and support could be of benefit:

- Lack of adequate funding sources (due to the significant and growing demand for social support).
- Necessity to sign a greater number of agreements with institutions to access additional funds to carry out activities and services.
- Limited availability of vehicles to carry out transportation services of users to the hospital and other health care centres.
- Insufficient number of volunteers, in face of the exponential demand for activities and services requested by older users.
- The supply and the range of activities and services are less developed in some territorial contexts (e.g. southern regions, peripheral areas, small villages) than in others.
- Difficulties in linking all the resources and subjects at local level (e.g. public services, civil society, non-profit organisations, and private organisations).
- To tackle these challenges the initiative aims to increase the activities and the number of people linked to AUSER. They also seek to activate participation of the Third Sector in the decisional process at regional and local level.

Funding

The initiative employs about 100 people regularly and is supported by about 20,000 volunteers.

Single donations from private individuals account for 45% of their funding while another 40% is sourced through national public funding and 10% through fees of AUSER's members.

Conclusion

The initiative Filo d'Argento (*Silver Thread*) targets the growing number of people aged 65 years or more. The initiative's core elements are its organisational structure and innovative project strategy. They are enhancing networking and developing collaborations with institutions and other stakeholder for the implementation of shared work projects on activities for older people. The most important impact of the initiative's activities is the ability to understand the demands of users and to find an effective solution for their needs. Through a toll free telephone service they provide help to older people. They identify their needs and respond to them. The initiative gives older people the opportunity to play an active role on a social and cultural level by making the most of their specific experiences, skills and abilities. *Silver Thread* is a unique and innovative initiative in Italy which reaches a huge number of older users. With adequate support to address the challenges they have identified this initiative could continue to replicate throughout Italy thus expanding its social impact.

HEALTH & EMPOWERMENT

PASSION FOR LIFE (SWEDEN) – PERSONAL EMPOWERMENT FOR HEALTH

Researcher: Rodd Bond, Netwell Centre, Ireland

Cluster	Health & Empowerment
Name of implementer	Belongs to all seniors, organized or not organized
Type of implementer	Informal group
Implementer in operation since	More than 5 years
Implementer located in	Sweden
Name of initiative	Passion for Life
Initiative in operation since	More than 5 years
Stage of initiative	Scaling (the next step will be growing impact on a national scale)
Cooperation partners, type and primary function	Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions (Public Body). When Passion for Life started 7½ ys ago as a pilot study it was a collaboration between Qulturum and the Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions.
Staff	Regularly paid employees: 3 Volunteers: approx. 1,000 circle leaders Trainees: none External advisers and experts: none
Funding sources	National public funding: 99% Economic return from own products/services: 1%
Webpage of initiative	www.lj.se/passionforlivet

Organisational background:

Passion for Life is run by Qulturum, a centre for learning and innovation in health care, located in the south of Sweden. The focus of Qulturum is to design and develop preventative health care programmes and improve individual knowledge through active patient involvement. Qulturum is engaged in activities on a regional, national and international level.

Passion for Life is informed by the WHO's health and quality-of-life improvement themes of empowerment, safety at home, exercise, diet/nutrition and social connection, and is set firmly within an overall total quality management framework. The initiative adopts a Plan-Do-Study-Act (PDSA) approach to effect real and enduring change in older-peoples' healthy life-styles. While originally designed within Qulturum, the programme actually 'belongs to' and 'is driven by' the seniors, therefore *Passion for Life* achieves a carefully orchestrated balance between 'seniors' ownership and control of the process' and 'light touch' support from the programme initiators, Qulturum, at Jonkoping County

Council. Almost eight years after its inception, there are over 2,000 volunteer coaches supporting over 30,000 senior participants in over 8 countries.

At the initial stage, Qulturum was supported by two senior groups who helped with promotion, validation and participant recruitment. Today, the Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions (SALAR) provides support for the spread and diffusion of the *Passion for Life* programme in reaching other counties and regions throughout Sweden and beyond. SALAR are also contributing to the strategic planning for the possible extension of *Passion for Life* as it addresses the opportunity to support older people who have more complex healthcare needs.

The facilities are set in a wonderfully refurbished, 19th century, lodge-type building on the wooded campus of the Ryhov Hospital in JonKoping. Qulturum, and its environment, was conceived as a 'place where people can just meet and reflect'. It's a combination of flexible spatial characteristics that can be a retreat, a think tank, a training centre, a classroom, a conference centre and a dining room simultaneously.

Problem and solution

Health care improvement, community development and patient legislation in many countries put a clear focus on citizen participation, empowerment and choice. At the same time older people often suffer from loneliness, isolation and lack of power and control in their life situation. This is a problem which may increase in an aging population. To improve the conditions for older people, new arenas for meeting, learning and collaboration are required. *Passion for Life* is based on the individual's own motivation and contexts. The project particularly aims to address the problem of loneliness for older people.

The core activities of the *Passion for Life* programme are a set of 'life cafés' originally based on the WHO healthy ageing themes/dimensions which include:

- Empowerment
- Safety at home
- Diet and nutrition
- Physical exercise
- Social networking.

Running across the programme is an action-oriented behaviour and attitude change approach based on the Plan-Do-Study-Act (PDSA) life wheel. Normally, periods of between 2 and 3 weeks would separate the cafés during which time, participants will test and measure changes to their life-styles based on planned commitments they make to improve. As such, the action agenda for each life café includes:

- A reflection on progress made, and results achieved, in relation to changes in a dimension of their well-being introduced at the previous meeting/café (i.e. safety in the home)
- A discussion/exploration of a new theme/dimension (i.e. nutrition)
- An opportunity to plan a change to existing behaviour – and to test it in the period between this and the next session.

The first and last cafés have a slightly different format as they deal with introduction, orientation and empowerment, and summary and conclusions respectively.

Since the original pilot project in 2006, while the core approach and principles are retained, seniors/ participants have contributed to adapting and improving the programme to local needs and contexts. As a result, it is not unusual for more topics/themes to be explored over a larger number of life café events. While these can be locally defined, new, popular themes that have emerged consistently include topics such as falls prevention, chronic pain management and medication management. In some instances, circles have been extended to address intergenerational activities and the specific needs of ethnic minorities. *Passion for Life* is about creating the space for change, and moving innovation more up-stream in a process of radical, citizen-directed customization where people work together to help each other find their own ways to their own improvements. This culture of respect and personal responsibility permeates the interactions between all involved.

Participation of stakeholders

Passion for Life belongs to the seniors themselves and the users have significant opportunity to define problems and possible solutions. The road map for instructors is continuously updated with the help of the seniors. The success of *Passion for Life* is linked to the vision, drive and quality commitment of its leadership. The power and simplicity of the collaborative PDSA idea, and the passion with which older people are drawn to it, attach and support the process. By empowering and liberating the energies and resources of its senior participants, *Passion for Life* creates effective, efficient and joyful 'life cafés' where older people can commit to making real changes in behaviour and attitudes with tangible results in better health and well-being.

Target Group

The target group *Passion for Life* wants to reach are seniors of all ages globally, including very ill older adults and those in care homes and their relatives. To take part in *Passion for Life* circles could be of great value for the relatives of ill older people in care homes. The programme has an inherent flexibility and is adaptable to the needs of different target groups. Positive results have also been reported from older ex-patriots from other countries living in Sweden. Future objectives of the initiative include increasing promotion to attract more men to the life cafés and to involve the young to foster inter-generational solidarity.

Impact

Passion for Life provides a simple and user-friendly mechanism for:

- The systematic transfer of knowledge

- Creating an environment for the up-take of ideas
- Providing framework and infrastructure for the spread and diffusion of skills and knowledge.

While applied in the first instance to the challenge of active and healthy ageing for seniors, it has deeper and wider possibilities. The initiative's goal is to empower seniors to be active and take responsibility for their own lives, and as such it is an excellent instrument for preventive and health promotion activity, fostering better health and quality of life, and reducing health care service demands. Some key success outcomes that emerge from studies of the *Passion for Life* programme identified a number of areas of success:

- **Joyfulness** - Personal motivation is released in an environment where there is joy. Exit interviews showed the importance of learning with peers, which created inspiration and deeper learning.
- **Usefulness** - the methods are simple and user-friendly!
- **Empowerment** - The feeling of empowerment is experienced, made visible, tangible and real. Personal ownership of situations become the necessary ingredient for effective change. Key phrases often repeated are 'personal responsibility', 'take care of yourself' and 'don't give up'.

Evaluation

In 1996/97, Jonkoping County Council has embarked on a quality improvement journey, drawing on ideas from around the globe and bringing them back to Sweden, and to Jonkoping, to adapt, apply and improve them. Informed by the work of the Institute for Health Improvement (IHI) Breakthrough Series in the USA, and the efforts of Sir John Oldham with primary care development at the NHS in Manchester UK, Qulturum has looked to the collaborative process - '*an improvement method that relies on the spread and adaptation of existing knowledge to multiple settings to accomplish a common aim*' - as a framework for change. Underpinning this is a Plan-Do-Study-Act (PDSA) approach that aims to address and answer:

- What are we trying to accomplish?
- How will we know if a change is an improvement?
- What changes will we make that will result in an improvement?

Framed within the total quality improvement (TQM) initiative underway within Jonkoping and supported by Qulturum, and the learning from IHI in the USA and the NHS in the UK, the initiation phase started in 2006 with an initial pilot which was run over a period of 26 weeks. It was initially run by the project manager and encompassed 6 life-café addressing the WHO themes. There were 24 participants in the initial pilot, who had the role of ambassadors. Following a positive evaluation, in 2007 it was adopted as a programme and the support infrastructure for training and replication were put in place. A key step was the recruitment of two seniors as improvement leader and as external senior coach. The PDSA approach was recognized as a central tool to record and measure personal progress.

Competition

Passion for Life operates in a market segment that spans several domains including quality improvement, learning circles, personal development and group coaching. Its competitiveness and uniqueness is in the adoption and localization of a collaborative process model, identified through links with the Institute for Healthcare Innovation in the USA, and the experiences of primary care development in the NHS in Manchester UK. These mechanisms have been adapted to Swedish national and local norms and contexts, and applied to citizen-centric, older peoples' empowerment in the area of active and healthy ageing, and the pursuit of an enriched quality of life. Through releasing control to seniors themselves, the *Passion for Life* programme has been open to continuous evolution and improvement, while preserving fidelity to its core principles and values.

Barriers and solutions

- Keeping the innovation and continuous improvement 'fresh' and 'passionate', as it mainstreams.
- Vitalising and revitalising coaches and volunteers where they are acknowledged and rewarded/accredited for their efforts.
- Maintaining/refreshing an oversight and leadership team that is very influential in creating the conditions for the model to flourish and grow.
- Maintaining a sense of 'senior ownership' when the programme more closely interfaces with the 'better life for older ill persons' programme, where more professional, medical roles come into play.
- Challenging other stakeholders in the health and wellness eco-system to relinquish/distribute control, in order to better empower older people.
- Copy-cats and brand dilution. Protecting the integrity of the programme when it is copied without fidelity to the core principles.

The *Passion for Life* team is now looking to see how to increase outcomes and impact for those who are experiencing, or who are at a greater risk of chronic illness. This exciting and necessary direction will challenge several of the 'core principles' of the programme, as its distributed ownership and control to seniors will need to fuse in a creative way with care provider systems where care management has tended to be centrally and professionally controlled.

Funding

The general financial model is to charge a local authority, or host organisation, approximately €30,000 over a three year period to cover training facilitators, advertising/recruitment, setup, materials and maintenance/support costs. The initiative therefore depends solely on national public funding.

Conclusion

Passion for Life is a very low cost but high impact programme. As currently scoped and implemented, and with a successful operational pedigree for almost eight years, *Passion for Life* is a vibrant, stable, expandable and sustainable programme 'owned by seniors', and with a very 'light touch' intermediary supporting role provided by Qulturum. The initiative aims to empower seniors to be active and take responsibility for their own lives, and as such it is an excellent instrument for preventive and health promotion activity, fostering better health and quality of life, and reducing healthcare service demands. With its focus on 'living it' and 'doing it', rather than 'talking about it', the initiative offers a tangible and holistic programme that is results oriented, while remaining grounded in organisational change theory and best-practice. The ideal future scenario would be characterized by addressing identified areas for improvement, achieving the EU adoption and intergenerational milestones, and strengthening sustainability within a framework of extended ambitions including the following opportunities already identified as part of their future planning:

- Greater contribution to prevention of illness and injuries
- Better use of medication/pharmacy
- Greater support for those needing palliative care
- Greater support for those with a dementia
- Greater service impact in terms of reduced hospital admissions (re-admissions).

The seeds for sustainable change are already in place and the citizen-empowered *Passion for Life* platform is very well positioned to support progress on all these fronts.

AGE NO BARRIER (UK) – BREAKING HEALTH BARRIERS

Researcher: Suzanne Smith, Netwell Centre, Ireland

Cluster	Volunteering & Health
Name of implementer	Rushmoor Healthy Living (RHL)
Type of implementer	Non-profit/NGO/citizen sector organisation
Implementer in operation since	More than 5 years
Implementer located in	Hampshire, Farnborough, United Kingdom
Name of initiative	Age No Barrier
Initiative in operation since	Less than 5 years
Stage of initiative	Scaling (the next step will be growing impact on a national scale)
Cooperation partners, type and primary function	Rushmoor Borough Council (Public Body): promotes Age No Barrier and provides facilities to support the project. First Wessex Housing Association (Non-profit/ NGO): promotes Age No Barrier and provides access to residents. Step By Step (Non-profit/NGO): promotes Age No Barrier and provides activity opportunities and facilities to support the project. Rushmoor Voluntary Services(RVS) (Non-profit/NGO): provides access to volunteers and volunteer recruitment plus transport for older people.
Staff	Regularly paid employees: 4 Volunteers: approx. 30 Trainees: none External advisers and experts: 0
Funding sources	National public funding: none Economic return from own products/services: none
Webpage of initiative	http://www.rhl.org.uk/

Organisational Background

RHL 'Improving your Health and Wellbeing' is a registered charity and company limited by guarantee. The organisation was born out of Big Lottery funding in 2002, a project conceived by Rushmoor Borough Council and Blackwater Valley Primary Care Trust. The primary objective of the initiative is to implement change by providing opportunities and support to disadvantaged older adults enabling them to improve their physical and mental well-being. *Age No Barrier* is essentially about ensuring that age itself does not become a barrier for people as they get older but it is also about challenging and removing barriers for older people, whether they are obvious (e.g. access to transport) or not (systemic attitudes or processes). Some of the barriers *Age No Barrier* strive to overcome include lack of knowledge, low education levels, financial deprivation, lack of local amenities, poor transport links, ethnicity related issues, and low self-esteem/ self-confidence of older adults.

Problem Being Addressed

Research by a number of organisations (such as Hants CC Older Persons Strategic Board) has established that there is a need to equip older people to cope more effectively with life-changing events which can otherwise seriously impact their physical and mental health, social isolation, and ultimately quality of life. The detrimental effect that loneliness and isolation can have on the physical and mental health, as well as wellbeing of older adults is widely recognized with research suggesting that it is as great a threat to health as smoking and obesity. One older adult out of ten experiences chronic loneliness and can spend 70-90% of their time in their own home – this increases as they grow older and become frailer. The problems of isolation and loneliness can be even greater for people from minority ethnic groups as they may find it more difficult to access information. Furthermore, the Older Persons Plan for Rushmoor states that not all older people are aware of services and support available in their community. *Age No Barrier* addresses making older adults more aware of the many good quality services available to support them.

Rushmoor experiences significant spatial health inequalities with the local community containing pockets of deprivation which starkly contrast with neighbouring affluent areas. For example 4 areas fall within the worst 20% nationally on the income deprivation affecting older people domain of the Index of Multiple Deprivation 2010, and 9 fall within the worst 20% on the education, skills and training domain. It has 2 in the worst 10% and 3 in the worst 20% on the Health Deprivation domain of the IMD. Furthermore, the life expectancy for men living in the least deprived areas is more than 8 years higher than for those in the most deprived areas. Rushmoor has a high Nepalese immigrant population (+10%) of whom a very high proportion are older people. Needs identified for this group by the NHS's Nepali Health Needs Assessment include key health problems of type 2 diabetes, cardiovascular disease & hypertension, depression compounded by a significant percentage unable to communicate in English.

Innovative Solution

Using an award scheme similar to the Duke of Edinburgh Award, older adults are encouraged to develop new skills which ultimately encourage and empower them to improve their self-esteem, health and wellbeing and reduce isolation. The Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme, developed for young people, has not previously been trialed for older adults making *Age No Barrier* an innovative way of engaging this population group. *Age No Barrier* aims to empower vulnerable older adults (British and especially Nepalese) to deal more effectively with future life-changing events by helping them make physical, mental and social changes which will equip them to cope better and recover more quickly. The project specifically focuses on increasing participant self-esteem, self-confidence and mental resilience, as well as creating new friendships and peer support groups. In addition, local volunteering efforts are growing and more encouragement within the community is supported through *Age No Barrier*, especially with regard to greater interaction with the Nepalese community.

Participants of the project are supported by the project team in setting and achieving goals under each of the following four strands:

1. Volunteering
2. Learning a new skill
3. Achieving a physical challenge
4. Undertaking a personal challenge.

Bronze, silver and gold levels enable progression, with achievement of each strand becoming progressively more challenging. Some of the activities run by *Age No Barrier* so far, include English literacy and culture classes attended by Nepalese. These classes improve the ability of Nepalese participants to integrate socially, rather than focusing on academic achievement, for example understanding how to manage day to day situations such as going to the shops, booking appointments and recognizing and understanding signs. Well attended yoga sessions are run by Nepalese and English instructors as well as a wide range of other exercise/fitness classes including walking, Pilates and Tai Chi. The engagement of Nepalese staff and a large number of Nepalese community volunteers has been found to enhance the capacity for effective service delivery within the community. Volunteers receive additional training and are available to assist with interpreting and with the coordination and delivery of other activities, such as passing on advice & information on health & wellbeing and raising diabetes & cancer awareness through classes and groups. The flexibility and openness of *Age No Barrier*, to respond to the needs identified through users themselves, has been crucial to the project's success.

Stakeholder Participation

Stakeholders (including older adults) and partners are generally closely involved in the project activities, including supporting and defining solutions to identified needs. *Age No Barrier* works with 4 key strategic partners: Rushmoor Borough Council (RBC), Rushmoor Voluntary Services (RVS), Step by Step and First Wessex Housing. All of these partners were involved in consultation and project design. Following on from this the partners have cooperated in the following ways: RBC has been helping to promote the project; RVS have enabled project staff and volunteers to take mini bus awareness training so that the project can make use of their mini buses when required for the delivery of activities and excursions; Step-by-Step has engaged in intergenerational projects with older Nepalese; and First Wessex facilitates access to participants in nursing homes and managed housing schemes.

An essential element of socially innovative initiatives is the active involvement by service users in defining the project at all levels. This requires building trust and empowering stakeholders to participate in a meaningful manner. The co-production of activities by RHL and service users is achieved by *Age No Barrier* through constant reflection upon and re-direction of activities based upon input and feedback from the participants. Ownership and autonomy among participants has also been effectively nurtured with many now coordinating activities that only require background support from RHL.

Target Group

The project targets vulnerable older adults aged 50 years and older. *Age No Barrier* specifically focuses on older Nepalese immigrants as well as older adults who are on a low income, living alone or socially isolated, those without social or family support networks, those with existing or potential health problems (mental and physical) and older carers (caring for older parents with dementia for example). Approximately 250 older adults were engaged in the *Age No Barrier* project in 2013 with over 600 participants expected by the end of July 2014.

Impact

To date the project has had the greatest impact on community dwelling older Nepalese adults. Currently 400 participants and volunteers are impacted by the range of activities offered through the project. Out of all participants, 25 Nepalese have achieved set goals through English/Cultural Learning classes and approximately 30 older British adults residing in care homes have achieved set goals in learning and practicing Crochet. There are now 4 regular social groups run through ANB – 3 weekly and 1 fortnightly. All participants have indicated that they feel an improved sense of self-worth and wellbeing as a direct consequence of engaging in the events/activities. Most participants are acquiring new skills, improving social contact and developing networks while reducing social isolation. This is measured through activity logs and ultimately by award achievement. Furthermore, feelings of personal isolation for individual older adults have declined as has group isolation for the Nepalese community of older adults in the local area. A change in intergenerational attitudes including reduction in anti-immigrant or anti-Nepalese exchanges between young British and older Nepalese has been observed. On a wider societal scale, *Age No Barrier* challenges widespread pre-conceptions and myths about ageing and older people by recognizing and celebrating the many diverse ways that older people are contributing to family, community and civic life.

Evaluation

As a young project, evaluation has only begun to yield results. The project is being assessed through experience-based self-assessment, feedback-based self-assessment, self-evaluation, and external evaluation of impacts based on both quantitative and qualitative methods. RHL continues to directly consult with a wide range of older adults and relevant local organisations. Over 300 older people have been consulted via the Project Sounding Board, Older People's Forums and groups. The key strategic partners involved in the design of the project remain active participants in the promotion, delivery and evaluation of *Age No Barrier*, as are other organisations and prominent local people including the Senior Citizens' Forum, and local Nepalese community groups. Feedback from all stakeholders remains overwhelmingly positive. RHL and partners report that local older people who attend activities often make statements such as: 'it is the first time for a long time that I have looked forward to a Monday' or

'it is the first time that I've been out on a Sunday for years'. Interviews with local partners suggest RHL is becoming recognized as the organisational experts on local Nepalese community issues and engagement.

Competition

Both, University of the 3rd Age (U3A) and Age UK do in many cases run similar activities and services to Age No Barrier. The similarities between all initiatives can create challenges in terms of *Age No Barrier* being able to get the right message across and to distinguish the differences in the way the project seeks to engage with older adults in comparison to others. U3A for example offer a wide variety of activities to their members including physical and social events (walks, outings, events, and clubs). RHL and partners work hard to ensure that *Age No Barrier* is distinguishable from other organisations, by emphasizing that the project's key objectives involve engaging with more lonely and isolated older adults in the area. This population is least likely to engage with organisations like U3A as they may not have the capability, resources for membership subscription or the confidence to join. *Age No Barrier* does not seek to compete with these organisations, as they engage with the local Nepalese and more vulnerable older adults who don't join events organized by existing groups such as U3A and Age UK.

Barriers, Challenges and Solutions

Integration and cohesion present a challenge where trying to get older people of different cultures and ethnicity to integrate is very difficult, especially where there are many myths publicized about the Nepalese culture following a large immigration of older Nepalese ex-Gurkha soldiers to the region since 2009. *Age No Barrier* aims to overcome this challenge by promoting the cultural positives the Nepalese migrants have that are often unknown. In doing so *Age No Barrier* aims to dispel many of the incorrect myths that have evolved from negative campaigns against the integration of the Nepalese in the area. Specifically the project plans to address the issue of integration by using Nepalese project participants in positive ways such as delivering inspirational and informative talks to younger people at Step by Step, showcasing work done by gardening volunteers (helping those who are unable to maintain their gardens) and also raising local awareness of the lengths to which many of the Nepalese older adults are going in trying to successfully integrate. In terms of achieving cohesion the project expects that a proposed camping club and an established programme of excursions will continue to evolve and successfully bring English and Nepalese residents closer together in a meaningful way.

Funding

Age No Barrier is 100% funded by the Big Lottery for 18 months until 31st July 2014. The project budget is €90,000 a year. This current dependence on Big Lottery funding is likely to continue in the short term.

Currently a business model which sustains the larger RHL organisation is being developed to support aspects of the Age No Barrier project going forward.

Conclusion

Age No Barrier is a creative project with a focus on removing perceived barriers of age as well as barriers facing older people within existing services. Empowerment, support and elimination of social isolation are part of the vision of this initiative. In keeping with this vision it is older adults who define their needs, assist in developing solutions and who carry initial projects forward beyond the start-up stage, taking ownership and control of activities over time. Working in a relatively small but dramatically socially deprived area outside London, RHL and the ANB initiative in particular are leaving a mark on members of both the Nepalese and indigenous British communities by building trust, remaining agile and effectively responding to identified needs. As a young pilot project, measurement of their impact on health and social wellbeing is only beginning. This is a project to return to as the learning from their activities promises to have wide reaching potential application, especially where pockets of ethnic minority communities exist within larger metropolitan areas. It is projected that 600 people will have participated in the project and demonstrated their increased self-esteem and self-confidence by the end of July 2014.

INTERGENERATIONAL

KINDRED BY CHOICE (MÜTTERZENTRUM) (GERMANY) – INTERGENERATIONAL CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

Researcher: Victoria Holczmann, ZSI, Austria

KINDRED BY CHOICE

How to provide joyful spaces
for childcare, the care of elderly people and civic engagement
under one roof



Handicrafts connect



All real living is meeting



Togetherness tastes good



Who of the three is senile?
There are moments,
when it doesn't matter.



Feeling happy and safe



Mehr
Generationen
Haus

Cluster	Intergenerational
Name of implementer	SOS-Mütterzentrum
Type of implementer	Non-profit/NGO/citizen sector organisation
Implementer in operation since	More than 5 years
Implementer located in	Salzgitter, Germany
Name of initiative	Kindred by choice
Initiative in operation since	More than 5 years
Stage of initiative	Growth (your pilot is up and running, and starting to expand)
Cooperation partners, type and primary function	Mütterzentrum Bundesverband (Non-profit/NGO/citizen sector organisation)
Staff	Regularly paid employees: 2 Volunteers: 5 Trainees: 4 External advisers and experts: 2
Funding sources	National public funding: 80% Single donations from private individuals: 15% Foundations and philanthropy capital: 5%
Webpage of initiative	http://www.sos-kinderdorf.de/muetterzentrum-salzgitter

Organisational Background

The project is coordinated by Mütterzentren Bundesverband in cooperation with SOS-Mütterzentrum Salzgitter – both are Non-profit/NGO/citizen sector organisations. The cooperation partner supports the initiative by providing external and internal communication about the activities of the Mother Centres, coordination of facilitator training, networking and organisation of meetings and telephone conferences. The main implementer, Hildegard Schooß, has been operating for over five years. After marrying, moving to another town and having her first child she felt isolated and lonely. To overcome this isolation she looked for public rooms to found the first Mother Centre – a public living room where women and children would support each other like members of an extended family. The idea spread all over Germany under the umbrella of the Federation of the Mother Centres. Due to demographic changes over time the visitors to the centres became more diverse and older and gradually the centres became multigenerational.

Problem Being Addressed

Older people without strong family or community ties become lonely and isolated. There are no places or opportunities to meet people from all generations and backgrounds without the need to consume or attend an organised event. People with dementia or other cognitive disorders or decline and their caretakers can experience social isolation and there are few alternatives to conventional nursing homes

or day care centres. Many families must cope with a double or triple challenge since they have to care for children and/or older parents, maintain a household and engage in paid work. Instead of bringing young children and the elderly to the same place they are forced to take them to different spaces. Separation of generations is also seen to contribute to greater intolerance between them.

Innovative Solution

Kindred by Choice aims to provide joyful spaces for childcare, the care of older people, and civil engagement all under one roof. There are approximately 400 Mother Centres in Germany. The umbrella organisation is the "Mütterzentren Bundesverband" in Hamburg. One of the most innovative Mother Centres spreading its ideas to others, is located in Salzgitter. Having started thirty years ago with the idea of creating a public space for women and children, it is now a modern two-story-building with an open architecture that facilitates daily encounters between several generations of both genders, encouraging mutual help and understanding. The house is reminiscent of a small village where people stroll, talk, laugh and work. It consists of a big living room, small shops, a kindergarten and a market place, where the elderly from the day care and the kindergarten children can meet and eat together. Moreover there are some small shops, such as a hair dresser, second-hand shop, tailor, etc. Open architecture, a glass roof and light-flooded rooms create an inspiring and cosy atmosphere and facilitate a sense of togetherness. Children gather in so-called family groups from 0 to 12. On the other side of the floor older people pass their time.

Since the house is very big, going from one point to another involves a walk which presents the opportunity to meet, talk and sit down in one of the many chairs distributed throughout. Healthy meals are offered for everybody at big and small tables always with attention to each person's needs. The freely chosen forms of community arise, grow and evolve through participation and joint decision making. Facilitators, so-called "GastgeberInnen", inspire mutual empathy and interaction. The focus is on a person's abilities, not their limitations. Moreover, the intergenerational togetherness inspires self-confidence and joy. The Mother Centres provide services to facilitate the daily life of families, the elderly and whoever needs it.

Stakeholder Participation

Demographic change, the lack of nursing staff and the newly introduced entitlement to a place in a day nursery for children under three are constant topics in the media. Until now the federation of Mother Centres has been the only organisation training people to take care of both groups (young and old) together and the Mother Centre in Salzgitter pioneered implementation of the idea. *Kindred by Choice* has a holistic approach and does not think in terms of categories, specialisation or separation of groups. They highlight that up to a certain point it is possible to care for the very young and older people at the same

time, under the same roof with the same staff. It is important that both groups have common interests, rituals and the possibility to withdraw. The Mother Centre has a kindergarten facilitating all caretakers to bring their small children to work. Whenever possible the children have joint activities with the older people. Everyone who comes to the Mütterzentrum/Mehrgenerationenhaus can choose for themselves if they want to become active and volunteer, if they want contact with other users or just to sit in the café with their friends. In addition users are encouraged to bring in their own ideas, recommendations and address issues of concern. Staff members at Mütterzentrum Salzgitter are also encouraged to participate in and contribute their ideas to aspects of the initiative such as organisational, service, and personnel development. Mütterzentrum Salzgitter has an extensive network of partners, including the employment agency, the municipality, the social security office, different schools, and more. Depending on the project, some partners only provide funding while other companies send their employees to them for trainings.

Target Group

The target group of the project are families with children and older people, including those with physical or psychological difficulties, different cultural and social backgrounds, people with dementia, caretakers, politicians and those who engage in and promote intergenerational care. Currently approximately 20,000 visitors, about 2,000 children and 600 older people, come to the Mother Centre.

Impact

Kindred by Choice simplifies the life of families who experience the challenges of caring for children, attending to older relatives and engaging in paid work. Intergenerational care improves the health conditions of older people, emotionally as well as physically. It helps children to develop self-esteem and become familiar with the 'grandparent' generation. The contact between generations within families is often superficial, because more and more families are forced to be flexible and mobile in order to find work. This initiative offers children and the elderly the opportunity to become kindred by choice. As a wider impact on society, *Kindred by Choice* aims to provide a solution to the demographic challenge for all members of our society, independent of their cultural and financial background. They aim to promote mutual caring and combine the resources of individuals, families and institutions. They want houses where children and the elderly feel welcome and at home. Instead of separating generations it's the project's aim to bring them together.

Evaluation

Since 1990 the Mother Centres have been guided by the idea that old and young become kindred by choice in a public place. Leading in this field is the Mother Centre in Salzgitter spreading its experience

to the other centres all over Germany, with the help of the Federation of Mother Centres. Conditions in Salzgitter are ideal: open architecture, volunteers and professionals working as equals and joint sessions to reflect upon and improve the work. These conditions allow all generations to become aware of the needs of each other. There are often groups of people like social workers or social scientists and media professionals visiting the Centre. Two studies of Mother Centres can be found on the Website of the Bundesverband. A student from the University of Cambridge is currently conducting a study about the effect Mother Centres have on all people involved, namely volunteers, visitors and professionals. The Mother Centre has also been evaluated by Phineo, an independent, non-profit research and consulting firm for effective community involvement. In addition, the impact of the initiative has been assessed through experience-based self-assessment (assessed impacts based on personal experiences with the target group), feedback-based self-assessment (assessed impacts based on feedback from the target group without using specific methods), self-evaluation (impacts assessed through using qualitative and/or quantitative methods), external evaluation of impacts based on quantitative methods (quantitative measurement of impact indicators).

Competition

Since 1990 the Mother Centres have been guided by the idea that old and young become kindred by choice in a public place. The Mother Centre in Salzgitter is considered to be the pioneer. It is spreading its experience to the other centres all over Germany, with help from the Federation of Mother Centres. There are no organisations known, that have similar ideas and conditions except one model in Japan, the day care centre Showa.

Barriers, Challenges and Solutions

The Mother Centre Salzgitter proposes that a change is required in attitudes towards caring. Current training for caretakers is aimed at specific target groups, such as either children or older people, without any exchange among institutions. Representatives of the Mother Centres attend monthly meetings of caretaker institutions for children or for older people, but there are no meetings to bring both groups together. People need to be trained to take joyful care of children and older people at the same time and for such carers to work cooperatively with each other, but at the present there is a lack of money to finance such training. There is also a need for buildings that serve both groups and a need for politicians who can help to overcome legal barriers.

The initiative has three short term milestones it seeks to achieve:

1. Training of staff: Unfortunately there is too little money at the moment to achieve this goal in the short term.
2. Redesigning the garden: This is almost done.
3. Create more room where the children from kindergarten and the elderly from the day care can meet: an extension of the building is planned.

To successfully implement their strategy, different kinds of support are needed:

- Information on funding sources
- Exchange with other practitioners on innovative working methods and approaches
- Project management seminars
- Networking services
- Public relation services
- Evaluation services
- Support in mobilising users
- Backing from policy makers and political parties
- Adaptations of legal frameworks
- Access to public institutions such as universities, schools, hospitals, etc.
- Access to private organisations such as companies.

Funding

The paid employees have formal education as carers and are especially trained to work with people with dementia. The organisation is based on the self-help principle. There are flat hierarchies, and the initiative promotes direct participation. The initiative spends €85,000 per year on implementing the solutions. National public funding accounts for 80% of this with 5% sourced from foundations and philanthropic capital and the remaining 15% as single donations from private individuals.

Conclusion

Kindred by Choice – Mütterzentrum is a project with high impact. Since 1990 the Mother Centres have been guided by the idea that old and young become kindred by choice in a public place. The Mother Centre in Salzgitter is considered to be the pioneer and has been successfully implementing its programmes for over five years. There are still no other organisations implementing such a project. With help of the Federation of Mother Centres it is spreading its experience to the other centres all over Germany. The *Kindred by Choice* initiative aims to promote mutual caring and combine the resources of individuals, families and institutions. They aim to create houses where children and the elderly feel welcome and at home. Instead of separating generations it is the project's objective to bring them

together. With a budget of €85,000 per year, they provide training for staff and create a space where children from kindergarten and older people from the day care can meet and learn from each other. With its focus on offering care opportunities for young children and older people, including those with physical or psychological difficulties, different cultural and social backgrounds, and people with dementia, they simplify the lives of families who are challenged by caring for young children and for elderly family members while needing to engage in paid work. Moreover, the programme effectively includes older people, who can become isolated and lonely, while supporting intergenerational understanding in the society.

The ideal scenario for the future development of the initiative would be that child care and the care for the elderly are seen as normal to take place under one roof. Miss Schooß, the main implementer, thus imagines children and the elderly learning from each other. She also wishes that every old person who does not want to live in a care home, which is often considered as the last station in life, has a place like the Mütterzentrum/Mehrgenerationenhaus to go where they can find support and enjoy their lives. Hence they are working hard on a diffusion strategy for their initiative and on resourcing additional staff training and the extension of their building.

KNITTING SOCIAL FABRIC (NETHERLANDS) – INTERGENERATIONAL FASHION PROJECT

Researcher: Georgia Casanova, INRCA, Italy

Cluster	Intergenerational & Empowerment
Name of implementer	Granny's Finest
Type of implementer	Social enterprise (partly economically self-sustained through market products and services, primary mission is to solve a social problem)
Implementer in operation since	1-5 years
Implementer located in	Netherlands, ZH, Rotterdam
Name of initiative	Knitting Social Fabric
Initiative in operation since	1-5 years
Stage of initiative	Scaling (the next step will be growing impact on a regional or even global scale)
Cooperation partners, type and primary function	WorldGranny (Non-profit/NGO/citizen sector organisation): WorldGranny brings to Granny's Finest its experience working with big scale projects and scaling up small and middle sized projects.
Staff	Regularly paid employees: 2 Volunteers: 100 Trainees: 4 External advisers and experts: 10
Funding sources	Foundations and philanthropy capital: 93% Economic return from own products/services: 6% National public funding: 1%
Webpage of initiative	www.grannysfinest.com

Organisational Background

Granny's Finest is located in Rotterdam, Netherlands. Their mission is to improve the quality of life of older people. Granny's Finest is a partner of Help Aged International a worldwide organisation with about 100 partners in 60 countries. Granny's Finest is a fashion label benefiting society. It offers senior citizens social interaction and involvement in a social enterprise. Grannies gather once per week and work together with young designers creating knitted pieces using natural materials. Granny's Finest has 140 participants. Through this experience generations learn from each other while fighting loneliness. Proceeds from the project enable participants to engage in trips and excursions as part of encouragement to live an active life style. The organisation works in cooperation with WorldGranny, which is the only Dutch NGO dedicated to improve the quality of lives of older people in the Netherlands and abroad. WorldGranny brings its experience working with large initiatives and scaling up small and middle sized projects.

Problem Being Addressed

The *Knitting Social Fabric* project aims to reduce social isolation of older people through intergenerational interaction with the fashion industry. Seniors are often considered a burden on those that are related to them, on those that are obliged to take care of them, and especially on those paying for their care and wellbeing. Societies as a whole have shown a tendency to consider the position of seniors as superfluous and passive, an undesirable position considering more of us are living for longer than ever before. The passive role that society assigns to older people is part of a self-prophesizing cycle. This cycle begins with the end of working life and an associated gradual disintegration of income, social networks, sense of purpose, health and wellbeing. This instigates dependency on care givers, it increases the amount of money and effort required from others to support wellbeing, and in some cases may eventually prove society correct to no longer depend on the active contribution of older people to it.

The direct link between social isolation and decreased wellbeing has been well documented and the initiative recognises that the cost and effort of present day care for older people can be substantially reduced by making improvements to senior resilience. The main implementer of the initiative developed this initiative out of a recognition that ageing is often placed low down on policy priority lists. Much attention is given to issues pertaining to children and youth but there is a shortfall in projects with specific emphasis on older people. There is also a need for programmes designed to be self-perpetuating instead of dead-ending, as is the case for many current aid programmes.

Innovative Solution

The initiative believes that society has made a wrong assumption. Those who are retired are not necessarily condemned to being inactive from then on. While seniors have spearheaded and carried out many impactful initiatives, older people who are simply involved with a project or programme of some sort have been shown to remain in much better health and wellbeing as a result of their activity. The presence of a social network in combination with a communal goal and a sense of purpose has proven important in maintaining autonomy. *Knitting Social Fabric* is an initiative using knitting skills to improve older people's lives while providing opportunities to re-engage in social group contexts. Through this approach older people have been empowered to be self-supportive. The *Knitting Social Fabric* project supports groups across the Netherlands through the partnership with Granny's Finest.

The solution provides a sustainable business model that enables senior citizens to take action in their own lives and encourages a sense of belonging in society. The project is innovative by not only addressing the issue of social isolation of older people but by creating opportunities for intergenerational creative social interactions with young fashion designers. Through the initiative, grannies are partnered with young fashion designers. For young designers it can be difficult to get their ideas to market but the project combines the traditional handcraft skills of the older people with the ideas of the young. Through this process a wider social event is also taking place with the reinvention of a form of social heritage for presentation in a modern Dutch and global marketplace.

Stakeholder Participation

Stakeholders in this project include older participants (grannies), designers, photographers, stylists, retailers, cooperation partners and final consumers. Through consultation with older people, social knitting clubs were formed where participants can gather once per week and share their passion for knitting while working closely with young designers. For young designers, stylists and photographers finding it difficult to enter the fashion industry the *Knitting Social Fabric* projects bring them the opportunity to build their portfolio while collaborating with a social enterprise initiative.

WorldGranny is Granny's Finest's cooperation partner in this project. WorldGranny has nine years' experience scaling up projects that benefit older people. For retailers this initiative represents a sustainable solution to consumer demand for innovative fashionable items made of natural materials. For final consumers, the initiative offers an opportunity to choose items that have a positive social, economic and environmental impact.

Target Group

The primary target group is people 65 years of age or more living in the Netherlands with a secondary target groups of young fashion professionals and consumers looking for high fashion products with a story to tell.

Impact

The initiative aims to empower older people to take ownership of a business model that works for them. It is a sustainable social enterprise re-investing proceeds in the business and supporting social activities and outings for the older participants. Quantitative research is also underway on the impact the programme has on solitude reduction. Outcomes from the research will support activity to encourage change in governmental policy to promote activities for the wellbeing of senior citizens.

The project's staff members point out that the initiative provides a location and a pleasant activity creating an opportunity for older people to come together. They also highlight, that there is a creative platform where young designers and elderly people can engage with each other and opportunities for the young designers to learn from the skills of the older people. A main objective is preventing loneliness and isolation by bringing people together. Interviews with participants, suggest that the personal impact of the initiative may be less dramatic or different to that intended. Grannies did not report major differences in their lives as a result of participating but recognised that something useful is being done for young people and expressed a desire for increased intergenerational exchanges. That older people continue to participate in the project suggests an experienced value which may be more clearly identified through further research.

Evaluation

The impact of the initiative was assessed through experience-based self-assessment, feedback-based self-assessment, self-evaluation and external evaluation of impacts based on qualitative methods, such as interviews, focus groups, etc.

The initiative has established a social enterprise that is in the economic market tradition of the trade of wool products and combines two aspects: commercial and social, creating a social enterprise for a “niche market”. New technologies are effectively used for global dissemination, communication and marketing (website, online shop). The initiative is based on a traditional competence (knitting) as an expandable competence in society, and in the intergenerational relationship.

The overall project involves different target groups (older and younger), with the involvement of each target group occurring in different places and for different purposes. Opportunities for direct exchange and intergenerational relations are currently limited to when the young designers are directly involved in the knitting club. Relationships are often largely bound to the action of knitting and obtaining the end product. Support in developing and implementing additional relational strategies could ensure the intergenerational dimension is more effectively embedded in the initiative going forward.

Competition

At a Dutch national level there is another organisation called Ouderen Fonds, which has copied parts of the projects model, and has put knitting clubs in place. This organisation is competing with *Knitting Social Fabric* for the same funding and investment sources. However, the main differentiator is the successful fashion brand *Knitting Social Fabric* has integrated into its model. Granny’s Finest sets the highest standards when it comes to design and branding, and with obvious effect when judging from the overwhelming media attention over the past two years, since it is truly a fashion label with social impact.

At an international level there are other initiatives such as Big Knit in Ireland where older people knit hats for soft drinks and a percentage of the sales go to charity. While this represents another way to tackle similar issues the Granny’s Finest brand, and their unique selling point of facilitating control by the key players (the grannies), sets *Knitting Social Fabric* apart by setting older participants at the centre of this social initiative aiming to tackle the issues that affect them most.

Barriers, Challenges and Solutions

The initiative operates partially in the economic marketplace. This, despite being a strength, can present two obstacles. First, the risk of having less time to develop the “social dimension” of the initiative, as already noted. Second, the economic crisis of recent years has reduced the purchasing power of many people which in turn can put the stability and sustainability of the initiative at risk due to partial financial dependence on

the ability to sell products. The demographic structure of the city, with a declining young population, may also present new obstacles to be overcome in time. Despite these challenges, the association WorldGranny is well rooted in the territory and has good expertise in local development activities aimed at enhancing traditional skills. The intervention has a good resonance in the territory in the media (newspapers, radio and local TV). This provides opportunities for expansion of the initiative from the local to the national level. The initiative also shows a good ability to activate the territorial network, involving different organisations (for example nursing homes and other stakeholders). This capacity is an opportunity to strengthen the initiative and the sustainability of a structural intervention, even in the long term.

Competition with other organisations working with and for older people challenges the initiative in terms of securing financial resources for the expansion of the project. Meanwhile, consumer demand currently exceeds product output from the grannies currently available in the clubs. Continued promotion of the initiative is therefore essential to increase its reach, expand and decentralise the clubs. Ideally the initiative would like to extend the number of clubs across the country and internationally. Granny's Finest is actively searching for partners with regional governmental and care-agencies so the initiative can be taken on in other regions with the ongoing support of local institutions. Another potential challenge is the sourcing of sufficient affordable raw material, prompting exploration of alternative supply channels internationally to keep the model economically feasible and therefore sustainable.

Funding

The project employs two people on a regular basis, but there are 100 volunteers (grannies), four trainees and 10 external advisers and experts. The initiative budget is €150,000 annually to implement the solution. Foundations and philanthropy capital account for 93% of the funding while 6% is generated by economic return from own products or services and 1% through public funding.

Conclusion

The initiative *Knitting Social Fabric* is based in the Netherlands and tackles loneliness and isolation of older people as well as intergenerational relations. Through the initiative they provide an opportunity for older people to work with young designers. The aim is that they can learn from each other and that relationships between the young and the old are enhanced. The initiative faces a number of organisational difficulties going forward including financial resources and production supply issues. For this small organisation, these logistical concerns threaten to overshadow the need for renewed focus on strategies to meet their primary objectives of reducing social isolation and loneliness and enhancing intergenerational relationships. Networking opportunities with established supportive organisations have the potential to make a substantial difference to this socially innovative and ambitious project.

INTERGENERATIONAL & VOLUNTEERING

SENIORS IN ACTION (POLAND) – SENIOR SOCIAL ACTIVISM

Researcher: Marco Socci, INRCA, Italy

Cluster	Intergenerational & Volunteering
Name of implementer	Association of Creative Initiatives "e"
Type of implementer	Non-profit/NGO/citizen sector organisation
Implementer in operation since	More than 5 years
Implementer located in	Warsaw, Poland
Name of initiative	Seniors in Action
Initiative in operation since	More than 5 years
Stage of initiative	Scaling (the next step will be growing impact on a regional or even global scale)
Cooperation partners, type and primary function	Polish-American Freedom Foundation (NGO): strategic partner and economic support to the initiative. Institute of Applied Social Sciences, Warsaw University (University): launching post-graduate studies on volunteering and work with seniors based on the grant competition. The network of Flying Cultural Animators and Sociologists (Network): 54 coaches who run the workshops for successful applicants. Non-Governmental Organisations portal NGO.pl (NGO): dissemination.
Staff	Regularly paid employees: 6 Volunteers: 2 Trainees: none External advisers and experts: 54
Funding sources	Foundations and philanthropy capital (100% of operative costs) National public funding (additional small amounts) Donations from private companies (additional small amounts)
Webpage of initiative	www.e.org.pl

Organisational background

The Association of Creative Initiatives "e" is realizing socio-cultural projects all over Poland. One of them is the innovative grant competition *Seniors in Action* which reinforces seniors' social activism. The competition is carried out on national level in Poland. Grants may be applied for by individuals aged 60 or over who want to launch socio-cultural projects for the benefit of local communities, such as initiatives promoting intergenerational cooperation, volunteer work among senior citizens and engaging older people in the life of local communities. The mission of the association is to "create a world where people can act with passion for themselves and for others". The association's mission is based on values such as authenticity, the high quality of innovative ideas and proposals and the long-term partnership with other organisations.

The association originally worked primarily with young people in the creative sector and runs three main initiatives:

1. "Young Creators Cooperative" is an alternative production studio, in which the association creates stimulating conditions for young people in the creative sector to develop their ideas.
2. "Citizens in Action" is a laboratory of socio-cultural projects. Within its framework, animators realize their own projects in their neighborhoods and cities. The association runs grant and micro-grant programs and created the network of Flying Cultural Animators, gathering experienced trainers from all over the country to support the local leaders.
3. "Open Cultural Sector" is a think tank creating new solutions for cultural institutions. The association carries out participatory projects aiming to engage people who work in the cultural sector, people living in the community, researchers, and local government. Together the participants work out new strategies for action in cultural institutions (local cultural centres, libraries, universities of the third age etc.).

The initiative *Seniors in Action* was developed from the ground up as a part of the "Citizens in Action" laboratory. *Seniors in Action* goes beyond a typical grant competition in providing hands-on support for participants and thus combines a grant competition with "incubator services". *Seniors in Action* was the result of combining different professional experiences. The initiator Beata Tokarz-Kamińska brought new knowledge on age discrimination and the living conditions of older people in local communities into the association and combined this knowledge with the creative services the association was already providing.

"I also coordinated a grant donation program on an intergenerational basis and I realised that intergenerational programs deserve something more than just a typical grant donation program without any support given to the beneficiaries. I thought that it would be better to have some kind of incubator initiatives, with some kind of support given to beneficiaries, involving older people, and listening to their needs. So I realised that the best solution is to have some workshops with the beneficiaries, in order to help them by providing some tools to implement their projects in a more quality oriented way. After these years of work at the academia I joined the "Association of Creative Initiatives e". We wanted to test something new, in a creative way, and thanks to my knowledge about older people, plus experiences of the association in working with young leaders and youth organisations, we had the basis for the new intergenerational initiative *Seniors in Action*" (Beata Tokarz-Kamińska, project initiator).

The initiation and implementation of *Seniors in Action* was supported by the Polish American Freedom Foundation as they sought new partners to support volunteering and intergenerational activities. The innovative approach developed by the association was based on the idea of encouraging intergenerational couples - a young and an older person - to work together from the very beginning of the project development. The first edition of the initiative was an immediate success with 500 applications and project ideas.

Problem Being Addressed

People over 60 constitute 19% of the Polish population. Poles leave the labor market relatively early (at the age of 58 on average), which results in Poland having the youngest pensioner population in Europe. Research on the potential of older people in Poland demonstrated however that they rarely become volunteers and are reluctant to join initiatives for local communities, sports associations or cultural activities. Their social involvement is usually limited to their close family. According to the 2008 Report on Intellectual Capital of Poland, only one in seven older people engaged in any form of learning. Poland ranks last on the international Active Aging Index (AAI), which measures tapped and untapped potential of older people including their social activity and participation. Similarly, in the Global Age Watch (GAW) ranking published by the UN measuring older peoples' wellbeing, Poland ranked last among all EU countries. These statistics prompted the association to act and to seek effective solutions to involve older people in local communities and improve their quality of life.

As Polish society ages, the growing number of older people are represented in public discourse as a problem and burden to society rather than an asset. Because of stereotypes, older people are perceived as disabled and in need of help, recipients of services rather than initiators and creators of interesting activities. This perception leads to self-discrimination and lower self-esteem among older generations. Applying for grants that support senior activities is complicated and requires compliance with many procedures and formalities. It is a significant barrier for older people and their organisations. There is a clear shortage of micro-grants with simple grant-giving and reporting procedures available for small, grassroots initiatives for older people, both individuals and groups.

Another feature of Polish society is that fewer and fewer people live in multigenerational families and it is becoming a challenge to create space and opportunity for contact between various generations in neighborhoods and communities. Organisations that work with youth or with older people frequently become hermetical; they lack ideas and methods enabling them to work with various age groups. The distance between generations is growing (only 25% of older people perceive young people as friendly towards them according to a 2007 CBOS poll). Nowadays, the positions of "the Master" and "the Apprentice" are not based on age, but rather on skills and experience – qualities that people of all ages may have. This new situation requires openness to changing roles, as well as an ability to listen and learn from each other. Both formal and informal education programs are missing any subjects related to building dialogue between generations, a key competency in aging societies.

Innovative Solution

Seniors in Action is a unique open grant competition in Poland aimed at promoting older people's leadership potential and activism, as well as intergenerational cooperation and volunteering among older people through the development of socio-cultural projects for the benefit of local communities. The competition is carried out on national level in Poland. Grants may be applied for by individuals aged 60 or over who want to launch socio-cultural projects for the benefit of local communities (initiatives

promoting intergenerational cooperation, volunteer work among senior citizens and engaging older people in the life of local communities). Seniors may submit their projects alone or in cooperation with a younger person under 35. Every project is implemented in cooperation with a selected local government institution or NGO. The awarded grants range from €1,200 to €3,000. The duration of the awarded projects average ten months.

The competition is announced annually and is promoted through newspaper advertising, radio and TV programs, partnership networks, universities and youth portals. The careful choice of participants/winners is very important for the initiative to be successful. The selection of projects is made by an expert committee as part of a multi-stage process: 1) approx. 300 electronic letters of intent are evaluated, 2) meetings in 4 cities with the authors of approximately 80 of the most interesting initiatives are held (in these meetings the expert committee carries out interviews with the authors), 3) a final 35 full grant applications are prepared after taking part in workshops. At this stage, applications are rarely rejected.

The programme is not an ordinary grant competition. The work is based on the incubator model. During workshops, from June to November, staff support participants to further develop their ideas for activities, stimulating the process of exchanging experiences and learning from each other. This process supports the acquisition of skills needed by participants for work with local communities including intergenerational communication, working with groups, methods of promotion and creative workshops for specific animation tools such as graffiti, guerrilla gardening, photography etc. In addition to the workshops, staff members consult with and support participants throughout the whole lifecycle of their project. Each team member has 7 or 8 projects under his/her responsibility and participants may also receive the support of sociologists and animators in specific areas of their projects where they face some difficulties.

For the past two years, the association has invited external organisations to the workshops. This practice was adopted to ensure that the organisation (e.g. a local association/NGO that supports the project leader) learns more about the character of the planned activities in advance of the implementation to improve cooperation between grant applicants/implementers and partner organisations from the beginning. For many of these organisations, the collaboration with the association also has an additional educational value, as they are introduced to interesting work methods and provided access to knowledge and information. Investing in cooperation between organisations has created a valuable community of over 200 organisations and institutions all around Poland which have been engaged in the activities related to the grant competition.

Case Examples:

- *Zosia, a grandmother of three, opened the Supergrandma School in Lublin to help grandparents in raising their grandchildren and to promote voluntary work by seniors with children. Based on the model created by Zosia and described in a published textbook, further schools were founded in 6 different cities and towns.*

- *After retiring, Marta moved from Warsaw to Kaszuby region. Making use of her interest in fine arts, she launched a series of workshops for children from youth homes, engaging seniors and a local community.*
- *Wanda, Seniors Club director and Magda, a choreographer (in private life a mother and daughter) created an intergenerational contemporary dance theater in Wałbrzych. Performances and outdoor dance events were presented at a festival in London and at the European Culture Congress in Wrocław.*
- *Zdzisław worked as a miner. After he retired, he started riding a bicycle and decided to create a bicycle path connecting two historical districts of the city of Katowice. He involved older men and children in the project.*

There have been over 199 such stories in the program. Older and young leaders' actions starting the process of change in local communities.

Participation of Stakeholder

At the beginning *Seniors in Action* had the Polish American Freedom Foundation and a network of universities for the third age as partners. The Polish-American Freedom Foundation, which is the largest Foundation supporting local community activities in Poland, is the most crucial partner as it provides long-term funding to the initiative. Another partner is the Flying Network of Sociologists and Animators. This network was established for another programme of the association, but became a partner providing experts for the grant competition workshops. In addition, there were two temporary partnerships with an Austrian company which supported the initiative financially, and a Polish company working in the field of innovation. In 2011, the initiative started a collaboration with the University of Warsaw to set up a post-graduate course on working with older people. Various media partners also support the initiative including TV, radio, NGO portals, and local newspapers.

The programme format resulted from consultations with the Polish-American Freedom Foundation. The implementers still meet regularly with representatives from the foundation to report on progress and negotiate necessary changes. There is also a feedback mechanism implemented in the support process which allows the implementers to receive feedback from ongoing projects. Furthermore, the association invites programme alumni to take part in workshops in the form of a master class aimed at deliberating together about different methods of work with local communities.

Target Group

Active people 60 years of age and older with leadership potential who want to combine their passions with working for the benefit of the local community.

- Youth under 35 who want to start a social project in cooperation with an older leader.
- Less active older people who are threatened by social exclusion as potential participants of projects initiated by the older and young leaders all over Poland.

- Organisations/institutions working with older people or those who want to develop a particular area of activity.
- Network of 400 Universities of the Third Age.
- The program is open to all, regardless of education, gender, nationality, and social status.

Impact

Seniors in Action reaches 336 older and young leaders and circa 1,300 participants in local projects (of different age groups) per year. The grant competition is nationwide and supports 35 projects implemented in different communities each year. The initiative objectives are: to provide opportunity and space to people over 60 to implement social projects; to train older and young participants in practical skills useful in working with local communities; to encourage seniors to actively participate in community life through making use of their free time, skills and experience (e.g. volunteer work, intergeneration or neighborhood projects, self-help initiatives, etc.) and to create opportunities for intergenerational cooperation. With regard to the partner network the initiative wants to inspire intergenerational groups and organisations working with older people to use new working methods and to improve the skills of UTA leaders in the areas of advocating for seniors' interests and cooperating with local authorities, as well as developing volunteering and intergenerational cooperation.

The wider societal impact the initiative wants to generate includes:

- Promotion of creativity and initiative among older people
- Strengthening the presence and the voice of older people in solving local problems and responding to community needs
- Promotion of active ageing as an answer to demographic problems
- Overcoming stereotypes related to old age, raising the status of older people among the general public
- Building integrated communities that use the potential of all generations and are sensitive to the needs of various age groups
- Educating animators who will be prepared to implement innovative intergenerational projects.

Seniors in Action has so far supported the implementation of 199 projects launched nation-wide by older leaders or intergenerational pairs. It is estimated that over 8,000 people of different ages all across Poland benefited directly from these actions. Furthermore, 336 older and young leaders improved their skills for implementing social projects, 34 alumni were trained to share their experience and to take part in expert workshops, and the experience gained from over 50 projects were compiled in written form.

Evaluation

In 2011, when the programme was already in action for three years, a third-party evaluation was carried out which served as the basis for introducing methodological changes. The participants of the program (older and young leaders and the organisations they cooperate with) expressed their opinions about the efficiency of the support model provided by the association (through surveys, phone interviews, personal meetings). The evaluation also covered the efficiency and stability of funded projects and provided implementers with valuable information on the factors of success and difficulties faced while implementing the projects.

The external evaluation showed that taking part in the competition strengthens older leaders' status in their families and local communities, it makes them cooperate with young people more easily and creates lasting local partnerships.

Competition

Poland has a very strong network of over 400 Universities of the Third Age (UTAs) and these institutions focus on providing educational activities for seniors. The initiative collaborates very closely with UTAs and encourages them to open up for cooperation with the community and promote voluntary work among their students. The association encourages UTA students to submit their ideas to our grant competition and organizes special workshops for UTAs, presenting the working methods of *Seniors in Action* and the association.

In recent years, municipal institutions called "senior centres" have begun to emerge in large cities to coordinate the flow of information about activities aimed at older citizens. There exists significant potential for cooperation between senior centres and programme alumni who may broaden the offering of the centres. In several Polish cities the Little Brothers of the Poor organisation is active and successful. It promotes an intergenerational voluntary work project aimed at lonely older individuals. In the future, the association hopes to broaden the programme to include activities carried out in care homes and daily care institutions for older people.

Until now, the programme has been the only nationwide grant competition in Poland which is strictly focused on supporting senior activities and intergenerational cooperation. In 2012 however, large funds were invested by the Government to address the same issues. The government initiated a competition which offers much more economic support to individual projects than *Seniors in Action*. In anticipation of reduced interest in *Seniors in Action* the association is promoting its innovative non-financial support (workshops, counseling, flying animators support, networking for participants, study visits, publicity, access to knowledge) which provides the opportunity of developing new skills. In addition, the association highlights the added value of the sharing of knowledge and experiences which takes place in the projects. Cooperation with the University of Warsaw post-graduate studies project on organising work with seniors is proving to be an effective strategy for highlighting and examining the experience gained through the grant competition.

Barriers, Challenges and Solutions

Rather than “barriers” the initiative experiences several challenges related to work organisation, the participation profile and the rather small economic support offered by the grant competition. For all these challenges the initiative is actively searching for solutions. Participating in the grant competitions demands some effort (going through several recruitment stages, taking part in workshops etc.) while grant awards are not very substantial. Regarding participant profile, the grant competition faces the challenge of how to reach more male participants and the initiative continuously seeks ways to promote the project to men. New technologies have become a greater feature of projects but the initiative uses these technologies as a tool to involve local people of different ages in the community life only to a small degree. The participants in the initiative lack knowledge and substantial tools in this respect and also the implementation team needs to broaden its knowledge in this area.

Some topics which are addressed by awarded projects concern advocacy strategies and actions which strengthen the civic involvement of seniors in local decision making processes. This is an additional dimension addressing political institutions at local and regional level which is currently not fully covered by the initiatives’ expertise.

Another challenge refers to management of “rejected” projects. The grant competition usually funds 35 projects out of 300 applications each year and is therefore confronted with an ever larger number of “rejected” applications which are nevertheless seen as valuable contributions to the initiative.

A cultural challenge refers to common stereotypes connected to old age (which also lead to older people’s self-discrimination) which make it difficult for seniors to take up leadership roles in their local communities. The implementers observe a low prestige of community service and an insufficient culture of cooperation in Poland which leads to a situation where valuable projects implemented at the local level are often regarded by local authorities as their “competition”. Leaders of such activities can be met with distrust. The association is constantly attempting to overcome these barriers through communication actions, creating positive images of older age and showing that community service is an opportunity for self-development, sharing one’s own passions and meeting new friends, and by showing that intergenerational projects generate measurable benefits.

Funding

The funding of the initiative is provided by the Polish-American Freedom Association on a long-term basis and amounts to a yearly budget of €260,000 per year. Additional small amounts of funding have been received from private companies.

Conclusion

Seniors in Action shows innovative features such as the matching of older and younger persons, alongside the use of complementary competencies, such as work in the creative sector and knowledge of older adults. The project has an excellent partner network, including alumni offering master classes. To date, 40 active program alumni consisting of both older and young people have been identified who want to share their experience of working with seniors and intergenerational groups and other participants of programs for seniors run by various NGOs, businesses and local governments. Moreover, *Seniors in Action* holds great potential to make older adults understand that they are competent, able to do things, that they can attract attention and other people, that they can do something for their communities, and that they can get involved in activities that they would have never thought before. Very often their *Seniors in Action* project is their first experience of local or social involvement in their lives, as well as extra-familial contact with younger people. This innovative initiative thereby continues to contribute to social change in Polish society through its spread of projects.

HOUSE OF THE FRUITS OF SOCIETY (SLOVENIA) – INTERGENERATIONAL VOLUNTEERING

Researcher: Marco Socci, INRCA, Italy



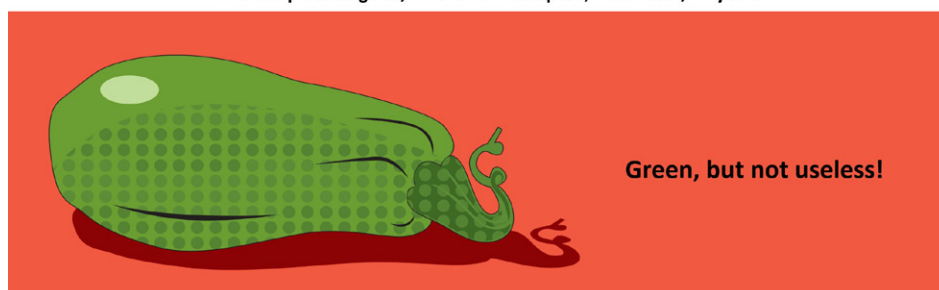
Slovene Philanthropy HOUSE OF THE FRUITS OF SOCIETY



“What does it mean to participate in the House? Meeting new friends and learning. I have the feeling that I am still useful to somebody else,” volunteer, 68 years.



“Being among young gives us energy, we are not talking only about diseases. I have a place to go to, where I am accepted,” volunteer, 72 years.



Cluster	Intergenerational & Volunteering
Name of implementer	Slovene Philanthropy
Type of implementer	Non-profit/NGO/citizen sector organisation
Implementer in operation since	More than 5 years
Implementer located in	Slovenia
Name of initiative	House of the Fruits of Society
Initiative in operation since	More than 5 years
Stage of initiative	Scaling (the next step will be growing impact on a national scale)
Cooperation partners, type and primary function	Municipality of Murska Sobota, Centre for social services (public institutions), Primary and secondary schools, Association of older people in Murska Sobota (NGO), Red Cross (Humanitarian organisation)
Staff	Regularly paid employees: 3 Volunteers: 112 Trainees: 2 External advisers and experts: 2
Funding sources	National public funding: 34,04% European Union public funding: 26% Foundations and philanthropy capital: 19,27% Single donations from private individuals: 1% Donations from private companies: 8,01% Participation fees: 0,11% Other: 2,86% foreign embassies, 8,71% international calls
Webpage of initiative	www.filantropija.org

Organisational background

House of the Fruits of Society is a project of Slovene Philanthropy, an association for the promotion of volunteering, operating in the public interest since 1992. The promotion of volunteering as the key mission of the association is based upon the belief that volunteering can contribute to a better and more tolerant society, based on respect for all people regardless of their personal or living circumstances. Furthermore, the activities of the association aim to increase the quality of life in the community and advocate for socially disadvantaged groups and individuals.

The story of *House of the Fruits of Society* began with the engagement of a political champion – the former president of Slovenia. His special interest in intergenerational volunteerism in Slovenia gave a public voice to the issue and led to the idea of implementing a new programme. From this starting point, Slovene Philanthropy designed a new intergenerational volunteer programme, the *House of the Fruits of Society*.

Stakeholder discussions and feasibility studies led to implementation of the programme in the town of Murska Sobota, in the Prekmurje region. The decision allowed the association to use funding dedicated to the development of deprived regions in Slovenia. A partner network was established with participation by municipalities, associations of pensioners, centres of social work, a primary school, a

social entrepreneur, a marketing agency as well as other local organisations from Murska Sobota. A steering committee was established by the partner network to design and implement the programme. The steering group identified an additional funding source – the Norwegian financial mechanism grant (REF) – and successfully applied for the funds in 2007. The initiative started in 2008 as a pilot project providing the first community centre in Slovenia encouraging intergenerational knowledge exchange. The initiative is coordinated by a project manager (coordination of activities, funding sources, identifying new opportunities for similar projects in other regions of Slovenia). Social and community workers work directly with older people and volunteers conduct workshops as well as offering support and advice in preparing individual plans (on how the user will participate in the activities). Volunteers and mentors are involved directly in preparing the daily activities, mentors also lead different workshops. Volunteers have an opportunity to become mentors by participating in training provided by the association. Every year some disabled people are employed within the initiative, paid through governmental supporting programs for disabled people (e.g. for additional help in the coordination of activities, implementation of daily activities and promotion of the House).

Problem Being Addressed

The initiative mainly addresses two problems experienced by older people. The first issue addressed is one of social isolation experienced by older people upon retirement from the workplace which can lead to depression and other health issues. Second is the lack of acknowledgement in society that retired and older people still can actively contribute to society. Furthermore, the initiative identified a lack of opportunities for intergenerational exchange of knowledge. As long as older people are not facilitated or encouraged to share their experience and knowledge, they are likely be seen only as passive 'users' of services.

Innovative Solution

House of the Fruits of Society is based on the idea of intergenerational volunteering and providing connections between older and young people. A feasibility study identified that a lot of young people went to home care centres for older people as volunteers. The initiative attempted to make full use of this potential in providing a new and more open setting for intergenerational exchange. The name, *The House of the Fruits of Society*, promotes a positive mind-set and also relates to the potential effects of social exchange and cooperation. The identification of an appropriate name also addressed the wish to promote the initiative in public and to create a positive image from the start.

The initiative combines several core elements including contributing to benefit society, promoting volunteering, and enabling intergenerational exchange. In Slovenia, many associations offer activities for older people but *House of the Fruits of Society* attempts to "fill the gaps" by connecting several organisations in an open approach. Another innovative approach is the successful cooperation between

several stakeholders and partners, supporting intergenerational exchange and engaging people of different ages in volunteering activities. The initiative is well embedded in the local community of the town of Murska Sobota.

Objectives and activities:

- Social inclusion of older people through participation in daily activities
- Active ageing through participation as volunteers and mentors in different workshops and intergenerational learning activities
- Intergenerational exchange of knowledge, skills and experiences
- Skill training for improving employment possibilities and enabling independent living
- Stimulating creativity through providing a flexible and open space, time and intergenerational exchange.

The facility of *House of the Fruits of Society* is partitioned into different workshop areas: a learning kitchen, a computer study room, a workshop for sewing, pottery and wood products, and a big garden with herbs and fruit trees. Participants can join different daily activities, such as cooking workshops, yoga and a gym for older adults, different craft workshops, herb and garden workshops, etc. They can also become mentors and prepare their own workshops, for example lead a sewing workshop or offer language lessons. The house provides the space, tools and materials and invites users to join the workshops. Alternatively, they may simply come and spend some time in the house.

The *House of the Fruits of Society* is the first of its kind in Slovenia. The initiative promotes a new approach to supporting older people which values them as active creators instead of simply passive service users. The house provides a flexible environment for different activities which can be arranged according to the needs and interests of the older and young people involved. Knowledge transfer, learning and staying active are the main benefits experienced by older participants.

Case Example:

Retired tailors and seamstresses began to lead a sewing workshop, teaching the younger generation about a craft almost forgotten after the break-down of the textile industry in Slovenia. While teaching they told stories about their youth and the toys they used to play with. From these stories the idea was generated to create a 'DIY rag doll', which has become a product for sale by the association. The rag doll is more than a toy. It tells a story, it teaches to sew and tailor and has a more permanent value than plastic toys from the store. Furthermore, as the older workshop leaders discovered that their non-professional knowledge, such as cooking, herbs, or gardening, is also valued in the centre and can be transferred to others, they have started additional workshops based on their experiential knowledge. The impact of this engagement is evident in the words of one participant: "I never believed that I would be sewing again with the same passion. I would never have believed that somebody else would be interested in what I know."

Participation of Stakeholder

Stakeholder cooperation started with a primary school located in Murska Sobota as a partner. The partnership network now comprises all schools in the city and in the region. The stakeholder network has been continuously expanded over the years. New organisations are currently being approached which provide complementary competencies, such as those working with people with disabilities. The range of available competencies and the channels to reach potential target groups are thus widened.

A cooperative relationship with the association for older people is a prerequisite for working with older adults and the association engages likewise with other organisations, schools and social services. An important function of such partnerships is to create channels and opportunities for referral of potential users to the centre, including older people, students/pupils, socially disadvantaged people or people with disabilities. Furthermore, these organisations provide the knowledge to understand the needs of clients and offer support and guidance on responding appropriately to different client needs. The success of the initiative is evident in that the *House of the Fruits of Society* is frequently sought out by partner organisations, from schools looking for interesting projects for students, to social work services looking for a safe and supportive environment for their clients, or associations for older people seeking meaningful activities for their members. This tight network also enables partners to respond effectively and efficiently to individual problems as they arise in the community due to a weekly exchange of information on urgent needs between local network partners working collaboratively.

There is also active internal stakeholder participation where volunteers and mentors in the centre meet monthly to discuss previous work and new ideas. The programme of activities is tailored according to the needs participants articulate and the resources volunteers and mentors can provide. When a person comes to the centre, an expert works with him/her individually to identify interests and needs, appropriate activities and the knowledge and experience the new client can bring to the centre.

Target Group

The main target groups are retired older people (65+, 65%), unemployed older adults (55+, 15%) and young people (20%). A high proportion of users are at risk of poverty. Most of the users and volunteers are women (70%). The initiators anticipated that women would be more likely to retire at a younger age and would also be more involved in volunteering. Many volunteers finished a professional school and provide specific professional skills. There is a high number of retired medical nurses and teachers among the volunteers. In addition, volunteers provide their informal, traditional knowledge.

Impact

The initiative encourages older people to stay or become active and share the knowledge they have with others, to gain a feeling of self-respect, to enable them to contribute to society and to extend their social networks. Furthermore, the project tackles prejudices based on age in connecting older people

and young people. The targeted social impact is to build a cohesive society, to fight ageism and to promote and enable intergenerational cooperation and knowledge exchange.

The centre is located in Murska Sobota (population 11,500). Approximately 3,436 participants have engaged in activities at the centre, of these 2,233 were older people. There are currently 112 active volunteers supporting the centre, of whom 62 are older mentors who lead their own workshops. Younger people also lead workshops such as a workshop on computer skills for seniors. There are 380 different activities performed each year and 30 different products have been developed for market under the social enterprise brand *Fruits of Society*.

Evaluation

The Slovenian Ministry for Social Affairs recognised the initiative as an example of good practice and monitored the outcomes for social inclusion over the past three years. The number of volunteers and the quality of life of older people have been shown to increase year on year, as a result of participation in activities at the centre. These positive outcomes have supported the ongoing participation of the partners with the initiative.

Competition

Although there are many organisations providing services and facilities for older people in Slovenia (daily centres for elderly, older people homes, societies for older people and programmes for lifelong learning) the *House of the Fruits of Society* is unique in connecting older and younger people. The centre is not just offering services, but encourages users to bring in their own knowledge and experiences to create a specific “offering” for all participants. In general, the initiative addresses the lack of opportunities for transferring knowledge older people have to younger people or for spending quality time together. It also fills a gap through programmes aimed at supporting older people in identifying their relevant knowledge and in further developing their skills.

Barriers, Challenges and Solutions

The initiative is in a good position regarding its extensive stakeholder network, the long-term support by the local community of Murska and its public recognition. The initiative has ambitious goals regarding scaling. In 2013 an additional community centre was established in the town of Vipava and the initiative is in the process of making arrangements with 5 other local communities. The initiative is expecting additional funding based on the national strategy for social welfare which is expected to support the implementation of 15 intergenerational community centres by 2020. In addition, the initiative is trying to set up a social enterprise (partly based on products produced in workshops) to provide employment opportunities to older people facing difficulties in finding a job.

A challenge exists in finding stable funding sources, in particular for staffing. Public funding is currently insufficient to guarantee long-term employment of staff which would be important to maintain continuity and to make sure that certain competencies remain within the initiative. Competent staff is needed to coordinate intergenerational activities and to ensure that the approach to both older and young people is appropriately managed. By contrast, equipment (ICT) can often be sourced through supportive private companies. The initiative also uses recycled materials and resources.

The future funding strategy relies on a mix of public funds (from the Ministry of Work and Social Affairs), European Union funds and local funds from municipalities. The initiative has an agreement with the municipality of Murska which will support the initiative for at least ten years. The municipality supports the project because it recognized that the initiative is relevant to the local community and provides immediate and long-term benefits to users.

Funding

The initiative depends on a mix of different funding sources including national public funding (34%), European Union public funding (26%), funding from foundations and philanthropy capital (19%), international calls (8%), donations from private companies (8%) and additional sources (5%). Recently (2013) funding came mostly from national public funding (92%).

Conclusion

House of the Fruits of Society, has an excellent stakeholder network – most of the partners have enjoyed close cooperation from the beginning of the project. Partners have a shared commitment to the project's mission and development goals: to foster cooperation and solidarity between generations; intergenerational transmission of knowledge, skills and experiences and to promote active aging through active participation of older people as volunteers and mentors of workshops. Another interesting aspect of the project is that volunteers can become mentors and thus stay involved in the project in another capacity. Older adults have concrete possibilities to stay active, to establish new social relationships, to be involved in the various activities and to transmit their knowledge, experiences and skills to other participants. Through the promotion of volunteerism many of the participants now offer support to others in their local community whether in local day care centres or in their own homes to those with disabilities or people who are socially isolated. Through the project older people are given the opportunity to share time and attend activities with young people and vice versa providing an environment in which to foster essential intergenerational solidarity and cooperation.

YOS – YOUNG AND OLD IN SCHOOL (GERMANY) – INTERGENERATIONAL MENTORING

Researcher: Victoria Holczmann, ZSI, Austria

Cluster	Intergenerational & Volunteering
Name of implementer	August-Claas-Schule
Type of implementer	Public Body
Implementer in operation since	More than 5 years
Implementer located in	Harsewinkel, Germany
Name of initiative	YOS-Young And Old In School
Initiative in operation since	More than 5 years
Stage of initiative	Scaling (the next step will be growing impact on a regional or even global scale)
Cooperation partners, type and primary function	<p>Claas Selbstfahrende Erntemaschinen (Claas SEM CSE GmbH) (Private Company): Claas supplies material, tools, machines, offers free training and helps financially since more than 10 years.</p> <p>The town of Harsewinkel (Public Body): The town of Harsewinkel supports financially, helps building a network and offers non-material assistance.</p> <p>Retired Craftsmen (Informal Group): The retired craftsmen invest their time as well as gaining work and experience.</p>
Staff	Regularly paid employees: 4 Volunteers: 15 Trainees: none External advisers and experts: 20 (as well voluntary)
Funding sources	National public funding: none Economic return from own products/services: 10% Foundations and philanthropy capital: 30% Single donations from private individuals: 30% Donations from private companies: 30%
Contact	wolfgang.strotmann@gmx.de

Organisational Background

The project is implemented and led by the August-Claas-Schule in Harsewinkel in Germany. The initiative *Young and Old in School (YOS)* is based in a secondary school in Harsewinkel with approximately 400 pupils. Its curriculum puts a strong focus of the pupils' preparation for future careers and vocational training. The school headmaster is Hermann Hecker and the technical head and coordinator of the project is Dr. Wolfgang Strotmann.

Problem Being Addressed

The transition for young adults from school into working life can be challenging in many respects. Often questions arise as to what type of career to even consider and what types of work are available. A gap exists within many school types in Germany between theoretical education about career choices and practical, hands-on experiences. Due to this gap pupils often have difficulties making vocational decisions by simply reading brochures or listening to lectures. More practically oriented concepts of individual support require personnel, material, time and space, and therefore they are not always available.

YOS offers pupils a flexible and realistic practice area to develop their soft skills such as ambition, endurance, reliability and responsibility. Practice of these skills is expected every week for participants in the project. Another issue addressed by *YOS* is intergenerational learning and exchange. Often ignorance builds due to little exchange and interaction between young and older generations. *YOS* encourages social learning and intergenerational understanding. Young and older work together on the same project, combining their competencies to produce a successful work result. The mutual appreciation of strengths and competencies gives all participants a new appreciation and respect for each other as partners. Generational conflict and insecurity can be turned into a productive union.

Older adults can often feel that they are no longer useful. The *YOS* initiative helps older adults to feel needed and their formerly acquired skills are appreciated. Moreover, the opportunity to pass on their knowledge can be very rewarding. *YOS* effectively encourages an often misled or non-existing public discussion about the challenges facing young adults transitioning into working life while at the same time showcasing an innovative example of reducing some of the challenges faced by pupils.

Innovative Solution

YOS brings together pupils, in their phase of vocational orientation, and pensioners from mechanical and technical trades. The aim is to work collaboratively on practical projects. This gives the pupils an orientation in their work- and life-planning as well as facilitating better intergenerational understanding. Three core elements are the practical orientation for pupils, intergenerational exchange and mutual learning. Once a week pensioners from different trades work in the external workshop with pupils on concrete hands-on projects using their skills. The workshop provides the pupils with the opportunity to dip into various occupational fields, for example gardening, cabinet work, painting and so forth. The *YOS* concept is exceptional because of its practical relevance. Other regular mentoring programs bring seniors and adolescents together in rather constructed settings but all participants of *YOS* participate with a high level of interest, enthusiasm and competence. The teens ask for certain work fields where they want to gain practical experience. The retirees operate as experts in their own field. This common interest leads to contentment and releases a high degree of productivity. After retirement, craftsmen from mechanical and industrial trades find it difficult to locate opportunities to remain active and neither senior citizen universities nor the public community college programs address the needs of this target

group. The present project activates this group of people on a long term basis and lets them work in a field that gave them joy and satisfaction during their working life, enabling them to experience this satisfaction during their retirement again. YOS is unique in Germany in that it has established a solid regional network. Due to the involvement of the retirees, teacher, businesses and companies, the town council, commercial enterprises, societies, social communities and citizens, the whole town takes part in the education of its own young adults. Everyone contributes their own competencies and potentials. All these little supports add up to a broad and solid basis.

Stakeholder Participation

Many of the current stakeholders have been included from the very first phase of the project. For instance, Claas SEM CSE GmbH was included in the development of the basic concept. Initially the firm stayed out of the planning and forming of the project to give the school pedagogical and didactic freedom to create the concept. Since then Claas has fully supported YOS with material as well as in logistic matters. Continuous communication with the personnel managers and training supervisors of Claas identify the precise needs of the workshop and lead to an ongoing reflection of the project's processes. The municipality has also joined the effort and participated in providing facilities, the logistic supply and helped in the building of a network from the beginning of the project. In addition, the pensioners were of course involved from the start; they organised their own working area, coordinated with the pupil's needs and took responsibility for the adolescents' development.

Target Group

YOS reaches approximately 200 retirees and students per annum with their project. This initiative has been fully realised in the town of Harsewinkel now and offers a realistic opportunity for replication in other areas of Germany and in wider Europe. The target group includes schools (pupils, teachers), city senior citizens, governments and companies (e.g. offering materials). YOS wants to encourage towns to participate in a collaborative education and development of their younger generation and to give their senior citizens a sensible and active field of engagement.

Impact

One of the main impacts of YOS is that pupils gain hands-on practice and therefore have better opportunities of getting apprenticeship places, they enjoy the workshop and recognise a purpose in what they are doing (compared to regular classes). At the same time, the retirees feel highly esteemed by the community and are motivated by the pupils' development. Many pupils get an apprenticeship place after taking part in the workshop, often because the retiree recommends their pupils to a company. Another outcome the teachers can observe is that the pupils realise how important it is to

choose a profession they can practice their whole life and enjoy working in this field also when they are old. The pupils get a broader and more realistic perspective on vocational orientation. They have an opportunity to try a wide range of trades and can gain practical job experience. They become familiar with different professions in cooperation with real experts of various fields. This helps them to match their own expectations with the things they have learned and the skills they have discovered. Last but not least they experience the intergenerational context of authentic work teams.

Evaluation

YOS has undergone numerous evaluations. It has been recognized through various awards due to a complex documentation of the idea and the processes. The project presents many possibilities for scientific evaluation prompting several Bachelor and Master Theses. Currently the University of Osnabrück is examining the project as part of a long-term-study. Meanwhile, YOS has gained international attention and the coordinators have been invited to conferences in Zurich and Brussels. Intergenerational platforms in the USA and Canada have also acknowledged the concept as exceptional and have expressed interest in replicating the idea. The results of all evaluations acknowledge that the project is of extremely high value in efficiency and benefit (for pupils, retirees, school, teachers, parents, firms, societies, council, local economy) sustainability, wellbeing of the participants, financial independence and promoting genuine intergenerational understanding.

Competition

The project is exceptional compared to other mentor-programs in Germany and beyond. Some basic requirements are believed to make successful implementation feasible. The project started very small and it seems advisable to concentrate on a small working field first with only a few active participants on board, so all manpower can concentrate on building the structure. As soon as all processes run smoothly more active partners can join. Furthermore, it appears quite important that despite the school context, the teachers are not directly involved in the working relationship between the pupils and pensioners. The institutional authority of the teacher would cause a competitive situation between teacher and retiree and might be a disadvantage for the latter. In addition, openness towards all network partners and those interested is fundamental for the success of the intergenerational learning. Empathy is also imperative for the intergenerational work context. Everyone has to be able to project his/her thoughts into the counterparts role and thinking, regardless whether pupil, teacher or senior. Such a mutually empathic and respectful approach lays the foundation for a trustful and conflict-free engagement.

Barriers, Challenges and Solutions

Due to their success and broad participation by both pupils and senior, *YOS* is currently under pressure to increase its working space, but plans to build a new workshop are already underway. The initiative is also considering expansion to offer more occupational fields such as a recent inquiry regarding paper and printing work. They are also considering including the involvement of kindergartens and older aged people to extend the target group and involve different age groups. Due to the flexibility of *YOS* it is possible to constantly reflect upon the activities and adapt to the needs of everyone involved. Thus, the flexibility of the concept would allow for an additional occupational area in the workshop.

In terms of keeping seniors involved and organizing outreach, a waiting list is maintained of seniors interested in participating in the project, ensuring that if someone involved withdraws from the project a replacement can be located easily to ensure continuity. *YOS* has been operating for over 6 years, and has proven to be sustainable. The initiative is supported by several organisations and therefore has a quite solid financial footing. Since the Hauptschule will eventually transform into a comprehensive school there is already a dialogue that the initiative can continue to be implemented.

Funding

Neither the state nor any other public institution puts money toward the project. *YOS* doesn't receive any national or European funding. The inclusion of external partners and supporters enables the project to maintain a completely independent funding structure. The necessary means are acquired through donations, prize money and profits from products that are produced in the workshop. The total yearly budget is around €30,000, with 30% coming from foundations and philanthropic capital, 30% is made up by single donations from private individuals and 30% is accounted for by donations from private companies.

Conclusion

The project has proven very successful in the past few years, keeping their strong focus on the cooperation of old and young, as well as the benefit and wellbeing it brings to both groups. By comparison with other mentor-programs in Germany, *YOS* further proves exceptional in its approach to bridging the intergenerational divide, as well as in linking theory and practice for pupils. Future plans include the creation of more space to be able to keep up with growing interest and being able to offer various thematic courses. There are already plans to build a new workshop and it appears the expansion of the project can be realised without any state funding. The municipality will provide the land and the building will be financed by sponsors and donors. Additional trades such as paper and print are being considered, where professions like bookbinder and media designer could be included in the project. The idea is to offer future oriented professions as well as traditional trades if possible.

Furthermore, *YOS* wants to expand the generational range by engaging with a local kindergarten where the children visit the workshop twice a year and work with the retirees. *YOS* appears to have a sustainable future ahead and offers concrete opportunities for replication of this effective model.

HAUS IM PARK/HOUSE IN THE PARK (GERMANY) – REINVENTING OLD AGE

Researcher: Victoria Holczmann, ZSI, Austria



House in the Park

Where old age is being reinvented



The house in the Park wants to take both the potential and the resources of older people into account, as well as provide assistance with age-related limitations.

We cast a new look at old age

In the House in the Park, we challenge current images of aging and cast a new look at old age. With events and theme campaigns, we provide very different approaches to the issue of old age – also for people who might not have previously dealt with aging.

We also want to make the supposedly 'dark' themes of old age, such as dementia, visible in our events and raise awareness so that people can deal with all facets of age free from fear.

We are more than a center for senior citizens

The House in the Park is versatile: it is a cultural and educational center for senior citizens, a neighbourhood centre with a café, a professional theater and a physiotherapy. And it is a place for engagement: we empower participation and engagement and offer structures that make this possible. The volunteers and visitors customize the house through their projects and activities.

We network with many partners

We work together with many partners in the district: with schools, the church, the Health Department, the district administration and other cultural institutions. Through joint events, we are able to reach a large public, with each partner contributing its expertise on the topic of old age. In the same vein, we advise and assist each other in new projects.

We face the challenge

We focus our activities on the one hand specifically at older people, but at the same time, we also have offers that are aimed at all generations. While the House in the Park is very popular with the 65+ generation, we need to do more to reach 'young seniors' from 50 years. While our offers are now oriented to the needs of this target group (e.g. evening classes or workshops to prepare for retirement), one of our great challenge is to communicate these offers.

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HAUS
im Park

Cluster	Intergenerational & Volunteering
Name of implementer	House in the Park
Type of implementer	Foundation
Implementer in operation since	More than 5 years
Implementer located in	Hamburg, Germany
Name of initiative	House in the Park – where old age is being reinvented
Initiative in operation since	More than 5 years
Stage of initiative	Scaling (the next step will be growing impact on a regional or even global scale)
Cooperation partners, type and primary function	None
Staff	Regularly paid employees: 40 Volunteers: 100 Trainees: 1 External advisers and experts: 10 Freelance educational staff: 50
Funding sources	Foundations and philanthropy capital: 50% Economic return from own products/services: 15% Participation fees: 15%
Webpage of initiative	www.hausimpark.de

Organisational Background

A project of the Körber Foundation, within its 'civil society' department, *House in the Park* has been in operation for over five years. Its leadership management controls the departments of physical therapy, communication, education and culture, and café. Each department in turn has different numbers of employees. More than 100 volunteers belong to the different departments and guide the structure of the house's independent projects.

The *House in the Park* thrives on the commitment of its volunteers. They are active in all areas of the house and customise the house through their work. In addition to 100 volunteers there are also 40 full-time employees. There is complete cooperation between full-time and volunteer staff and there are no hierarchical differences between the two groups. The staff members bring different competencies and professional backgrounds to the initiative. There are healthcare researchers, communications managers, organisational developers, physiotherapists, theatre technicians and educational staff. The current manager, Anja Paehlke, brings extensive experience working with disadvantaged groups including migrants and the unemployed.

Problem being addressed

The initiative addresses the following areas within the field of active and healthy ageing: health literacy and patient empowerment, personalised health management, prevention and early diagnosis of

functional and cognitive decline, social inclusion through intergenerational practice, work and volunteering, age friendly buildings, environments and communities. Committed to a comprehensive image of old age, the *House in the Park* challenges stereotypical images of ageing and promotes a new perspective on growing older. They work to encourage the potential and the resources of older people as well as providing assistance with age-related limitations. They seek to stimulate the “reinvention” of old age where neither the image of the golf-playing retiree living in Mallorca, nor of the old man on the floor, is justified as the reality of the 50plus generation. Through this initiative older people are encouraged and empowered to actively participate in their surroundings and to assume responsibility. At the same time, the support services available for older people are highlighted and encouragement provided. Through different events and topical discussions with people of all ages the initiative emphasises that aging affects everyone.

Innovative Solution

The *House in the Park* provides a comprehensive, differentiated space for the image of ageing. Here, the skills and resources of older people are taken into account and strengthened. On this basis, the *House in the Park* is versatile. It is a cultural and educational centre for senior citizens and a neighbourhood and cultural centre for the Bergedorf district of Hamburg. There is a cafe/restaurant and a theatre with 470 seats, a physiotherapy practice and a patient care service. Everybody in the *House in the Park* can bring in his/her expertise and ideas. It is a place for engagement. More and more senior citizens want to participate at least on a small scale. In the *House in the Park* participation and engagement are encouraged and structures that make this possible are created. The volunteers and visitors define the house through their projects and activities.

In the *House in the Park* current images of ageing are challenged and a new look at old age is proposed. Through events and theme campaigns, very different approaches to the issue of old age are evident particularly for people who might not have previously dealt with ageing. The initiative additionally aims to make supposedly “dark” themes of old age, such as dementia, visible in the events and raises awareness so that people can deal with all facets of age free from fear. A strength of the *House in the Park* is its familiar and appreciative atmosphere. People feel well and at home there and there is enough space for everybody, so that it is comfortable. Furthermore, the *House in the Park* offers quality in every respect whether course offerings, counselling or the service orientation.

A broad range of classes are available from art to Zumba. An important aspect of this is that participants know the classes, such a computer class, are for their generation of 50plus. Moreover, the course instructors are particularly responsive to the needs of older users. Intergenerational projects also take place as the initiative aims to be responsive not only to the needs of the elderly but also to be open to younger generations.

Stakeholder Participation

The *House in the Park* works in cooperation with many partners in their district: schools, the church, the health department, the district administration and other cultural institutions. The cooperation partners do not merely make up a network of institutions that know each other, but they actively participate in projects together. For instance, intergenerational projects are implemented with the cooperation of schools or space is provided for local health talks and health days to take place in cooperation with the public health office. Education events are organised in cooperation with other educational institutions or church partners and a model project called "Living with dementia in the quarter" is developed in cooperation with the social security office. Multi-partner cooperation is practice related.

The relationship between staff, volunteers and supervisors and their participation in the *House in the Park* is a good one, since the initiative follows flat hierarchical structures. Staff is encouraged to bring in new ideas in every possible area. The participants in the *House in the Park* bring their own competencies and are also encouraged to bring forward any ideas or concerns that arise. The *House in the Park* provides room to offer skills and to acquire skills, which can be passed on to others.

Case Examples:

Mr D makes use of his professional experiences as an artist in the House in the Park.

Mr C recounted that before participating in the theatre group in the House in the Park he had only secondarily tinkered with music but now he is able to concentrate on music and delve into the subject. He also notes that whenever he has an idea or anything to say he is comfortable expressing himself.

Miss B remarks that in her case it would be the other way round – she learns in the House in the Park and acquires new skills which she can then pass on others in her community.

Target Group

The *House in the Park* focus their services on the elderly. The initiators emphasise that the 50plus generation is not a homogeneous group. A 55-year-old who is still in the middle of their working life has very different needs to someone at the end of their sixties who would like to volunteer, or an 86-year-old who needs care assistance. Through the different services, the project tries to reach and meet the various needs of both the "young seniors" and the very old target groups. In addition, the initiative aims to appeal to people of all generations and invites them to think about a new image of old age.

Impact

The *House in the Park* is committed to a comprehensive image of old age. It is the project's vision to stimulate the "reinvention" of old age. Participation and engagement are facilitated and structures are created to make this possible. With publications, a website and through partners, the initiative continues to communicate the new images of ageing to reach a Germany-wide audience. The *House in the Park* is recognised as a local project that is transferable to other municipalities and regions.

In recent years, the *House in the Park* has evolved from a meeting place for seniors to a centre for the entire district. The programme reflects this process. The House in the Park presents itself as more open and through new types of events and longer opening times it allows people of all generations to participate in the programmes. The project already has many volunteers, visitors and clients who can develop their potential in the *House in the Park*. Moreover, the initiative is increasingly perceived as an expert on potential-oriented ageing and, as a result, regularly receives requests from other institutions and working groups. A direct primary outcome for the users of the initiative is the socialising impact. Older people are sometimes shy and reluctant when they come to the house for the first time but through making friends and understanding that they are free to express any age-related weakness, because they know they are accepted, people become confident and usually begin visiting the *House in the Park* regularly. An atmosphere where older people feel comfortable and home is therefore created and maintained.

Evaluation

The impact of the initiative has been assessed through feedback-based self-assessment. The *House in the Park* has not yet achieved its full vision of being the open house it wants to be. This is partly due to circumstances such as its location. Situated in a mansion district the initiative attracts mostly wealthier users while users with lower socio-economic status are deterred by the location. In response, the *House in the Park* strives to be more inclusive by developing new classes or offerings and is considering opening the house on weekends to attract more users aged between 50 and 65 who are still working.

The significant strength of the initiative is its broad range of offerings and the fact that they are constantly adapted to the needs of the users. Moreover, the fact that in the *House in the Park* provides a central location for various institutions under one roof where users can attend physiotherapy, go to a patchwork class and have lunch without having to go elsewhere, is emphasised as a major strength by the staff. Furthermore, the familiar and appreciative atmosphere tailored to older people makes users feel at home and they identify with the project. Familiarity is a strength, however, it is recognised that it may also present a possible barrier for those who do not feel like they belong to this “family” and therefore do not go to the house.

Competition

Since the *House in the Park* is an independent agency, they see other solutions not as competing but as a useful supplement. The *House in the Park* cooperates closely with their partners in the district and they support each other in their work. If it becomes clear that other partners are working on similar topics, they try to determine the expertise of each partner and develop common solutions collaboratively.

Barriers, Challenges and Solutions

The activities of the *House in the Park* are on the one hand specifically focussed on older people, but simultaneously offer activities aimed at all generations. To reach all audiences alike is described as difficult. While the *House in the Park* is very popular among the 65plus generation, the initiative needs to work on reaching the “young seniors” from 50 years. Particularly with these younger people, the *House in the Park* can be perceived as a “boring senior centre”. In response to this challenge new offerings are being oriented to the needs of this younger target group, for example, evening classes or workshops to prepare for retirement, but these need to be actively promoted to reach this target group. Another challenge the *House in the Park* faces is difficulties in finding qualified personnel in Germany. Physiotherapy is given as an example where it is difficult to locate therapists able and willing to work with elderly patients. Going forward the initiative aims to attract other user groups, for example people from minority ethnic groups, and is developing activities tailored to their interests and needs. At the same time, existing activities are being expanded to counter a range of stereotypes. In the wood workshop, which used to be a male-dominated field they have been providing workshops for women since 2012, which has proven to be very successful. The strategy to achieve the milestones of the project is to continue adapting the course offerings and the opening hours to meet a growing and wider range of user needs.

Funding

Currently the *House in the Park* has a yearly budget of €2,000,000, of which €1,200,000 is generated through course fees, dues or health insurance funds. An annual grant from the Körber foundation amounts to €800,000. A significant portion of the budget is spent on energy costs.

Economic return from own products and services accounts for 35% of the budget, with 50% from foundations and philanthropic capital and 15% from participation fees.

Strength and Weakness

The strength of the *House in the Park* is summarised in the following points: beautiful facility, elaborate architecture; broad range of services and offerings; everything under one roof; many volunteers; integration of vulnerable groups; great financial support from a foundation, even though the initiative would also run without this foundation; users can develop and realise their own ideas; familiar and appreciative atmosphere.

The weakness of the *House in the Park* can be summarised in these following points: it is located in an elegant residential area and therefore mainly attracts wealthy people and deters people with a lower socio-economic status; familiar atmosphere is strength and weakness at once. Some people might feel that they do not belong to the “family” and therefore do not come to the house.

Conclusion

The *House in the Park* is an initiative where almost 200 people are working (voluntary and employed) and more than 400 people visit each day. It challenges stereotypical images and tries to facilitate a new perspective on ageing. Despite cooperating with many partners, it remains difficult to reach “young seniors” but the *House in the Park* is in significant demand from its primary target group of those over age 65. The initiative operates in a reflective manner and constantly examines what it offers and how to ensure a broad range of users and activities which reflect the desired and actual diversity of this group. Changes in offerings and opening times aim to successfully reach the younger target group while continuing to provide for existing users. All users in the *House in the Park*, as well as the partners and staff, are invited to participate and to contribute their skills and competencies as well as ideas or complaints. This initiative provides space to offer and to acquire skills and creates a place supporting intergenerational exchange where older people feel understood and accepted.

EMPLOYMENT

KESTREL (BELFAST, UK) – EMPOWERING OLDER WORKERS

Researcher: Lucia Carragher, Netwell Centre, Ireland

as we know it
Retirement [^] isn't
working
 **estrel**

“Challenging perceptions on older people in the workplace, valuing their knowledge, skills and experience, maximising their opportunity for employment, enabling them to positively manage change and transition by understanding and supporting their career development and lifelong learning opportunities”

Older people can fly, don't clip their wings.



Cluster	Employment
Name of implementer	GEMS Northern Ireland Limited
Type of implementer	Social enterprise (partly economically self-sustained through marked products and services, primary mission is to solve a social problem)
Implementer in operation since	More than 5 years
Implementer located in	Belfast, United Kingdom
Name of initiative	Kestrel
Initiative in operation since	More than 5 years
Stage of initiative	Scaling (the next step will be growing impact on a regional or even global scale)
Cooperation partners, type and primary function	KANS - Kestrel Age Neutral Solutions: (Social enterprise) KANS developed from the Kestrel older peoples employment project established in 2009 when GEMS NI recruited four "Age Positive Champions" – older people who wanted to challenge traditional models of retirement and create choices for change that promoted healthy and productive ageing.
Staff	Regularly paid employees: 6 Volunteers: 12 Trainees: none External advisers and experts: 5 Others: 4 Age Positive Champions
Funding sources	National public funding: 90% European Union public funding: 5% Economic return from own products/services: 5%
Webpage of initiative	www.gemsni.org.uk

Organisational Background

GEMS Northern Ireland is a social enterprise located in Belfast. The organisation has developed since its launch in 2002 to become a service which is recognised as delivering excellence and a model of best practice in employability interventions with long term unemployed, economically inactive people and those who experience disadvantage in the labour market. GEMS NI works to promote social inclusion in employment through the design and development of innovative products and services that through partnerships with local communities, employers and other key stakeholders, support, encourage and enable positive action that brings people to jobs and jobs to people.

GEMS NI works in cooperation with KANS – Kestrel Age Neutral Solution. KANS developed from the Kestrel older people's employability project established in 2009 when GEMS NI recruited four 'Age Positive Champions' – older people who wanted to challenge traditional models of retirement and create choices for change that promoted healthy and productive ageing. The *Kestrel* initiative is managed via 8 integrated work packages which detail the project management plan responsibilities and timescales for delivery, reporting arrangements and quality management. GEMS NI is ISO9001:2008 accredited and *Kestrel* is managed within this quality management system. GEMS NI Chief Executive is the project lead with the Directors of Employment Services and Business Services responsible for operational management of the project.

Problem Being Addressed

Through the organisation's work with people who are in employment or who have recently lost their jobs as a result of the current economic recession, the implementers know that the age-factor can also create a "line in the sand" for people in the workplace who are at or approaching the fifty plus age range. By this it is meant that there can be a tendency for some to view this as an 'ante room' for retirement with their primary focus being about pension not continued personal and professional development and lifelong learning. The organisers also emphasise that they know very well that the impact of unemployment and economic inactivity is so much more than financial; they work with people in the fifty plus age range who experience very low self-esteem and feelings of worthlessness and hopelessness and who are very vulnerable to physical and mental ill health, alcohol and substance dependence including those whose life expectancy has been lowered by some or all of these factors. They also outline that the aforementioned issues are also a feature for people who are reaching retirement or newly retired, especially those for whom their job has represented their main form of social interaction. We know that many employers HR policy/practice in relation to older workers reaching transition has a focus on pay and pension and the traditional company retirement age instead of an approach that offers a value proposition to both the employee and the employer and embraces lifelong learning and productive ageing.

Innovative Solution

The *Kestrel* project was established to make a meaningful difference to the experiences and opportunities available to people in the 50 plus age range, as both job seekers and employees, and also in determining their choice of next steps following employment. The project has a threefold objective:

1. Helping older people who experience labour market disadvantage to increase their employability, engage in learning and development opportunities and develop their employment and volunteering opportunities.
2. Working with employers to improve how older people in the workplace are valued, how their career development needs and career progression opportunities are met and how change is managed.
3. Exploring how personal succession planning can support, encourage and enable older people who are considering retirement from paid employment to challenge their own perceptions on ageing and create opportunities for lifelong learning and improve health and wellbeing.

The *Kestrel* project is based on the premise that training programmes need to be tailored to age and circumstances. Older workers have been particularly affected by changes in the workplace such as the increased use of technology and they can face difficulties when trying to gain access to work or when in work by being overlooked for promotion and training or pressured into retiring. The project thus adopts a three pronged approach which includes:

1. Training, up-skilling and re-skilling of individuals for language, literacy and numeracy, ICT and specific training to suit employers' needs.
2. Self-esteem of individuals by mentoring to counter the negative effects of age stereotypes on older workers' self-confidence and motivation to gain employment.
3. Engaging with employers to improve working conditions, HR practices and to foster age friendly working environments.

The *Kestrel* model seeks to alter the perceptions and skills of older workers as well as the working conditions and HR practices of employers to create age friendly working environments and extend working lives. This type of innovation generates social and public value and will be increasingly important for the growth of EU Member States in the coming decades.

Stakeholder Participation

In developing the *Kestrel* Solution the organisers determined that they needed to have older people actively involved in all aspects of the project. Accordingly, they recruited *Kestrel* Age-Positive Champions to support the design, development and delivery of the *Kestrel* pilot project. This innovative approach was prompted by an acknowledgement that the project needed the input of older people with the skills, experience and knowledge that implementation of the *Kestrel* project required.

The Age Positive Champions are excellent role models for *Kestrel* clients. They were identified through GEMS NI's extensive network of contacts and were selected for their specific skills and experiences working within communities, in industry, education and training and themselves with a network of contacts that would benefit the achievement of *Kestrel*'s aims. Specific tasks included:

- Undertaking research into age positive practice
- Promotion of *Kestrel* at Job Fairs and through their network of contacts
- Facilitating Corporate engagement
- Promoting volunteering opportunities
- Producing the *Kestrel* newsletter
- Developing the *Kestrel* DVD and web site
- PR and media coverage for the *Kestrel* pilot.

They too have benefitted from their engagement with *Kestrel* in respect to the lifelong learning opportunities afforded them as they were introduced to new and varied experiences. As a result they have established KANS.

The projects holds regular staff meetings to allow the team to reflect on how well the programme is working and to give them an input into decisions that affect their work. These meetings give staff the opportunity to express their views freely and frequently. These meetings are good for the programme as well as invigorating for staff. In the early stages of the project the Age Positive Champions initiated

client/user focus groups to encourage participation of clients in the programme development. These regular engagement feedback sessions mean clients comprehend activities and actively help shape developments. User focus groups typically involve a small group of clients discussing the project in an informal way where they are free to give views on any aspect of the initiative.

Target Group

The initiative's main target group includes older people over 50 years who can be further viewed in subgroups of those:

- who are unemployed
- who are economically inactive through long-term ill health
- who are carers
- who are isolated and their health and wellbeing is suffering
- who require support to learn new skills for the workplace
- who are employed and considering retirement choices/options.

Furthermore, the initiatives target group includes employers with whom they can work to improve their HR Policy/Practice in relation to older workers/retirement and policy makers and who support the delivery of social change in relation to older people and society.

Impact

As impact on the target group the initiative generates:

- Improved pathways to sustainable employment for older people and increased opportunities for older people to engage in citizenship activities, volunteering and lifelong learning opportunities
- Improved health and wellbeing and prevention of age onset health and wellbeing conditions, better management of existing conditions, improvements in overall wellbeing and reduction in loneliness
- Employers supported to develop age-positive merit based workplaces
- Better communication, understanding and respect between older people and younger people through inter-generational collaboration.

Focus groups with the target group showed that older people often lack job search skills. Hence the mentoring aspects of the programme are helpful in exploring problems and barriers and how to address these. This in turn lifts self-esteem and confidence, enabling better choices. Moreover, the volunteering opportunities are rewarding for respondents and for some people this is the key, giving them the practical experience needed in a new field of work. A further impact on the target group, identified through focus groups, was identifying that the programme helped them appreciate their experiences and the importance of continuing to learn across their life.

As a wider impact on society the initiative wants:

- To ensure that older people have access to financial and economic resources to lift them out of exclusion and isolation
- To deliver integrated services that improve the health and quality of life of older people
- To promote equality of opportunity for older people and their full participation in civic life, and challenge ageism wherever it is found
- To ensure that Government works in a co-ordinated way inter-departmentally and with social partners to deliver effective services for older people.

Kestrel pilot project participants aged 50plus have already received one to one support to overcome the barriers they face. Many participants have secured employment, are now financially more secure and are contributing to the public purse through the generation of income and taxes. Furthermore, they have benefited from vocationally relevant training and personal development programmes and the wellbeing of the pilot participants has improved. *Kestrel* research with employers has introduced new thinking on choices for change at retirement.

Evaluation

The impact of the initiative is assessed internally through experience-based self-assessment, feedback-based self-assessment, self-evaluation and external evaluation has been conducted through both qualitative and quantitative methods. An independent evaluation showed the initiative compares well with mainstream government employment programmes, e.g. Steps to Work, with 38% employment outcomes, compared to 28% under Steps to Work. Over the three years in which the programme was piloted, the minimum cost saving to the public purse from people moving into employment and off benefits was estimated to be £223,402 per annum. A cost benefit analysis showed that on annual project costs of approximately £200,000, *Kestrel* achieved a net benefit of approximately £23,000 on the basis of welfare benefits savings alone.

Competition

The *Kestrel* project is unique in that it focuses on productive ageing and challenging perceptions of age and unemployment as well as beliefs about ageing in employment. There are currently no direct competing solutions to *Kestrel*. However, some organisations do offer similar elements to some specific areas within the *Kestrel* approach e.g. Business in the Community workplace campaigns include developing an older worker pre-retirement mentor programme. These elements are seen as complimentary to *Kestrel* but not in competition to this unique model.

Barriers, Challenges and Solutions

The project was initially funded for three years by the Atlantic Philanthropies Ageing Programme and this provided the flexibility and freedom to innovate and experiment away from the constraints of defined targets. The heavy reliance on philanthropic funding had drawbacks, however, with the 'crowding-out' of government funds when resources were directed elsewhere and the programme was vulnerable when project funding ended. The Committee for Employment and Learning has requested the Department for Employment and Learning to consider extending the programme across Northern Ireland. Under the government's People and Place strategy, 36 urban neighbourhoods across Northern Ireland are designated as Neighbourhood Renewal Areas (NRAs). These communities are experiencing the highest levels of deprivation and are the focus of urban regeneration programmes. The *Kestrel* project was delivered across the 4 NRAs in South and East Belfast and it performed better than Steps to Work, so if successful, the submission to the Department, could see the Kestrel programme rolled out across all NRAs in Northern Ireland.

The current economic climate and austerity measures have undoubtedly increased competition for reduced funds. Older people are not generally seen as a priority in the labour market with emphasis placed on tackling youth unemployment. Despite this, *Kestrel* offers a strong solution in terms of tackling unemployment, supporting productive ageing, improving health and wellbeing, reducing poverty and isolation in older people and supporting healthy ageing into later life. They have proposals with the relevant government departments to scale *Kestrel* up to provide its service across Northern Ireland and are exploring opportunities to share the model in Europe. *Kestrel* is an excellent example of providing preventive measures that will ultimately reduce older people's need for social care intervention as it promotes their health and wellbeing and facilitates their independence. For the initiative, healthy ageing is a priority and *Kestrel* contributes to ageing well.

Funding

The organisation has 6 employees on a regular basis, 12 volunteers, 5 external advisers and experts, and 4 Age Positive Champions. The initiative spends €295,000 on implementing the solution per year of which 90% comes from public funding, 5% from European Union public funding and 5% is sourced through economic return from own products/services.

Conclusion

Increasing the participation of older workers in the labour force is an important part of Europe's response to the challenge of population ageing and labour shortages. A report by the EU Commission draws attention to the shrinking labour force already evident in most member states and expected to continue in the future, with only six countries having a labour force that is currently growing and

expected to continue to do so. Consequently, the degree of urgency to address the barriers which many older workers face in and out of employment varies across member states. Where youth employment is high, priority is given to combating youth unemployment, often at the expense of measures to retain older workers or develop tailored supports to help unemployed older people access work. The *Kestrel* initiative offers an innovative and proven approach which can be replicated in supportive environments.

GRÜNDER 50PLUS (50-PLUS ENTREPRENEURS) (GERMANY) – EMPOWERING OLDER ENTREPRENEURS

Researcher: Victoria Holczmann, ZSI, Austria

Cluster	Employment
Name of implementer	Gründer 50plus gUG
Type of implementer	Social enterprise (partly economically self-sustained through market products and services, primary mission is to solve social problems)
Implementer in operation since	1 - 5 years
Implementer located in	Verden (Aller), Germany
Name of initiative	50-plus Entrepreneurs. Business Start-ups to Prevent Poverty in Old Age and for Older People to Contribute to Society
Initiative in operation since	5 years
Stage of initiative	Growth (your pilot is up and running, and starting to expand)
Cooperation partners, type and primary function	Kura M. Schöne, Gaby Barton, Frank Schach, Detlev Scharenberg, Heinr. Scheuerlein, Holger Kopietz u.a., A-K. Schmidt, ... (Network)
Staff	Regularly paid employees: 3 Volunteers: 20 Trainees: none External advisers and experts: 3
Funding sources	Foundations and philanthropy capital: 75% Economic return from own products/services: 20% European Union public funding: 5%
Webpage of initiative	http://www.gruender50plus.de

Organisational Background

Gründer 50plus (*50plus Entrepreneurs*) is all about professional support for business start-ups specifically tailored to elderly people, their interests and past experiences. The programme is organised into three workshop blocks of three days each. The participants take part on their own initiative and have a more or less developed business plan. *50plus Entrepreneurs* is a social enterprise, which is partly economically self-sustained through market products and services, but with the primary mission to solve a social problem. Hence, the non-profit initiative helps people aged over 50 to start their own business. The organisation provides expert advice through business start-up advisors, who initially work on a voluntary basis. *50plus Entrepreneurs* is expanding in Germany via a social franchise system. Currently there are 3 people working as regularly paid employees, another 20 as volunteers and 3 external advisors and experts.

The main implementer, Ralf Sange, has professional experience in outplacement support where he had a lot of older clients. He recognised the difficulties experienced by people over 50 in getting a job. Many of Sange's older clients opted to start their own business because they had available financial resources

due to dismissal pay, release from work, qualification budget, paid coaches etc. The question about what people can do who do not have such privileges was the reason for Sange to start the initiative. Ralf Sange brings practical experience in coaching and franchising gained through working as a business start-up consultant since 1989 and has been operating in this initiative for over 5 five years.

Problem being addressed

50-plus Entrepreneurs is a non-profit initiative with the aim of providing advice and assistance to people who are over 50 years of age, have professional experience and are willing to be self-employed. The organisation mainly focusses on older people who are keen to start their own business due to financial difficulties and/or because they have a long-standing business idea that they would like to bring to fruition in order to make a contribution to society. Demographic and social changes mean that ever-increasing numbers of older people are being supported by ever-shrinking numbers of working-age people. The risk of sinking into poverty with older age is growing. *50-plus Entrepreneurs* aims to avoid this and create opportunities for its target group to reach stability in their lives through setting up the right kind of business that will provide them with an income and at the same time allows them to pass on their valuable knowledge and problem-solving skills to the next generation.

Innovative solution

The consulting philosophy is based on *50-plus Entrepreneur's* humanistic approach. People are supported in developing their individual potential. The business concept is based on the research of Prof. Dr. Günter Faltin (University of Berlin) and Dr. Timothy Clark (Business Model You, Portland, Or, USA).

The business ideas of the participants are intrinsically motivated rather than "opportunity driven". They are seeking to be implemented in an environment with a range of external resistors, such as family, social environment, banks and institutions, employment agencies, etc. and often find little or no support. Consequently, a consulting methodology was developed with the main focus on the pre-seed phase:

- Through frequent re-thinking, question position and discussion an intensive processing of the business idea is pushed forward
- Emphasis is placed on nine key components: customer, customer relationship, distribution channels, customer benefits, own resources, their own performance, cooperation partners, expenditure and revenue
- The initiative provides advice and assistance on the topics "marketing and sales" or "finance", which is particularly important to enable a fast and sustainable market access
- Nothing is left to chance.

The main activity/solution is the joint development of a business idea and a concrete business plan. To do so the trainer assigns the participants some tasks, then the latter accomplishes this task autonomously or in teams. When everyone has completed their assigned tasks, the outcomes are discussed with the trainer and the initiator. For example, participants need to contemplate what their value proposition is for the product or service they want to offer. Moreover, the trainers directly support the users, mainly through explaining the tasks and giving useful inputs. Trainers provide individual support to the participants according to their needs. Observations identified that trainers are direct in their approach and offer constructive criticism about the business ideas, as necessary, thereby stimulating the participants to reconsider certain issues.

Core elements of this solution include: the workshop concept, the work progress in groups, the consistent alignment with the target group and incorporating the knowledge of cooperation partners. They are different from classical start-up consulting where the coach often dictates the business development process. By contrast, *50-plus Entrepreneurs* focus on the personal ideas and strengthen each participant in developing an authentic service that offers real opportunities. To date *50-plus Entrepreneurs* is the first and only initiative for start-ups over 50 in Germany that focusses on the pre-start-up phase of the participants.

Stakeholder Participation

Partners and stakeholders (employment agency, bank, social office etc.) are invited to engage through active participation in the discussion, proposals and pilot projects to further develop the concept with service users. Partners of *50-plus Entrepreneur* include Ashoka, Social Impact Lab, Chambers of Industry and Commerce, employment agencies, business promotion facilities and universities. These partners bring their competencies in scientific and social business sector knowledge to the initiative. Some of them have supported the project through from its initial development phase in 2011.

Target group

50-plus Entrepreneur has two target groups they aim to support. Firstly, men and women over 50 who are at risk in economically precarious situations or impoverishment of age. Secondly, people over 50 who want to turn a long-held social business idea into reality. The initiative currently reaches 10,000 users and clients directly with their solution across Germany in Berlin, Bremen, Hamburg, Cologne, Coburg, Hannover, Stuttgart and Munich.

Impact

50-plus Entrepreneurs provide support and encouragement to participants seeking to start a business. This support is provided at the early stages where participants are deciding whether or not to proceed

with the business idea. To date 500 participants have been supported in this decision process with an additional 20 benefitting from the encouragement by starting their business. Furthermore, the initiative raises awareness of the positive aspects of entrepreneurship in the population, through its public relations activities and support in the initial decision making, implementation and post-formation phases for participants with business ideas. A wider impact on society is also sought with the commitment to a culture of social entrepreneurship in the generation 50plus in Germany and an active rejection of the deficit-orientated view of the potential of older people.

Case Example:

Mrs C worked as a movement instructor and now wants to open her own shop for spiritual goods (herbal medicine, stones etc.). She learned about 50-plus Entrepreneur at a business fair. She decided to participate in the workshops because of: a) the modest price, b) the fact that the initiative is non-profit, and c) the initiator and trainer were sympathetic to her situation.

Now that her child is 20 years old and she has a more solid financial situation she decided to start her own business; to be precise she had two business ideas in the beginning of the workshop, but one plan developed better during the process. For Mrs C the main benefits of the initiative are that her idea has become more concrete and that she has received a lot of useful tips concerning the commercial part of starting the business. She praises the workshop and says that she has enjoyed working in groups. Furthermore, she notes that her personal network has expanded due to the workshop and that she feels supported by the other participants. She also says that she wouldn't have thought of some of the activities herself, such as interviewing some shop owners, from which she has learned about how to work effectively with customers and the public.

Solution Evaluation

The impact of the initiative has been assessed through experience-based self-assessment (assessed impacts based on personal experiences with the target group), feedback-based self-assessment (assessed impacts based on feedback from the target group without using specific methods), and self-evaluation (impacts assessed through using qualitative and/or quantitative methods).

Competition

So far there are no organisations that deal specifically with the pre-seed phase offering advice and support about start-up businesses for people over 50 years in Germany. Other vendors focus on the implementation phase of the start-up.

Barriers, Challenges and Solutions

The main barrier for the initiative is lack of money. Currently the initiative is partly funded personally by the implementer, Ralf Sange. Donations account for a small portion of the funding. It is hoped that the initiative could be run on a full-time basis therefore the acquisition of financial donors and investors

would carry great weight. The implementer retains a small office but no secretary or administrative staff which presents some access challenges when he is travelling to implement the initiative. Workshops take place in rented facilities, although locating appropriate facilities has not proven to be a significant challenge to date. The current financial framework hinders the expansion and leads to paucity of manpower. Furthermore, at present the initiative depends very much on the implementer, Mr. Sange. Additional support for the initiative is required to provide a sustainable and broader basis for the project.

The biggest obstacle to growth for *50-plus Entrepreneurs* lies in the inability of the implementer to dedicate his time on a full-time basis to the initiative as he needs pursue his career to finance himself, his family and the initiative. As a sustainability strategy Mr. Sange seeks to secure a financial basis, to spread the project onto various shoulders through franchise, to offer trainings and to have quality controls.

There have been four milestones indicated which the initiative aims to achieve in the short to medium term:

1. Attending fairs and conferences on an ongoing basis
2. Acquisition of sponsors and utilising resources available as an Ashoka Fellow
3. Set up more locations: theoretically it would be possible to set up ten more locations, however, the integration of these new locations would exceed the capacity of the staff and would not be sustainable
4. Implement an entrepreneurship-summit, giving lectures and leading workshops on an ongoing basis.

To successfully implement its strategy *50-plus Entrepreneur* initiative would currently need different types of support:

- Exchange with other practitioners on innovative working methods and approaches
- Networking services
- Public relation services
- Evaluation services
- Support in mobilising users
- Backing from and access to public institutions such as universities, schools, hospitals, etc.
- Access to private organisations such as companies
- Mass media promotion.

Funding

The team of *50-plus Entrepreneurs* brings a lot experience to the initiative. Some have 25 years work experience in management, or 25 years of experience in office organisation. Others bring experience in marketing, advertising and PR, sales or seminar planning. However, most of the staff are volunteers. The initiative has three regularly paid employees, 20 volunteers and 3 external advisers and experts.

The total yearly budget spent on implementation of the solution is currently €80,000, of which 5% comes from European Union public funding, another 20% from economic return from own products/ services and 75% sourced from foundations and philanthropic capital.

50-plus Entrepreneur relies heavily on Ralf Sange and partner, Jörg Fot for its progress and success and their withdrawal would be a huge risk to the initiative. To secure a sustainable future, effort is directed to securing a solid financial basis and to spread the project onto various shoulders through franchise to continue to offer trainings and provide quality assurance controls.

Conclusion

Gründer 50plus/50-plus Entrepreneurs focusses on providing professional support for business start-ups specifically tailored to older people and based on their interests and past experiences. The participants self-initiate involvement in the initiative bringing a formulated business idea and typically completing the project with a more or less developed business plan. The main activity of the initiative is the joint development of the business idea and production of a concrete business plan. The participants are directly supported by trainers who explain the business development stages and tasks providing constructive criticism to them and providing useful guidance to ensure that nothing is left to chance.

The strengths highlighted for this initiative are the availability of suitable rental facilities, the sympathetic and responsive trainers, the franchise model, the focus on pre-start-up phase, a cheerful and supportive atmosphere and the constant target group orientation and the individual approach.

HABITATION AND HEALTH


P3 (PROTOCOL 3) (BELGIUM) – COMPLEX CARE AT HOME

Researcher: Suzanne Smith, Netwell Centre, Ireland

Care coach
24/7
Coordinated care
'tailormade' at home

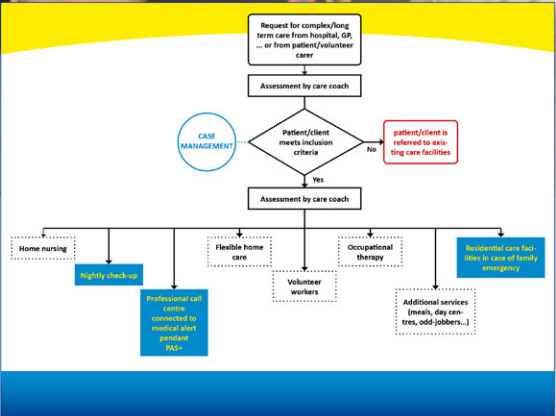
P3 CARE INNOVATION

a coordinated and comprehensive care package



KEY FEATURES

- 110 elderly per year, 65 clients at any time
- Pilot in Ghent since 2010 until end of 2014
- Admission in residential setting postponed with 240 days
- 24/7 support at home
- Living longer at home in good and safe conditions



Supported by:



Multiple providers and services:



Cluster	Habitation & Health
Name of implementer	Solidariteit voor het Gezin
Type of implementer	Social enterprise (partly economically self-sustained through marked products and services, primary mission is to solve a social problem)
Implementer in operation since	More than 5 years
Implementer located in	Ghent, Belgium
Name of initiative	P3 – Care Innovation: a coordinated and comprehensive care package
Initiative in operation since	More than 5 years
Stage of initiative	Established (past the previous stages and has demonstrated success)
Cooperation partners, type and primary function	Huisartsenvereniging Gent (Ghent General Practitioners' Association) (Network): makes the project known to general practitioners in Ghent. UZ Gent (Ghent University Hospital) (Public body): delivers expertise in care for older people and hospital release management support. OCMW Destelbergen & Gent (Ghent & Destelbergen Social Service Centres) (Public body): employ occupational therapists who screen patients' homes and make adaptations for fall prevention. Liever Thuis LM (mantelzorg) (Network): a volunteer care association that organizes about 5 information sessions every year on relevant topics for carers and individuals in need of care.
Staff	Regularly paid employees: 36 Volunteers: 16 Trainees: none External advisers and experts: 5
Funding sources	National public funding: 97% Economic return from own products/services: 1,5% Other (overhead costs of the organisation that are not subsidized through public funding): 1,5%
Webpage of initiative	http://www.svhg.be/Gezondheidszorg.aspx

Organisational Background

'Solidariteit voor het Gezin', is an independent (non-profit) service offering a wide and versatile range of health and welfare services, with a humanist vision and dynamic client-centred approach that is both responsive to the needs of clients and capable of developing innovative solutions where necessary. Established in Ghent in 1976, to provide training courses for professional care givers for older people, it added home nursing and cleaning services for seniors in 1979 which expanded across Flanders. In 1994 a block of 90 apartments for seniors was opened next to the administrative offices in Ghent and in 2006 a three-floor, 65 bed nursing home, referred to as a Care Hotel, was added. The addition of a local community centre for older people in the centre of the facilities (serving residents of the apartments, care hotel and local residents) make for a service offering which is unique in Belgium. With 5,600 employees, the services for older people offered by 'Solidariteit voor het Gezin' include 2,500 professional carers, 2,200 cleaning staff, 540 home nurses and a team offering an odd-jobs service to seniors in their homes. A volunteer arm of the organisation coordinates and additional 1,200 volunteers who offer a range of supportive services.

Protocol 3 (P3) is a pilot project developed in response to the first of a two phase call for projects by the National Health Insurance Institute (INAMI/RIZIV). The mandate was to develop and pilot an innovative solution to delay nursing home admission for at-risk older patients (over 60 years) with chronic conditions including early stage dementia, who require multi-dimensional and integrated care.

Problem Being Addressed

Delaying or avoiding admission to nursing homes is the primary objective of this initiative. The specific target group for *P3* is the most vulnerable group at-risk for nursing home admission. These clients are at high risk due to the complexity of their health and social care needs but not necessarily due to the clinical severity of their condition. The introduction of an innovative range of care services aims to enable older people (aged 60 or older) to benefit from care while remaining in their own home for longer. Services available include night rounds by nursing assistants, professional alert responses, emergency relief, individually scheduled day care, occupational therapist advice, cleaning services and volunteer befriending. Effective harmonization of care services ensures essential continuity of care for individuals in need of complex and/or long-term care.

Innovative Solution

In *P3*, each client is assigned a Care Coach who acts as a single point of contact to assist them and their carers from their first request for care to the final stage (admission to a nursing home or death). The care coach coordinates all aspects of care for the client, consequently carers or individuals in need of care only have to contact the care coach to start, adapt or add care services. *P3* is innovative in a number of ways;

- In addition to in-house services offered by 'Solidariteit voor het Gezin', the care coach can include services offered by other providers, including competitors, where they meet the need or are requested by the client. The coordination of cross-provider care provision, and particularly cross-silo cooperation, is innovative in the Belgian context.
- The care provided in this project is not limited to office hours (8AM-5PM). *P3* also provides evening rounds by nursing assistants between 5PM and 10PM, weekend assistance and night rounds by nursing assistants between 10PM and 6AM. While the private market offers limited options for overnight, sleepover care, there is no rounds-based service currently available in the region after office hours. The provision of a nursing assistant to drop by once or more times during the night to change incontinence pads or turn a bed-bound client to avoid pressure sores, means clients get the service they need when they need it as part of a standard care plan rather than in an emergency or crises only.
- Within the existing service provision system for carers, service is generally offered in four hour blocks. The *P3* project offers service in 30 minute blocks. This means that services can be provided

when they are needed by the client and can be managed more efficiently. An example may be where a client needs to be turned in bed four times during 24 hours to prevent or ease pressure sores. The *P3* nursing assistant can visit four times over 24 hours, for 30 minutes each time, rather than being in the client's home for a single four hour block during which they may only turn the client twice. This Flexible Family Care approach offers an innovative solution for clients around pressure sore prevention, mealtimes, medication, physical therapy exercises/movement, intimate care, toileting and a variety of other personal and clinical care challenges any of which can result in admission to a nursing home where they cannot be managed effectively at home.

- Health and social care provision in Belgium is provided within philosophical silos such as the Catholic, Socialist, Liberal etc. Though the public demarcation of these silos are less apparent than in the past, providers and service users rarely access or provide services across these boundaries. *P3* does not operate within established silos and draws necessary external services from sources most appropriate to meeting the needs of the client, regardless of silos and as such is taking a new approach to service provision and management.

Stakeholder Participation

The various partners involved with the initiative have been active in first-line care for many years. Based on their experience they have a clear view of the problems experienced by older people in need of care and of the gaps in service offering leading to early nursing home admissions. All partners have been involved in the preparation of the project at different levels from identifying the target group to defining and developing care services. The essential perspective of carers was facilitated through a partnership with a carers association, Liever Thuis LM, who remain represented on the steering committee.

Target Group

As a pilot project there are specific participant criteria including people aged 60 or older who need complex or long-term care after hospitalization or who suffer from serious health complaints, with an inevitable admission to a nursing home in the short term. The patient must achieve relevant scores on the Katz and Edmonton scale measures, and/or suffer from early stage dementia. Family carers are also targeted, where there is a need for professional support to continue to avoid admission to a residential setting for the person for whom they provide care. The project currently reaches approximately 110 people per year in Ghent, within a 12-15km distance of the organisation's service centre, an urban region with a general area population of 280,000.

Impact

Case Study: Robert

Robert used to run a successful flower export business for which he travelled extensively. He never married and has no children or immediate family. With terminal cancer, resulting in permanent back pain, he is paralyzed from the waist down and is now confined to bed. He was referred to P3 upon discharge from hospital approximately 3 years ago. The team supporting Robert include nurses, a cleaner and professional carers who visit every 4 hours day and night to change Robert's position, due to severe non-healing pressure sores. A neighbour provides additional care support in the form of shopping, meals and company. Robert has learned to use the internet which he does regularly. He also enjoys company and lively conversation. He never leaves his home now but as a result of the flexible support of the P3 team he can now leave his bed for two hours per day, when he is transferred to a wheelchair.

Robert spoke enthusiastically about the 'Solidariteit voor het Gezin' and the P3 initiative. 'I depend on them 100%,' he says, 'I am paralyzed but I am taken care of. They are wonderful!' Robert selected the 'Solidariteit voor het Gezin' initiative because of the night rounds service. When asked what could be improved about the P3 offering he responds, 'This can't be improved,' he says 'you have to be reasonable!' Without the intervention of P3 Robert would be in a nursing home.

Society faces an enormous challenge. Health care costs are already a considerable part of health and social care budgets and to keep health care and the impact of an ageing population affordable for society, new forms of care are required. Many older people (in need of care) are keen to stay at home, in a familiar environment, for as long as possible. In practice, however, a lot of older people live in their homes in awkward and unsafe circumstances because care services are not adapted to the concrete needs of this target group. Innovations are needed to care for older people at home longer and to provide residential care to those most in need of it. Since there already is a shortage of residential settings, the introduction of 24/7 support at home has obvious impact potential. Since the start of the project, older people in need of care have been able to postpone admission to a residential setting by an average of 240 days. Support by carers and close monitoring by care coaches supports older people at home by meeting their specific care needs. For example, sleep-over volunteer services may provide security and comfort for an older person at night but this service is not intended to provide physical care. The night rounds service offered by P3 provides timely and needs-based physical care to clients thereby adding value to the night care service provision.

Solution Evaluation

Results to date show the P3 project delays nursing home admission by eight months, exceeding the original P3 objective of six months. Other benefits identified, but for which measurement and reporting is not required by INAMI/RIZIV, include improved social and wellbeing benefits for clients and carers and improvement in Katz scores for clients. Monitoring and evaluation of the project is conducted by a scientific consortium from a number of universities using pre-defined measures of assessment.

The second project call defined by INAMI/RIZIV has included more specific objectives which mirror those from the original 'Solidariteit voor het Gezin,' application and include the care coach concept as a project inclusion criteria. This suggests that a number of the elements of the *P3* project have been identified as successful to have been included in the criteria for the second project call. Application has been made to expand the *P3* pilot until 2018 with learning-based adjustments, a larger number of participants, and a cross-silo and cross-competitor collaborative component. These elements are aimed at showing the concept and project is sufficiently robust to accommodate 'up-scaling complexity' such as including competitors' services in care plans, offering the project to clients of competitors and cooperatively engaging across service provision silos and within service teams. Successful solutions identified from the first and second call for projects are expected to be implemented as a standard practice nationally across Belgium and supported by the national health insurance system.

Competition

Other organisations focus on only 1 or 2 services exclusively, for example only evening care services (5pm – 10pm) or only care coordination but do not offer a full range of flexible, 24/7 care services combined with a care coach for coordination. In Ghent there are a few other projects focusing on partial or single service care provision, but not on 24/7 support with an extensive range of care services. Taking into account the needs of the client and the carer, the care coach develops an individual, tailor-made care package. Services included in the care package are not restricted to 'Solidariteit voor het Gezin,' or *P3* services but involve collaboration with other providers both private and public, as appropriate. Despite some early resistance from competitor providers the role of the care coach has now become accepted as one with an advocacy and coordination mandate on behalf of the client. Recognition that the care coach is seeking genuine and equal collaboration has facilitated this cooperation with competitors engaged to date. Competition to 'Solidariteit voor het Gezin,' or *P3* presents itself in two forms. Firstly, in relation to organisational size and therefore promotional capacity or market presence. For example, one main competitor is ten times larger than 'Solidariteit voor het Gezin' but it provides only nursing care and no night coverage. Secondly, in relation to the current Belgian siloed service organisational system, with Catholic silo services representing more than 60% of the market, socialist services approximately 20%, Liberal 10% and others, including the 'Solidariteit voor het Gezin,' *P3* project, sharing the remaining 10% of the market.

In 2018, when both pilot project phases have been completed, should the care coach concept become official standard practice, all providers will be in a position to develop this role but 'Solidariteit voor het Gezin,' will have a market advantage in Flanders as the initiator and developer of the concept, and the only organisation to have trialled and evaluated its effectiveness. A second advantage will remain the in-house service range already offered by 'Solidariteit voor het Gezin,' to support the role of the care coach. Single service providers, regardless of size, will not have these capabilities and will have to develop them in some manner to support the care coach role.

Barriers, Challenges and Solutions

Flemish (community government) and federal rules and regulations are not entirely harmonised and make it difficult to optimise care services. The various types of care providers and their professional status are often defined by different regulations, which sometimes prevents flexible employment of these professionals. For example, professional carers subject to Flemish (Community) regulations who provide assistance at the weekend cannot be replaced by a substitute should they become ill. As a result, family or volunteer carers have to be sought to fill the gap. However, some individuals in need of care do not have family carers or they are unavailable, which compromises the continuity of care provision and in the case of the *P3* population might require a client to be admitted to a nursing home, since many participants are immobile or unable to feed or care for themselves for an entire day without care.

The *P3* approach offers a number of solutions in such cases:

- Access to the care coach to facilitate alternate arrangements.
- Direct communication with family and members of the multi-disciplinary team if needed to make alternate arrangements.
- Assignment of a team of professional carers to a client rather than one dedicated carer. This way any member of the team can be called upon to provide replacement coverage at short notice.
- A pendant alarm button is available to clients. In Belgium this alarm system requires 4 contact numbers. Where 'Solidariteit voor het Gezin' clients do not have 4 contact numbers (some may not even have one) 'Solidariteit voor het Gezin' can replace some or all contacts because there is 24 hour coverage through the 'Solidariteit voor het Gezin' on-site staff to respond to such calls. This service is also available to *P3* clients as appropriate and night rounds staff are available to follow-up immediately if necessary.
- Access to volunteers willing to assist with some minor care support as needed.
- Two beds are also available in the care hotel/nursing home for night-time only coverage in these cases. Where a client needs 24 hour care during a weekend (or at any time) they can be admitted on a crisis stay basis with access to all the services and facilities offered by the facility.

Financial considerations are a second potential barrier as public debt has increased in recent years and funding cuts are expected to be a significant feature of the new political and economic landscape following the federal, regional and community elections in 2014. If the care coach and flexible 24/7 integrated care concept is not accepted and translated into standard practice it will not become a subsidized or funded service and will require an alternate business model in order to be sustainable. In preparation for this possibility, the care coach concept and a matrix service structure are currently being developed and integrated within the larger organisation of 'Solidariteit voor het Gezin' following learning from the *P3* project to date.

The manner in which health and social care is funded presents barriers to flexible family care service provision. For example, funding for professional care is provided in four hour blocks where carers are expected to remain at the client's location for the four hours. Travel time is not reimbursed. This

impacts *P3* in that instead of attending to one client in four hours they may attend up to four different clients, the travel time for which 'Solidariteit voor het Gezin' must absorb. All providers have access to 3% of funding received for use to offset 'flexible care costs'. This can be used to cover this travel element. Doing so for the limited number of clients in the *P3* pilot may be feasible but post-piloting this will be less so on a large scale, therefore requiring a modification of funding structures to fit the needs of the service user.

Promotion of the concept of flexible family care to decision makers such as politicians also offers potential to address this challenge, especially in a socio-cultural climate where community care services are well established and citizens expect to remain at home into old age. Whether people may be willing to make a greater financial contribution towards doing so has yet to be assessed.

Funding

The *P3* project is a four year funded pilot project with an annual budget of €455,000. The pilot funding applies to specific elements of the *P3* client service experience such as the care coach and night rounds staffing. General overhead costs of the organisation are not subsidised through public funding. Where clients access services already subsidised or funded through other public funding sources, these costs are not included in the budget amount above. In some cases clients will pay a partial subsidy for a government subsidised service and in other cases the service may be funded 100%. An example is the cleaning service offered to clients which is a state subsidised service available to all citizens who pay a portion of the costs.

The project evaluation focus has been on specific health criteria such as Katz, Edmonton and Belrai scores, all which show improvement on the health status of *P3* participants. Significant social and personal improvements have also been noted by staff but as a federally funded project with a health related mandate these social changes have not been measured (funding for such social aspects of service impact come under community not federal remit). The possibility of sourcing resources to evaluate the social and financial impact of the initiative is currently under consideration.

Conclusion

The *Protocol 3* initiative offers a contextually innovative solution to the significant challenges facing older adults with complex health needs wishing to age-in-place in their own home environment. Through their Flexible Family Care and Care Coach initiatives, 'Solidariteit voor het Gezin' are impacting individuals, families and communities in creative and flexible ways. The positive health impact of *P3* has been measured and verified and while their social and wellbeing impact remains widely reported, these outcomes require resource support to facilitate specific evaluation. The wider potential social impact of the initiative includes: influencing national dialogue around home and community supported care for older adults to age-in-place; contributing to a national political and

cultural shift in how services are provided across existing ideological boundaries; and highlighting the value of integrated service provision over more accepted fragmented or account-management approaches. 'Solidariteit voor het Gezin's' solutions have real potential for adaptation in additional contexts and will be worth further examination.

Note: Since receiving 3rd place in the Social Innovation in Ageing European Award the renewal of the *P3* project in Ghent has been ranked 1st in the second project call by the INAMI/RIZIV. The new *P3* project in Tienen (together with the Broeders Alexianen) has been ranked 2nd, and the new project in Ostend (together with Bond Moyson) has been ranked 4th. The first 11 projects will receive full funding until 2018. Furthermore, the new reporting by *P3* to the INAMI/RIZIV will include a component on the evolution of the 'well-being' of the patients, an unreported benefit of *P3* highlighted during this case study. This will be conducted in partnership with Broeders Alexianen, and a professor in psychology who specialises in this kind of scientific research.

HABITATION & INTERGENERATIONAL

ABITARE SOLIDALE (ITALY) – A CO-HABITATION SOLUTION

Researcher: Georgia Casanova, INRCA, Italy



Abitare Solidale

*Pensare alla casa,
per una comunità più solidale*



The project addresses social relations and their recreation as a possible answer to the general economic crisis through **cohabitation**. Cohabitation resolves a multitude of old and new needs such as:

- Decreases social expense;
- **Supports self-sufficiency in aged people** and favors the maintaining of their residences and homes
- Offers an individual and **person-centered environment** as well as offers new resources for their upkeep;
- Lowers household accidents and risks;
- Innovates and potentiates the approaches of public assistance;
- encourages a **sense of community and its welfare**.

- Offers **integration and optimization** between financial and personnel resources between private and public associations;

- Develops new professional and transversal figures thanks to the constant interfacing between diverse skill sets;
- promotes **new social and community oriented actions** thanks to the integration in a single project of different fields (housing, assistance, equality and minorities integration);
- the project is entirely developed through **volunteer workers**;
- Potentiates loan systems that **encourage good active citizenship practices from subjects traditionally considered as outcasts**
- No other or alternate assistance necessary
- The project is transferrable to other fields













Cluster	Habitation & Intergenerational
Name of implementer	Abitare solidale onlus and Auser
Type of implementer	Non-profit/NGO/citizen sector organisation
Implementer in operation since	1-5 years
Implementer located in	Italy
Name of initiative	Abitare Solidale
Initiative in operation since	n/a
Stage of initiative	Scaling (the next step will be growing impact on a national scale)
Cooperation partners, type and primary function	Artemisia (Non-profit/NGO/citizen sector organisation): Artemisia cooperates to the project by deploying and carrying on the following activities: communications, selection of candidates to house-sharing (including women who have been victims of violence), as well as support during the phases of new projects of co-habitation. Social departments (Municipality of Florence, and others municipality in Tuscany Region): municipalities cooperate to selection of candidates to house-sharing.
Staff	Regularly paid employees: 2 Volunteers: 4 Trainees: 3 External advisers and experts: 8
Funding sources	National public funding: 60% Donations from private companies: 30% Participation fees: 10%
Webpage of initiative	http://www1.auser.it/ http://www1.auser.it/IT/Page/t01/view_html?idp=288

Organisational background

Abitare Solidale aims to facilitate cohabitation arrangements based on solidarity and mutual aid between elders and people at high risk of social exclusion or poverty. The project is run in the province of Florence, Italy by AUSER, a voluntary association working with older people, in partnership with ARTAMISIA, a voluntary association working to protect women who are victims of violence. The initiative works in cooperation with the social welfare system and several regional municipalities. The team consists of psychologists, legal advisors, communication specialists, counselors and social workers. By using an integrated network approach for dissemination and external communication a range of media are engaged, including videos and Youtube, for a wide spectrum of communication. Conference meetings facilitate engagement with public administrators and practitioners in the field and a broad network of formal and informal stakeholders enable the initiative to reach service users from the two primary target groups.

The mission of the initiative is to combat social exclusion of older people and to help and promote the social inclusion of adult individuals with temporary socio-economic difficulties. The initiative proposes a solution of cohabitation between an older person and an individual with socio-economic difficulties, where the older person provides the house for cohabitation in exchange for companionship and shared everyday life.

Volunteers are trained to ensure ongoing relevance of interventions with respect to social issues. The association also carries out experimental projects in the field of horizontal subsidiarity and social cohesion/integration. There are two sections of coordination and management: 1) the technical team, which has the task to manage the strategies and improve the project and 2) the executive team, that carries out all operational activities scheduled on a weekly basis.

Problem and solution

In recent years the welfare and social protection systems have been challenged by an increase and diversification of demand and a simultaneous decrease of available resources. The combination of these elements makes traditional policy approaches inadequate. Sectorial and inflexible responses have included: ineffective housing policies and unresponsive social policies to protect unemployed and vulnerable people. *Abitare Solidale* represents a solution to cope with the problem of isolation and social exclusion of older people and adult individuals with temporary socio-economic difficulties. It allows older people to stay longer in their homes improving their active participation in society.

The project improves older people's independent living and self-determination. It represents a solution to loneliness. The project helps people in need to find affordable and decent accommodation allowing them to actively participate in society. It offers an innovative solution to new causes of poverty and social exclusion such as precarious jobs, migration, and lack of entitlement to public protection schemes and/or to public care services. Through the idea of mutual aid, the project represents an alternative to the isolation and stigmatisation of people facing economic or personal difficulties.

Abitare Solidale offers an innovative and sustainable solution to self-sufficient older people in need of companionship. It also reaches out to those experiencing economic difficulties who are in need of affordable and decent accommodation as well as to women who are victims of domestic violence and in need of temporary shelter. The project promotes the idea of cohabitation as a new form of service, providing an integrated response to different kinds of problems and needs and overcoming classical sectoral boundaries in social services. The project is based on the idea of mutual aid and provides:

- An alternative solution to loneliness for older people
- An affordable and decent housing solution for people at risk of poverty and exclusion or experiencing economic difficulties (families of migrants, students, unemployed persons)
- Shelter for women who are victims of domestic violence
- Solutions for various target groups and stakeholders
- Access to legal tools created to formalise cohabitation arrangements (the Housing Covenant, and the Free Use of Property).

Participation of stakeholders

The following stakeholders are involved in the project:

- AUSER: a voluntary association working with older people
- ARTEMISIA: a voluntary association working to protect women and children who are victims of violence
- Municipalities of Florence, Bagno a Ripoli, Scandicci, Sesto Fiorentino, Cascina
- Housing Agency of the Municipality of Florence (public authority)
- Private architecture offices providing retrofitting services at favorable prices (because of certain agreements with the public authorities) (private actors).

The ARTEMISIA Association collaborates to produce effective procedures for the provision of shelter and safety to women experiencing domestic violence. ARTEMISIA also supplies psychological support at all stages of the habitation plan. ARTEMISIA social volunteers collaborate with social welfare operators to coordinate the profiles and the planning for possible beneficiaries.

Target Group

The initiative currently reaches about 250 people including:

- Older people living in homes, which are too big or not adapted to their needs, who are at risk of losing their self-sufficiency and becoming isolated from society.
- Disadvantaged people at risk of poverty and in need of decent and affordable housing. These are mostly represented by families of migrants, unemployed people and students.
- Women who are victims of domestic violence in need of a temporary shelter to start a new life.

Impact

The main outcome is the social inclusion of older people who are enabled to build a new support network of relationships, similar to a “family situation”. These often frail individuals have the time and the opportunity to rediscover their personal potential and regain economic and social independence in a family atmosphere. Through the *Abitare Solidale* initiative older people effectively reduce their level of personal loneliness and social exclusion by expanding their network of social relationships in the long term. The emotional relationship that develops between the older host and the hosted adult usually continues, even when cohabitation ends. In practice, it defines a network of extended family relationships to which they belong: the older person, the subject hosted, the mutual families (if any), and the network operators of *Abitare Solidale*. The same effect is present for the disadvantaged adult. The hosted person reconstructs his/her social identity through the relationship with the older person (and his/her family), thus expanding their network of personal relationships. The positive social impact of the initiative is confirmed by the diffusion of the intervention. In three years, in the Tuscany Region, more than 300 users have joined *Abitare Solidale*.

Evaluation

The project was tested for a year, to define and control the processes and identify possible difficulties. During this period, 50 applications were considered and from these 10 cohabitations were activated. The result showed the validity of the methods of candidate selection as well as the effectiveness of the cohabitation as reported by both “guests” and “hosts”. At the end of the trial period results were shared with all the stakeholders and partners as part of a transparent promotion of the initiative. Experimentation and development is part of the overall approach of the project during which the instruments used are tested and if necessary modified. This approach ensures the effectiveness of the service in addressing identified needs expressed by participants. Project evaluation methods include experience-based self-assessment, feedback-based self-assessment and external evaluation of impacts based on qualitative methods.

Competition

In the region of operation there is no project like *Abitare Solidale*. There are a few similar initiatives tackling the housing problem, yet the traditional policy approaches are inadequate, as they are too “sectorial” and inflexible. From the Poverty Hostels or religious relief centres to mini-apartments, the elderly are not considered as a social resource and are not facilitated to stay longer in their homes, with a huge waste of public resources. The University of Florence attempted cohabitation projects between students and older persons but these were unsuccessful largely due to different or poorly matched needs and a lack of supervision and tutoring.

Barriers and solutions

The main potential challenge identified involves a sudden or unexpected interruption of a cohabitation arrangement for any number of reasons. It can become difficult to find an alternative solution in such cases but *Abitare Solidale* is responsive to relational or other problems which can arise over time. They work closely with stakeholders to identify swift and practical resolutions. As the number of its franchisees and partners continues to grow, and spread the idea of house-sharing, greater numbers of municipalities and individuals subscribing to and supporting *Abitare Solidale* represent a wider network from which to draw solutions to interrupted cohabitations.

Funding

Abitare Solidale was initially funded by a grant of €25,000 from the Voluntary Service Centre for Tuscany. After one successful year of operation the initiative won the support from the municipality of Florence and was again funded with €25,000. The initiative has a total yearly budget of €25,000, of this 60% is generated from national public funding, 30% from donations from private companies and 10% from participation fees.

Conclusion

Abitare Solidale offers a solution to two social needs: to combat social exclusion of older people and to help and promote the social inclusion of adult individuals with temporary socio-economic difficulties. This is accomplished by facilitating cohabitation arrangements between an older person and an individual with socio-economic difficulties, where the older person provides the house for cohabitation in exchange for companionship and shared everyday life. The solution builds on the value of community as a resource, both in terms of individuals and society, and stimulates the diffusion of a new idea of social and intergenerational solidarity. It is an idea of community solidarity in which the role of the elderly is not only that of “bearers” of needs, but where the older person is valued as a resource that can offer both personal and social support.

The valorization of community resources (economic, social and personal) ensures the initiative maintains efficiency without loss in effectiveness. The *Abitare Solidale* solution has significant potential for replication because it primarily uses resources already existing in the community. The flexible structure of the initiative also makes it easily adaptable to the circumstances present in other cities. The ease of reproducibility is confirmed by requests already received for an extension of the initiative in other places. The initiative originating in Florence, has already spread to other towns in Tuscany. Furthermore, *Abitare Solidale* continues to receive requests for activation of the project in other Italian regions including Sardinia, Veneto and Piedmont among others.

PARI SOLIDAIRE (FRANCE) – INTERGENERATIONAL LIVING

Researcher: Georgia Casanova, INRCA, Italy

Cluster	Intergenerational & Habitation
Name of implementer	Groupe SOS
Type of implementer	Social enterprise (party economically self-sustained through market products and services, primary mission is to solve social problems)
Implementer in operation since	More than 5 years
Implementer located in	Paris, France
Name of initiative	Pari Solidaire
Initiative in operation since	More than 5 years
Stage of initiative	Scaling (the next step will be growing impact on a regional or even global scale)
Cooperation partners, type and primary function	Member of Groupe SOS / partnership with real estate company (specialized in social housing) / partnership with retirement homes
Staff	Regularly paid employees: 4 Volunteers: 3 Trainees: none at the moment (1 last year) External advisers and experts: none
Funding sources	Economic return from own products/services: 60% Donations from private companies: 23% National public funding: 14% Other: 3%
Webpage of initiative	http://www.leparisolidaire.fr

Organisational Background

With more than 11,000 employees and 330 facilities, Groupe SOS is one of Europe's foremost social and societal undertakings. For over 30 years, Groupe SOS has been putting economic value creation at the service of public interest. It provides responses to the issues of today's society by developing innovative solutions in its five main fields of activity (employment, health, solidarity, elderly, and education). The actions undertaken by Groupe SOS influence the lives of more than one million people every year.

Pari Solidaire has been part of Groupe SOS since 2012. The team is composed of 4 people working on a full-time basis. The director of *Pari Solidaire*, Aude MESSEAN, is a successful leader with strong interpersonal and negotiation skills which are valuable assets in her position. The other members of the team have considerable knowledge of social economy and French housing policies which provide them with an extensive understanding of the context in which the initiative is implemented.

Problem Being Addressed

According to the French National Office of Statistics, 20% of the Parisian population is currently over 60 years of age and more than 40% of those live alone. Loneliness is recognised as an issue faced by an increasing number of people of advanced age as family members increasingly tend to live further away and have less time to visit. This leads to the progressive disappearance of the intergenerational link and the deepening of a feeling of loneliness by the elderly. Additionally older people increasingly face financial difficulties once they reach the age of 85, since the level of income can dramatically decrease at this age.

Implementer Aude Messean's motivation to act was prompted during the heat wave in Europe in 2003, when around 19,500 older people died in France. Most of them died with a cruel anonymity. Based on similar activities in Spain, *Pari Solidaire* addresses the new social issues faced by older people in Paris and its suburbs. The initiative offers older people the possibility to host or sub-let a room to a young adult, usually a student, seeking a housing solution in exchange for some company and a reassuring presence at night. Thus, *Pari Solidaire* was born from the idea that the issues faced by young adults and older people are complementary and can be solved together.

Innovative Solution

Pari Solidaire addresses the issue of older people's loneliness and income insecurity by offering them the possibility to share their house with a young adult seeking a housing solution. Through its pragmatic approach *Pari Solidaire* offers a wide range of solution options that can be adapted to meet a wide range of specific needs. Older people have a choice between two options depending on their emotional and financial needs:

- The "formule convivale" offers the older person the option to sublet a furnished room to a young adult.
- The "formule solidaire" gives older people the option to host a young adult in exchange for a mandatory presence five nights a week and one week-end out of two.

The commitment becomes official when the "living charter" is signed between the senior and the young adult at the beginning of the agreement. The living charter states the rules of the cohabitation and the duties of each of the signatories towards the other.

To guarantee the success of the cohabitation, *Pari Solidaire* uses a professional approach to matching participants. When a room is offered it is visited by a team member to ensure it is appropriate and that it will provide the young adult with a reasonable level of comfort. Young adults are interviewed with the goal to only introduce those who match the specific requirements and the needs of a particular senior. Moreover, the team maintains contact with the senior host and the young adult during the entire duration of the stay to make sure that everything goes well.

The solution is influenced by different contextual conditions. The initiative aims to solve the economic

obstacles of young and older people, since there are very few possibilities of finding an affordable place to live, especially if people are going to stay for a relatively short period of time.

Many seniors prefer to stay in their homes as they age, since they do not want to or cannot go into a nursing home. Hence, many seniors are still living in family sized apartments. The initiative optimises the opportunities for young adults to live in decent conditions, while allowing seniors to remain at home. The initiative's core focus remains addressing the living situation of older people. Many are retired and may face economic difficulties. There is a need for cohabitation, which can be addressed through introducing young adults looking for affordable housing to seniors looking for a cohabitation solution. The initiative's office provides reassurance to people that there is a fixed base-team and the office is open all year. If people experience difficulties, they can visit or contact the office with the assurance that somebody will help them. Another key element of the initiative's solution lies in the administrative documents they provide. All youth members as well as seniors must have a clear idea of what they are signing to support the values underlying the association. *Pari Solidaire* is not a named party on the contracts, which is directly between the participants, but it provides support and guidance to both parties that they may understand the details and consequences of the contractual agreement.

Stakeholder Participation

Pari Solidaire was created in close collaboration with institutional partners who had identified similar issues faced by elderly people in the Paris area and were keen to respond to them through the solution *Pari Solidaire* proposed. Thus, *Pari Solidaire* was co-constructed with ICF Habitat (a real-estate company) and mainly funded by Paris City Council along with donations from private companies. Since its foundation there have been various partners, such the Ile de France, who subsidised employee positions for three years and who help in promoting the project through their magazine, and various conferences. Moreover, cities, universities and the press have contributed significantly to raising the profile of the initiative. Other partners have included the Paris Emerald Point, the Centre for Social Action and many clubs for retired people.

Today the "Groupe SOS" plays a key role in providing a solid base for the project.

The initiative retains an openness to participation by users with opportunities for dialogue and internal procedures for continuous improvement in place, however, many users do not feel the need to avail of these opportunities while others visit the office monthly to update the staff with news about their daily lives. If it is not possible to personally visit the office, users can call or send emails sharing their news, which also gives them the chance to submit their own ideas, recommendations, and complaints.

Target Group

The initiative was designed to target older people living in Paris and its suburbs, who have extra space to offer to young adults. Typically the targeted people are over 65 years and live by themselves. As

the initiative only aims to provide emotional support to the elderly, the young adult mission does not aim to provide nursing to their landlords. Therefore, the older people using the service must still be enjoying a good level of autonomy. Currently the initiative reaches 2,000 persons directly within their target group.

Impact

By bringing older people and young adults closer together the initiative aims to restore the intergenerational link and address the social exclusion of older people. Additionally, the initiative allows older people to remain in touch with their social community and society in general by being in constant contact with younger generations. As a wider impact the initiative aims to demonstrate that intergenerational solidarity may be the key to solve many new social issues. Thus, they aim to inspire other initiatives to use a trans-generational approach to solve social problems.

Since its foundation, *Pari Solidaire* has provided housing solutions to over 2,000 young adults. Every year, 300 matches are created which illustrates the success of their approach. The initiative also has a strong impact on the individual lives of the participants. Participants identify the possibility of saving money as one factor encouraging them to use *Pari Solidaire*, and the newly established relationships as another one. A new relationship with young adults provides older people with a chance to better understand youth culture and young people in general. Through ageing some people become disconnected from the younger generation. The initiative gives them the opportunity to re-connect. Some participants even say they feel as if they have a new family and that they have increased their social network as a result of participating in the initiative.

Evaluation

The impact of the initiative has been assessed through experience based self-assessment.

The solution was inspired by a similar initiative that took place in Spain in the early 2000s. *Pari Solidaire* looked at what was working well in Spain to design their own initiative based upon research on the social exclusion of older people in France. The programme was created in 2004, giving the initiative over 9 years of experience in delivering the solution. Today, the initiative's main strength is its experience in this field and its stable and professional staff structure. *Pari Solidaire* is an association that provides services and activities focused on intergenerational cohabitation. An annual membership fee paid by the users (older and younger) covers two thirds of the costs of the organisation. The association therefore has a good level of internal sustainability.

Evaluators found that currently the users, as associates, are using the initiative as a service they need rather than an association in which they participate. This view is confirmed by the lack of involvement of end-users in the internal organisation with the annual general meeting as the only real opportunity for discussion. Further, involvement of older people is limited to those under 75 years of age, therefore

excluding a large segment of the target group. Given that older people often find it difficult to become involved socially, this may be an area for the initiative to examine further.

Competition

Pari Solidaire tries to complement similar initiatives, not to work against them. Thus, they have encouraged the creation of a national network of similar initiatives to offer beneficiaries a geographical overview of organisations offering a similar solution. As other similar initiatives are not located in the same geographical area they are not a direct competitive threat to the success or growth of *Pari Solidaire*. Concerning the possibility that future initiatives could emerge in the Paris area, the initiative's approach based on high standards in terms of participant selection and housing offer, together with individual and personalised support, suggests *Pari Solidaire* delivers high quality services which would be difficult to compete with.

Barriers, Challenges and Solutions

The main challenge to the growth of *Pari Solidaire* is the strong dichotomy between supply and demand. Indeed, the initiative receives a greater demand for housing compared to lower rates of offers from potential older hosts. This is partly explained by anxiety on the part of older people when it comes to letting an unknown person enter their house and their every-day life. Thus, the initiative is working on a new educative approach to help older people to adapt to someone new. Moreover, they are developing a new communication strategy to attract new older people into the initiative. Another approach being explored is the creation of new offers such as offering rooms dedicated to young adults in retirement homes. This would be an option whereby an intergenerational link could be created without disturbing the every-day life of the elderly.

Another barrier *Pari Solidaire* faces is a preference by young people not to live with older seniors over age 70. This places pressure on the initiative to seek mainly younger seniors between the ages of 60 and 70 as hosts.

A final challenge revolves around the continuity of participant memberships (older and younger) which most often only last as long it is needed and where no other choice is currently available. Even though the contracts are for three years, people only pay initially for one year, with the other two years paid on an as-needed basis. The initiative needs to manage and maintain enrolment of participants to provide an effective matching service and ensure appropriate supervision of the cohabitation arrangement.

Funding

The initiative spends €232,546 per annum implementing their solution. Economic return from own products and services accounts for 60% of this amount with 23% sourced through donations from private companies, 14% through national public funding and 3% from other sources.

Conclusion

Pari Solidaire addresses the Parisian situation of 20% of the population being over 60 years and more than 40% of those living alone. This contributes to a progressive disappearance of the intergenerational link and a deepening of the feeling of loneliness by older people. Additionally elderly people often face increased financial difficulties as they age. Through an innovative solution introducing young people who need an affordable space to live in Paris to older people living alone in family houses, the initiative aims to lower the loneliness of older people and to improve intergenerational relationships. The initiative faces some barriers and challenges, in particular that of demand outstripping supply of housing hosts and the reluctance of younger adults to live with people over age 70. The extensive experience and wide network of the initiative, however, suggests that they are adept at addressing challenges as they arise.

HABITATION & EMPOWERMENT

TUBBEMODELLEN (SWEDEN) – A COOPERATIVE LIVING MODEL

Researcher: Rodd Bond, Netwell Centre, Ireland

Cluster	Habitation
Name of implementer	Tjörns kommun
Type of implementer	Public Body
Implementer in operation since	More than 5 years
Implementer located in	Skärhamn, Sweden
Name of initiative	Tubbemodellen
Initiative in operation since	More than 5 years
Stage of initiative	Scaling (the next step will be growing impact on a national scale)
Cooperation partners, type and primary function	Tubberödshus (appr Tubberöd Housing) Culture Department (Kulturförvaltningen) in Skärhamn Information office of the local municipality of Skärhamn
Staff	Regularly paid employees: 26 Volunteers: 1 Trainees: none External advisers and experts: none
Funding sources	National public funding 99% Economic return from own products/services 1%
Webpage of initiative	http://www.tjorn.se/

Organisational Background

Tubbemodellen, established in 2009, is run and organized by a care facility for older adults in the city of Skärhamn (on the island Tjörn) in Sweden. The project is implemented by the municipality of Tjörn (Tjörns kommun) – a municipality with almost 15,000 inhabitants and comprises 1,546 islands on the west coast of Sweden. Tjörn is the biggest of these islands and the sixth largest island in Sweden. The project is mainly the result of a political decision by the municipality of Tjörn to offer housing for older adults based on the Lotte pedagogy. Tubberödshus (care facility) is responsible for the operation, development and management of this housing model and works under an intraprenad agreement within the municipality.

Problem Being Addressed

Provision of care for older people is facing a range of challenges in addition to financial considerations. Finding staff with the right qualifications is one challenge within this sector. If we don't change focus to give workers more responsibility and increase their participation at work they will continue to choose other careers. Meanwhile, more people are living longer and each person is different with individual needs. Senior citizens have preferences and demands concerning the life they want to live. Many have higher levels of education than in the past and worked in professional jobs. They bring a rich experience from their lives into older age. They know what is meant by a good life and what contributes to good health. They can formulate their needs and the public sector is challenged to respond to these needs according to social service legislation and with existing financial resources. However, elderly care in institutional settings (care facilities etc.) is often not centered on the needs, demands and wishes of older persons themselves. On the contrary, care for older people is often standardized and hierarchical, in a top (directors followed by staff) to bottom (older adults/clientele) manner. *Tubbemodellen* addresses the issues of social and political participation of care home residents, and the organisational tools necessary to better involve residents in decision-making processes, with an aim to ultimately let residents (to a large extent) shape their lives as independently as possible.

The idea of *Tubbemodellen* was inspired by the work of Thyra Frank and the 'Lotte model' of home-oriented, residential accommodation, operating in the Lotte home in Copenhagen. Thyra Frank's motto is "to live until you die!". Moreover, there is a general sense at the *Tubberødshus*, of the place being run and organized by the residents and supported by the staff instead of the other way around.

Innovative Solution

The model clearly puts residents in the centre of attention and action. The approach itself to 'let older people live the way they'd like to' is gaining increasing attention, though examples from implementation practices are still rare. *Tubbemodellen* also tries to implement such an approach through changes of the local government governance framework. The key resource underpinning the implementation of the *Tubberødshus* model is the activation of human energy to effect a culture change in how older adults are viewed and cared for. It has been shown that the innovative model is even more 'investment effective' than mainstream delivery (the staff /resident ratio is 0.63 which is less than in the region generally). Starting in 2009, the organisation and staff working practices have taken about 3 years to bed in, and are centered around creating a culture that puts the empowerment, well-being and 'lived-lives' of the residents at the heart of the model's activities. As such, the range of activities for both residents and staff merge into a unified model supporting 'an active life for everyone' in the place.

All of this has translated into the following paradigms: all important decisions are taken by a board with representatives from both staff and the residents. The residents are also involved in the daily work of the home and each employee has a great amount of freedom and responsibility to carry out their work in accordance with the Lotte pedagogy. The management model can be described as participatory.

Since 2010, the *Tubberödshus* retirement home has operated through an 'Intraprenad' agreement with the social welfare unit of Tjörns municipality. The goal of Intraprenad is 'better quality for users,' and it takes the form of a special mode of business operation within the Tjörns municipality. While staff are still municipal employees, and costs are borne by the municipality, the Intreprenad framework provides *Tubberödshus* with significant operational autonomy where any excess/profits can be used to fund internal operations to further improve quality. If there is a deficit, it is to be regulated with their own budgets. Intreprenad provides a shorter decision path between residents, staff and administrators, giving residents much greater influence over the content and delivery of the care and wellbeing supports.

Stakeholder Participation

One of the main stakeholders in the project is the local parliament within the municipality of Tjörn. They were the first to decide about the implementation of the Lotte pedagogy in the care facility. The *Tubbemodellen* project has developed as a relatively autonomous operating unit as an 'Intreprenad' within the Social Services Department of the Tjörns Community, a local government organisation. Another stakeholder (and cooperation partner) is the public culture department (Kulturförvaltningen) interested in and helping with the organisation and dissemination of events at the facility. Moreover information about the care model is spread (inter)nationally, resulting in many site visits to Tjörn from various people and organisations.

Target Group

Currently, 30 seniors live in the *Tubberödshus*. Most residents come from the city of Skärhamn on Tjörn, the main island in the municipality. Out of all residents about 25 are female and 5 are male with ages ranging from 70 to 98 years. Most of the residents are aged 85 years and several residents have been over 100 years of age. In terms of socio-demographic mix, about 7 of the current residents receive a subsidy from the local authority to help with rent payments. The remaining self-fund out of income, insurance and pension. The team of 24 universal co-workers/carers is supported by an Intraprenad manager. A nurse visits each morning to attend to healthcare/medication issues and is available to call/visit around the clock if necessary.

The project seeks to introduce the *Tubbemodellen* as choice option for the care of all older people in Sweden. The target group is therefore both larger and increasingly growing far beyond the group of 30 seniors currently residing in the *Tubberödshus*.

Impact

The main impact of *Tubbemodellen* can be ascribed to altering the culture of participation within a residential care home setting. *Tubbemodellen* strives to enable care recipients (residents) to actively participate in the development of their own care model thereby transferring power and influence to older adults as much as possible. This clearly not only affects residents but also staff members, who need to be given the authority to act with responsibility to participate in and influence the nature of care activities, as those closest to the persons who receive the care. On a local and national level, the model can support other municipal activities in the social field by offering a systematic and tested approach for senior empowerment. Activities and social events are integrated to provide a more relational approach in elderly care.

Evaluation

The project has been evaluated through experience-based self-assessment, feedback-based self-assessment and self-evaluation. So far, evaluation has shown that participation and involvement has increased and the relationships between staff and seniors has become warmer. Furthermore, the type of care has become more relational. Staff and senior perspectives have become more integrated and there is more of a family atmosphere. Additionally, security, belonging and the sense of always being welcome have been built into a public organisation.

Competition

Tubberhodshus operates in a market segment that can be described as residential care homes, assisted living, or care homes. Its competitiveness and uniqueness is in the adoption and localisation of the 'Lotte model' of care from Copenhagen, its adaptation to Swedish national and local norms, contexts and regulations, and its enhancement and refinement in response to resident needs and aspirations. Unique features of this approach and the *Tubbemodellen* project include:

- The level of older peoples' participation in planning and decision making
- The extent of older peoples' control over the quality of their own living conditions
- The manner of staff/care worker responsibility and participation in their work
- The form of participative and process-oriented leadership
- The reduction in the difference in roles between staff and residents.

Barriers, Challenges and Solutions

Several challenges, mainly organisational, were identified following site visits and consequently an organisational restructuring process has been started through the *Tubbemodellen* project. This

implies that hierarchies, work ethos and practices need to be changed and adopted by the staff. It has been described as challenging to be as a leader of the care home facility. This is not about having to have all the answers but is increasingly about allowing the staff to reflect on problems and bring forward their own solutions. The role of leaders is to provide everyone with the space to innovate and to recognize that the risks are shared by all. Furthermore, the model of universal co-working in care for older people appears harder. It requires infinite flexibility, very careful planning, and increased responsiveness and adaptability during the course of the day. As mentioned in one of the interviews: *“It’s not my job’ is not a phrase that is heard any more – but it takes a lot of work to build up the inter-dependencies, trusts and mutual supports to enable it to work properly”*. In addition, staff must also make the time to have more input and participation with residents, which in turn requires more planning, and more paperwork.

Another important challenge is to ensure this additional workload does not interfere with the quality of connection, relatedness and interaction with residents. Setting up a framework that allows for another work mode which favors decisions to be made closer to, and by the residents themselves was clearly one solution. The Intrepred model provides such a de-centralized operating framework. Finances also need to be handled efficiently. With better insight and more knowledge, employees in care settings can increase their understanding of what is important for an older person, thereby more easily providing a service that can offer an extra flavor to life for clients.

Through the Intrepred model, *Tubberhodshus* provides a spatial canvas and a social milieu that can accommodate the variety of resident capabilities and which offers personalized support to help people live their lives as they wish. Staff members who have been working at the *Tubberhodshus* before and after the ‘transition’ refer to a relatively seamless transition from the old structure to a new environment where they can more easily contribute and participate. The active participation of the older residents in the planning and organisation of the *Tubberhodshus* further demonstrate openness to creativity and co-creation, drawing on resident skills and experiences to shape and empower their actions and activities.

In order to achieve active participation and demand-driven engagement, work groups have been formed within the organisation for all different work areas that are needed for modern elderly care. All activities rest on these groups and have confidence that all play their part in the care work area assigned to each of the groups. The pedagogical group for instance works with coworker supervision to ensure an adequate approach in care and with care implementation plans to guarantee that each resident gets the support they need. This group also works with quality development in management to oversee routines and security and they regularly evaluate (through questionnaires) how the seniors perceive the quality of living in *Tubberödshus*. Another group, the activity group, works in dialogue with the seniors to plan and arrange activities to cover all kinds of needs, both when seniors wish to travel or when someone is so fragile they can only be communicated with through touch and food. To remain open to the wider community older adults who do not live in *Tubberödshus* are invited on a regular basis to visit and join activities in the house. Residents also participate in the selection of new

staff. One representative from each of these workgroups forms the board for *Tubberödshus* together with two representatives from the municipality and (from autumn 2014) senior resident representatives.

Funding

The project is 99% funded through public funds. The same amount is received from the municipality as for any elderly care (=no extra cost). Economic return from own products and services accounts for 1% of funding.

Conclusion

Tubberödshus, is an exemplary model of social innovation in active and healthy ageing within a public sector framework, leveraging the autonomy offered by the 'Intreprenad' mode of operation. Its success is linked to the power and simplicity of the idea, the commitment of its leadership, and the passion of its workforce. Within this project action and social activity are integrated within a more relational approach to care of older people. By empowering and liberating the energies and resources of its residents *Tubberödshus* creates an effective, efficient, attractive and joyful place for older people to live their lives to the full, which is at once, both sustainable and replicable. Clearly, the operating framework, including changes in organisational structures, hierarchies and working processes need to adopt and change to a large extent. The *Tubbermodell* project can serve as a role model of quality and enterprise in the landscape of long term care settings – a landscape increasingly growing due to population ageing. The *Tubberödshus* model aims to be a residential care option for all older people over 65 years of age in Sweden. To help facilitate the process, a tool-kit is currently being prepared as a resource to support the replication and transfer of the model to other residential care settings in Tjorns and adjacent communities in Sweden.

EMPOWERMENT

GDYNIA DIALOGUE WITH SENIORS (POLAND) – INNOVATIVE CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

Researcher: Krister Hakansson, Karolinska Institute, Sweden

Cluster	Empowerment
Name of implementer	Gdynia Municipality
Type of implementer	Public body
Implementer in operation since	More than 5 years
Implementer located in	Gdynia, Poland
Name of initiative	Gdynia Dialogue with Seniors
Initiative in operation since	More than 5 years
Stage of initiative	Established (past the previous stages and has demonstrated success)
Cooperation partners, type and primary function	Pomeranian Science & Technology Park Gdynia, Social Innovations Department (Public Body): their mission is to link and support partners from public sector, NGOs and business. Gdynia Welfare Centre (MOPS) (public body): the resort organizes and coordinates all activities for people in need of assistance in Gdynia. Foundation for Social Innovation and Research – Shipyard, (Non-profit/NGO): an expert organisation from Warsaw with significant knowledge and experience in socially innovative solutions and international cooperation on local growth.
Staff	Regularly paid employees: 35 Volunteers: 12 Trainees: 7 External advisers and experts: 5
Funding sources	National public funding: 80% European Union public funding: 20%
Webpage of initiative	www.gdynia.pl www.innowacjespoleczne.gdynia.pl www.ppnt.pl

Organisational Background

Gdynia actively develops its mission to create a society and environment which appreciates diversity, promoting an active social life for all groups of citizens and respecting different needs and priorities. Gdynia administers and promotes innovative projects for the benefit of citizens aiming to increase their level and quality of life. Specific groups such as seniors, youth and people with disabilities, especially those at risk of social exclusion are highlighted for inclusion. In cooperation with partners, Gdynia aims to make the city more attractive and accessible to all its citizens. The initiative is not connected to any of the traditional political parties. The main implementer and mayor of Gdynia, Michał Guć emphasises that being connected to the main party in Poland would obviously bring some financial benefits, but he

highlights that the initiative is a local project and avoids being connected to the national parties, in order to remain more independent in the way they work.

The Pomeranian Science & Technology Park Gdynia, Social Innovations Department, works in cooperation with the Gdynia Welfare Centre (MOPS) and the Foundation for Social Innovation and Research – Shipyard. As a budgetary department of Gdynia municipal the GCI is responsible for the management of Pomeranian Science and Technology Park and implements innovative solutions for Gdynia citizens. GCI mission links and supports partners from the public sector, NGOs and other businesses. The Social Welfare Centre aims to help local residents to overcome difficult situations. Shipyard's actions concentrate on three key issues: 1) development of local communities, 2) social innovations and 3) civic participation. Shipyard is an expert organisation from Warsaw with significant knowledge and experience in socially innovative solutions and international cooperation on local growth. The *Gdynia Dialogue with Seniors* project is integrated into the more general attempt by the city to involve all citizens in the development of the municipality, "Gdynia for everybody". The local government originates from a non-political organisation, the Civic Committee, and is called "Gdynia Solidarity" in the elections, although they don't want to see themselves as a political party. Self-governance and citizen participation is the main ideological idea. It was founded in 1990, mostly by people with previous experience in NGO work, and has been in power since 1998. In the last election they gained over 90% of the votes.

Problem being addressed

According to the EU Report Active Aging Index, Poland is unfortunately on the last position from all 27 EU countries (before 1st July 2013) regarding the level of employment of seniors, their low level of engagement into civil initiatives and voluntary activities (only 4,8% comparing 14,9% average for EU). Only 10% of seniors devote their time to voluntary work for other seniors in Poland. Gdynia's mission is to change this situation with the help of general local politics in cooperation with individual initiatives.

Over 34% of Gdynia's citizens are over 55 years of age. Gdynia authorities have taken the initiative to build an age-friendly environment and to inform, engage and create a civil panel providing information and feedback on different aspects of seniors' lives. Welfare Care links the complexity of developing a social environment adjusted to seniors needs with innovative solutions regarding social life, urban space and activating senior engagement. According to the main implementer, Michał Guć, in the past there was no room for participation in Poland, something particularly experienced by older people. Today people have greater choices and opportunities such as travel. Many citizens remain unable to avail of the new opportunities for a variety of reasons such as financial resources, health problems or other reasons. Michał Guć promotes offering a range of activities, like the centre for elderly, and donation of money to NGOs to provide more activities. This way it is hoped to show people that it is possible to do something, it is possible to make choices.

Innovative Solution

Gdynia implements policies and initiatives for seniors, using the dialogue with citizens as a tool to promote social activity and respect for diversity. The initiative addresses the following fields of active and healthy ageing: personalised health management, assisted daily living, independent living solutions, social inclusion (intergenerational practice, work and volunteering), age friendly buildings, environments, and communities. There are two complementary dimensions of Gdynia policy towards seniors, which are implemented in cooperation with the Foundation for Social Innovation and Research Shipyard. The first dimension aims to create friendly and safe urban spaces. Activities and consultations with seniors examine the stage of adjustment of urban areas in different parts of Gdynia. In this framework research walks for disabled people as well as for seniors are organised. The topic of these walks is to encourage seniors to give their opinion regarding public spaces, urban architecture and how Gdynia can become more safe and friendly to the needs of seniors' and/or people with disabilities. The research walks locate barriers in the urban space and promote good practice in creating appropriate and friendly environments for all. The walks with seniors are dedicated to analysing the availability of the municipal infrastructure in the centre of Gdynia for older people.

The second objective of the initiative aims at implementation of a new way of interactive communication with seniors. A civic panel for seniors was established to engage this group of citizens to share their opinion on different aspects of their lives, such as preferred channels of information and communication, active participation in civil life and local environment or options for different activities for seniors. The panel is a systematic tool for generating the opinion of seniors with a representative group of 800 to 1,000 seniors taking part annually. The tool retains flexibility regarding groups of responders and topics. Through this process a common platform is developed enabling the highest quality of communication with seniors. The initiative emphasises that to create and maintain an active civil society in the region of Gdynia it is crucial to involve this group of people in decision making processes and to value their contribution.

The innovative solutions of the project require building trust and fostering good relationships between researchers and participants. The dialogue process has a direct influence on solutions implemented by the city. The civic panel regularly arrives at decisions through a voting mechanism. The participants have the possibility to vote online about smaller projects regarding their life and their districts. As an example small groups or NGOs may outline project proposals for an available budget allocation. If the amount is deemed more or less suitable for the proposed projects, the initiative verifies it and the online voting begins. Voters may select more than one project, but the total budget amount available per district cannot be exceeded. The projects with the highest number of votes (falling within the budget allocation) are selected for implementation.

Stakeholder Participation

One of the deputy mayors in Gdynia, Michał Guć, has developed a model for wide participation by using the +600 NGOs in the city to reach different target groups for direct participation in city planning and development. He formally headed the *Dialogue with Seniors* project but in reality the project seems to be developed and run jointly by a number of different actors in the municipality, by NGOs, expert groups and – perhaps most importantly – by the citizens themselves.

From the very beginning, all groups of stakeholders were involved in the action plan and the pilot period when the tools for active communication with seniors were developed. In all activities the cooperation partners were integrated. Gdynia Welfare Centre as the budgetary unit of the City Hall holds all data regarding the situation of seniors in difficult living conditions. The partners strongly cooperate with the Gdynia Innovation Centre researching the needs of seniors, informing about the projects, recruiting volunteers and providing specific activities. Consulting with and engaging older people themselves (in different living situations) is the most crucial part of the process.

The Foundation for Social Innovation Shipyard supports the initiative in preparing, planning and evaluating the whole process. As experts they provide the highest standards of tools and methods, and give best practice examples to the initiative providing advice on diverse solutions tailored to specific situations and topics. The implementer of the project emphasises that all partners still learn from each other. Shipyard is actively seeking to implement the civic panel in other cities.

The initiative creates space for the main actors to participate in developing new ideas with the main actors involved in all parts of the process, from beginning to end. The initiative embraces participation in an extensive way, since they also include volunteers and the seniors themselves. Such extensive participation was seen as risky at the beginning but all stakeholders would agree it has been worth it.

Target Group

The initiative's general target group is seniors but also includes people with specific needs and conditions. The initiative recognises that it is crucial to reach people who are disabled, in difficult financial situations or have different needs. Furthermore, it is also important to reach active volunteering groups to harness their energy for the benefit of building local society.

The visible diversity of seniors (in social and economic situation, education, life experience etc.) within specific city districts enables the initiative to be more effective in reaching particular groups of elderly people. Currently the project reaches 530 people within the target group.

Impact

Gdynia adjusts its policy towards seniors by:

- Promoting dialogue as the process of building active participation in social life
- Investing in dialogue as the tool for comprehension and tolerance in society
- Facilitating the expression of seniors' opinion about social and urban aspects of living conditions in Gdynia.

As a result better security policies and modification of urban space, such as reconstruction of bus stops, benches and public toilets, are implemented.

As a wider impact on society the initiative works on setting up the dialogue as a permanent and systematic mechanism of policy with seniors. The key tools to do so are 1) use of the civic panel to enable consultation and interactive dialogue about social and health care, preferred channels of information, active participation in civil life and local environment and 2) maintaining the research walks, as a tool to diagnose urban space with active participation of seniors.

Based on this, Gdynia's impact is to achieve the high level of active citizenship according to the strategic policy and further development of the Gdynia policy for seniors.

They already achieved:

- A data base of issues identified by seniors living in Gdynia has been established, e.g. the initiative developed a map, which shows that there are hundreds of places which need to be improved. This map aims to show citizens how much there is to do and the results from the research walks.
- The Accessibility Standards for Gdynia, a document to guide future planning and construction of physical space in Gdynia to make it accessible to all citizens. All public entrepreneurs are bound to follow these guidelines and private entrepreneurs are encouraged to do so. This policy document applies from May 17th 2013.
- Concrete solutions regarding urban space and improvement of specific places which have been adapted to meet the needs of seniors.
- Mechanisms have been established to ensure ongoing dialogue with seniors as a long term process thereby building engagement and showing the real impact of seniors' active citizenship.

The main implementer points out that the initiative is still at an early stage. He highlights, that there are already many different types of councils with representatives of NGOs, experts, and city representatives who are dealing with different issues. His vision is to be able to get all people, not only elderly, into the process of discussing and reshaping public policies.

Procedure and Evaluation

The *Dialogue with Seniors* project consists of two main pillars: the Civic Panel and the Research Walks. The first round of the Civic Panel has been completed and evaluated. It consisted of interviews with 450 citizens over age 55 between late 2012 and 2013. Half of this sample was random and the other half randomised within different strata of the population to ensure representative participation between relevant age ranges, types of disabilities, gender and between district areas. The Civic Panel is based upon an interview guide and performed through home visits by trained staff from the municipal Centre of Welfare. The research strategy and the design of the questionnaire, as well as the evaluation and compilation of results, was done in close collaboration with the Foundation for Social Innovation and Research Shipyard, a non-profit national organisation with expertise in these matters.

The evaluation of the first Civic Panel identified areas in need of attention, such as the state of the public toilets, information and other problematic aspects at the bus stops and physical barriers for the mobility of elderly and disabled people. This result was then followed up in various ways. The research walks are a major follow-up activity to the Civic Panel, focussing on the physical characteristics of the city, such as street crossing, bus stops and pavements. A large number of NGOs are used to carry out the walks, where typically 2-3 elderly persons are joined by 2-3 volunteers. Certain routes of special importance are identified and each route is walked by 2-3 trans-generational research teams. In short, the method is to walk for 20 – 30 metres, then stop and discuss if anything problematic was found. When a problem is encountered it is written down, photos are taken, and the information is entered in a list, which is added to previously identified problems. The whole list, now covering over 600 barriers and problems, is then handed over to the department in Gdynia responsible for the physical environment. All identified problems along with photos, are inserted in a web-based map, a type of "Fix-it" web page, where citizens and municipal institutions, workers from diverse departments can see which stage of solution each point has. When the problem has been fixed, it is marked on the map. A notable detail is that the deputy mayor of Gdynia, Michał Guć, inaugurates each single research walk to express gratitude to the participants and to emphasize the importance of their efforts to help improving the city. Other follow-up activities are workshops for target citizen groups where different solutions to fix a problem are discussed and suggested to the City Hall, local meetings with citizens where a major renovation is presented and modified, and a recent policy document for all future construction work in the city, the Accessibility Standards for Gdynia. The purpose of this document is to prevent future problems of the kinds that have been identified through the dialogue project.

The impact of the initiative has been assessed through self-evaluation (qualitative and/or quantitative methods), external evaluation of impacts based on qualitative methods (interviews, focus groups, etc.), external evaluation of impacts based on quantitative methods (quantitative measurement of impact indicators).

Competition

The idea of active communication and consulting with different groups of people has become popular in European countries. There are good practices from Great Britain such as "Seniors Voice". Because of the previous political situation the process of building active citizenship among specific groups of people does not have a long tradition in Poland. Gdynia has become a leader of social innovation and building active participation.

Barriers, Challenges and Solutions

The project implementers faced two main barriers when they were working on the programme and the action plan of *Gdynia Dialogue with Seniors*:

1. There can be difficulties in convincing the senior responder about the high importance of his/her vote in the panel. To solve this problem the initiative constantly works to improve their communication and information strategy. Concrete results and implemented solutions after each edition of the panel leads to better engagement and motivation for seniors to involve themselves as important partners for the city and as an important part of society. To reach people with their feedback, the initiative uses different tools, such as local newspapers, local media, newsletters, and personalised letters from the mayor of Gdynia to appreciate their senior participants.
2. The research group was not open enough at the beginning of the project. To address this, a personalised approach was developed as a crucial element in building confidence and reaching the groups of "non-organised" seniors.

From the beginning it was clear that it is important for the people to notice a change of things as a result of their participation. If people are pointing out problems and the initiative is not able to react on them it is difficult to continue to engage participants. To address this, *Gdynia Dialogue with Seniors* announces project results to their participants first as a strategy to retain their motivation and involvement.

Funding

A shared budget of €800,000 is divided between 22 local districts in Gdynia. This initiative has an annual budget of €24,000 used for implementing the solution. Of this 80% comes from national public funding and 20% from European Union public funding. The organisation employs 35 people on a regular basis. There are 12 more volunteers and 7 trainees supporting the initiative.

Conclusion

Poland is in last position among all 27 EU countries regarding the level of employment of seniors. There is also low level of engagement in civil initiatives and voluntary activities by this group in Poland. *Gdynia Dialogue with Seniors* offers a mechanism to involve older citizens in decision making policies for the districts in which they live. Through a Civic Panel and research walks they found methods to gather the ideas and opinions of older people and those with disabilities. Through an evaluation of the first Civic Panel areas in need of attention were identified. These areas included public toilets, information and other problematic aspects at the bus stops and physical barriers for the mobility of older people and people with disabilities. The research walks are the main follow-up activities to the Civic Panel, focussing on the physical characteristics of the city. Usually a large number of NGOs carry out such walks and note all important aspects that need to be changed. Other follow-up activities include workshops for target citizen groups where different solutions to fix a problem are discussed.

The initiative faces a small number of challenges, which they have already begun to overcome, and represents an innovative approach which, if replicated, could considerably progress the implementation and impact of age-friendly communities initiatives.

4. INSIGHTS FROM INITIATIVES' WORKSHOP

The 20 finalist initiatives met on 26th of March 2014 for a one-day workshop hosted by King Baudouin Foundation and organized by the project consortium. The workshop used a World Café format and provided an opportunity for the people behind the initiatives to engage in a lively exchange of experiences on key thematic issues concerning the further development of the initiatives: Relevance, Innovation, Organisation, Impact, Sustainability and Scaling. Participants shared their insights, practices and strategies on each of three themes in a small group table discussion format. The results were documented and this chapter highlights key statements which were agreed upon by the participants themselves, illustrating the depth and range of critical reflection on social innovation by those on the front lines of solution implementation.

Relevance

Question: *How do we make sure that our solutions meet the needs of our target groups and tackle significant societal challenges?*

The initiatives showed a significant appreciation for the role of users in designing, developing and evaluating services and the wish to actively approach external stakeholders when promoting the initiative.

Two key statements emerged from this discussion:

KEY STATEMENT: Make people curious through inspiration and thinking big!

KEY STATEMENT: Achieve credibility through networking – make others see the relevance.

Innovation

Question: *Which methods do we use to generate innovative solutions? How can we make our solutions more innovative?*

The statements reflected a slight concern that the pressure to innovate may overwhelm certain initiatives, the need for responsible and step-by-step development and growth, and the courage to believe in the power of small changes was highlighted.

Three key statements emerged from this discussion:

**KEY STATEMENT: Innovative does not always mean "new"!
Consider incremental innovation rather than radical innovation?**

KEY STATEMENT: Have courage to consider that the golden nuggets of innovation may be small, but may make a big difference.

KEY STATEMENT: Keep the focus and don't lose the main purpose of the initiative in the pursuit of 'innovation'. Consolidate before scaling.

Organisation

Question: *Which organisational and networking models do we use to implement our solutions? How can we enhance the organisational capacity of our solutions?*

Issues of organisational capacity were discussed from an external cooperation and network perspective rather than an internal organisational development perspective. The network of partners thus appears to be a key feature of the overall organisation for initiatives.

Three key statements emerged from this discussion:

KEY STATEMENT: Create flat hierarchies (everyone inputs their knowledge), undertake constant evaluation and create partnership network.

KEY STATEMENT: Join a peer group of socially innovative initiatives and organise an annual "academy" to discuss improvements.

KEY STATEMENT: Create an open knowledge bank containing suitable tools for all stakeholders > connectivity and synergy.

Impact

Question: *How do we monitor and measure the impact of our solutions? How can we improve our impact monitoring and measurement?*

Impact was discussed from the viewpoint of evaluation linked to service improvement and improved external recognition. It was however emphasized that the purpose of evaluation has to be critically considered as it is only meaningful for dedicated stakeholders and strategic development.

Three key statements emerged from this discussion:

KEY STATEMENT: Gain deeper knowledge of WHAT to measure, WHY, for WHOM and develop valuable ways to SHARE.

KEY STATEMENT: Involve different stakeholders in the evaluation process (private, public, service users, volunteers) – including those outside the 'ageing' field.

KEY STATEMENT: Combine qualitative (e.g. interviews, videos) and quantitative methods (e.g. questionnaires, indicators) to change mind sets.

Sustainability

Question: *What are we doing to make our solutions sustainable in terms of assuring long-term activity? How can we make our solutions more sustainable?*

Sustainability has to be anchored in a well-functioning team and organisation. It is not about establishing rigid structures and routines, but about establishing an open and responsive organisation.

Three key statements emerged from this discussion:

KEY STATEMENT: Be a pioneer all the time (adapt to changing needs, cooperate, generate participation).

KEY STATEMENT: The initiative is not your "baby" – don't "go it alone", but nurture it together a little every day.

KEY STATEMENT: Whole team buys into a long-term strategy with focus on needs (mission statement).

Scaling

Question: *Which scaling models are we currently using? Which strategies do we need for an even more effective scaling of our solutions?*

Scaling emerged as one of the most complex and diverse issues and showed that initiatives are continuously exploring new ways to spread their services and practices. Scaling starts with a well-defined service or practice and hands-on guidelines for implementation. The initiatives found many small and practicable solutions for improving and speeding up diffusion.

Three key statements emerged from this discussion:

KEY STATEMENT: Cooperation between well-matched organisations to pilot practices internationally.

KEY STATEMENT: Building a consortium of NGO/NPO and research organisations to respond to EU Horizon 2020 calls.

KEY STATEMENT: Facilitate buy-in of local authority (funding) to an initiative and develop mechanism to transfer initiatives across local authorities.

5. DIFFUSION STRATEGIES

For small organisations the effort to promote and disseminate the solution may become a burden in terms of financial, personnel and time resources. Smaller organisations therefore need to connect to existing networks which can often take place at European level. Scaling may be limited to certain elements of the innovative solution, thereby requiring openness to adaptation when transferring solutions. The government as an important stakeholder may provide options to implement and finance expansion, but to connect to public authorities a strong position in the field of work, clarity of purpose and methods as well as a good network are required. Diffusion of an innovative solution can mean the costs for central administration rise significantly. One question may therefore be whether the organisation should remain centralized or become decentralized. There are different models for decentralizing the organisation, including the identification of clusters of projects with a focus on cooperation instead of competition.

One of the most surprising findings was probably the variety of diffusion strategies identified across all 20 finalists. This clearly supports the observation that these service providers are also innovators. The following figure highlights 12 different diffusion strategies identified across the 20 cases under study. Interestingly, initiatives chose quite different paths for extending their practices and services which offers a range of options for involvement to current and potential partners and stakeholders.



Figure: Diffusion strategies of the 20 finalists

Diffusion strategy examples from the initiatives

1. Pilot project develops replicable model:

AGE NO BARRIER: The ANB pilot project is aimed at developing a working model which can be sustained and replicated elsewhere in the UK. The project has potential to be replicated in other areas provided differences in demographics are considered through refinement of service delivery and promotion.

2. Setting up of local groups in response to local demand:

GOOD GYM: Central administration will support the local groups but one of the organisational objectives is to empower the local groups to build their own community of runners, coaches and partners. This model has emerged from earlier models tried such as 'GoodGym Open' where potential groups were provided basic information on how to set up a GoodGym branch upon request and left to do so independently. Challenges with quality, sustainability, security and consistency were identified with this early model, resulting in the development of the current expansion approach. Local branches will be self-sustaining after three years, through member donations. Central administration will be funded from private and/or public funds, small local branch contributions and other sources such as fundraising activities, donations etc.

3. Social franchising and consultancy:

ENTREPRENEURS 50+: The initiative works with self-employed persons who set up in their own location. At the moment these people work in a volunteer capacity during the workshops. After the workshops there is the opportunity for single consultation where franchise partners can charge users to participate.

KESTREL: One of the initiators participated in a trade mission to Romania. Part of her role there was to meet with the International Development Organisation and to look at the enterprise opportunities to develop initiatives for deprived communities.

KINDRED BY CHOICE: The initiator and her colleagues counsel different types of organisations or initiatives, private persons etc. who may adopt the concept in their region.

SENIORS IN ACTION: The initiative passes its know-how to other organisations and regional editions of "Seniors in Action". The initiative provides local authorities and local organisations with know-how and consultancy on how to organize similar projects and on how to support senior leaders.

4. National and international cooperation and promotion:

HOUSE IN THE PARK: Haus im Park is being supported by the Körber foundation which helps to promote the model on a meta level. Starting from the Haus im Park, the foundation launched an international collaborative network with cities such as Edinburgh, Brussels, Utrecht and Rome to exchange experiences.

SIEL BLEU IRELAND (Keeping Your Balance): The initiative focuses on becoming an active partner and advocate in the national conversation around solutions for active and healthy ageing in contrast to being a "sub-contractors for exercise classes". The emphasis is on developing business and research partnerships and networks to support this objective.

5. Establishing new facilities with local support from municipalities:

HOUSE OF THE FRUITS OF SOCIETY: The initiative aims at establishing ten more "houses" in Slovenia with the support of local municipalities and has already signed agreements with three more municipalities.

6. Transfer of model to similar sites:

YOUNG AND OLD IN SCHOOL (YOS): The initiative started to look for local support first and then gradually extended the dissemination of the model. The idea is to transfer the model to other schools. First presentations of the model have been held and an exchange with other schools has been established.

7. Site visits and exchange programmes such as Erasmus (EU):

KESTREL: The initiative attempts to transfer its model through the European Erasmus programme and participation in projects in the framework of the European Horizon 2020 programme.

TUBBEMODELLEN: The team has presented the model to several stakeholders in Sweden and hosted many visiting groups who were interested to learn about their model.

8. Setting up an “academy” to attract and train volunteers:

KNITTING SOCIAL FABRIC: The initiative has the plan to set up a granny academy in the form of an on-line platform. The idea behind the “Granny academy” is to reach out to the target group before approaching potential participants directly with regard to becoming members of a knitting group.

9. Diffusion through legal/regulatory adoption of the core elements of the initiative:

P3: The initiative has been funded by a government programme which may provide long-term funding and the legal/regulatory adoption of the service provision model for the whole territory of Flanders. It is not the intention of P3 to provide services outside Flanders at this time due to the regulatory complexity of doing so as a single organisation.

10. Creating a formalised network of independent organisations:

PARI SOLIDAIRE: The initiative achieves scaling through a formalised network of organisations (reseau-CoSi) present throughout the national territory, which perform the same service (because they adopted the model). The network currently comprises 21 organisations and is regionally structured (northeast, northwest, southwest, southeast, central, and the whole Paris region).

11. Creating a self-sustaining user-to-user system:

PASSION FOR LIFE: Passion for Life created guidelines which are being constantly updated and translated for improving replicability. The main model however relies on the life café coaches who are trained centrally but continue to organise life cafés in their own region.

12. Attaining accreditation or “Good Practice” status:

PASSION FOR LIFE: Through their local public authority partner in Skane, Passion for Life was successfully accredited as a 2-star reference site within the European Innovation Partnership on Active and Healthy Ageing (EIP-AHA) which opened up channels for replicability throughout the EU.

6. CONCLUSIONS

An analysis of the 20 final initiatives has yielded useful information on key issues for effective social innovation in active and healthy ageing:

Strong innovations need to be simple. Everett Rogers (professor, researcher, well-known for his theory of diffusion of innovations, Iowa, USA) once concluded from decades of diffusion studies that the more complex an innovation the lower its rate of adoption. Most initiatives are aware of the need for simplicity, support and guidance, in promoting and delivering their services to ensure users are not confronted with the organisational complexity of initiatives and are free to focus on their experience and personal outcomes. The award process, however, showed that initiatives often find it difficult to articulate themselves in a manner which resonates with potential supporters. This can occur because the initiative consists of a range of services with multi-dimensional impacts, offers a combination of services and approaches rather than a single service, because they have a passionate social agenda which is difficult to enumerate or because scarce resources are directed more often to implementation than evaluation, thereby limiting the initiative's ability to effectively communicate their impact.

Strong innovations need to demonstrate their "relative advantage" over existing solutions. The finalist initiatives are all successful in creating a positive user and volunteer experience. We could directly observe and assess this outcome during our site visits and based on our interviews with staff/volunteers and users/beneficiaries. There are however only a few initiatives which actually compare a measurable outcome of their services to the outcome of other similar services. This relates back to the question of strategic positioning: Is the implemented solution complementary, adaptive, substitutive or discrete in relation to existing solutions? Adaptive and substitutive solutions clearly need to have a relative advantage over existing practices. Some service models may be immediately convincing while others will need to prove their advantage with reference to impact. In particular, the comparison with public services may demonstrate the actual benefit of the service and encourage financial support from the public sector. Both *P3* and *Kestrel* offer an example of such comparison where net savings were calculated for their initiative in comparison with similar public services.

Innovative initiatives recognize societal challenges and the need to innovate social systems instead of simply compensating for their shortcomings. The finalist initiatives have a clear understanding of the broader context of their work. We were impressed by the way the initiatives described societal challenges and how their own work relates to them in relevant ways. They described the implications of specific political agendas, elaborated on research results, analyzed development trends and anticipated demands. The case studies documented a high sensitivity for changes in society and the resulting needs and problems. While many initiatives work on local level with specific methods and target groups, they are still able to relate their work to much broader issues and agendas. Although many initiatives consider their innovations as “complementary” to existing services, they usually promote a service model which also challenges established public institutions and practices.

New user perception: from deficits to capacities. A focus on user capacities instead of user deficits, which is central to the concept of active and healthy ageing, is clearly reflected in the way the initiatives plan and implement their services and articulate their project aims. User empowerment is a strong and visible component in most of the finalist initiatives.

Users are co-creators. A particular feature of many initiatives is that the activities they engage their users in are not fully determined by the service or practice. Users receive the opportunity to bring in their own interest and set their own focus thereby shaping the practice itself. In this regard, most finalist initiatives attempt to engage users in participative practices rather typical “services” consisting of a service provider, a defined service and a service consumer. The practice is defined by a set of rules which allow for flexible adaptation of content depending on the users’ needs and wishes. Even the more specified solutions such as the *Kineage* computer game provide this kind of flexibility. It becomes fully evident for initiatives such as *Age No Barrier* and their adaptation of the Duke of Edinburgh award scheme where participants set their own challenges, or for *Passion for Life* where participants decide themselves on the issues they want to discuss and work on in their peer group. Co-habitation projects such as *Pari Solidaire* and *Arbitare Solidale* also leave much room for flexible user adaptation as the agreement between co-habitants (students and elderly persons or disadvantaged persons) is negotiated individually. The initiative only provides the legal and organisational framework as well as individual support.

Does this mean that users actually become co-creators of a practice? We can say that users in almost all of the 20 finalist cases have the opportunity to adapt the practice or service to their needs. In addition, most of the initiatives continuously receive feedback from their users – either informally or formally through internal evaluations. What initiatives do not provide regularly are methods and opportunities for users to actually co-create and co-develop the setting and framework of the practice. This is still mainly the job of professionals who are however in continuous engagement with users. One exception is the co-creation observable in the *Tubbemodellen* initiative. The participative character of

this care home model allows clients to define the areas of participation themselves. This includes even the management structure of the care home which is open to user representation.

New forms of volunteer engagement support new volunteer roles. The roles of volunteers are obviously changing with regard to the benefits volunteers are generating for the users as well as for themselves and the community. The motivation for volunteers in many initiatives goes beyond the wish to help disadvantaged persons. Some practices become part of a volunteers life style as for instance in *Good Gym* where running, social exchange and the support of older people are combined. Here too, the volunteers enjoy a lot of freedom in adapting the practice to their interests and needs in cooperation with their older coaches. Co-habitation initiatives generally redefine the role of “volunteer”. As both students and elderly persons benefit from co-habitation the differentiation between “user” and “volunteers” is blurred or irrelevant. The same is the case for *Young and Old in School*, the German mentoring initiative where elderly craftsmen work with disadvantaged students in dedicated workshops as part of their regular school education. The “volunteers” receive as much appreciation and benefits as the users as they can transfer their knowledge, remain active craftsmen and experience a completely new and positive role as educators.

Continuous learning feeds organisational development. All finalist initiatives implement feedback mechanisms which allow them to learn from user, volunteer and staff experiences. Two examples of a systematic approach to such learning are found in *GoodGym* with its CQI development approach and *Passion for Life* with its PDSA approach.

Evidence-based technologies, practices and services drive innovative solutions. Several of the finalist initiatives are grounded in research work. Furthermore, many are evaluated or studied by research organisations and universities, some of them as long-term partners of the initiative. The *Learning Centre for Good Dementia Care* and *Kineage* are two such examples while others, such as *P3* and *Siel Bleu Ireland*, are partnered with researchers for project evaluation.

Increased observability blends service provision with raising public awareness. According to Everett Rogers innovative solutions which are observable show a higher rate of adoption. A solution which is implemented “behind closed doors” thus lacks observability. Depending on the elements, context and target groups of initiatives the solutions may either operate in special facilities or in public or semi-public areas. In general, we gained the impression that the majority of initiatives are operating in semi-public spaces where practices can be observed. Obvious examples are the intergenerational and multi-functional facilities of *House in the Park*, *House of the Fruits of Society*, and *Kindred by Choice* where by providing a semi-public space users can easily access the services and choose their level of involvement themselves. The observability is enhanced by public events, programmes and exhibitions connecting practices and services to the public discourse on specific societal challenges. Peer-to-peer contacts with support from facilitators also generate safe environments which can be easily accessed.

Combining social interaction and cooperation with technology offers social innovation potential (ICT, social networks, assistive technologies, etc.). Technology still plays a subordinate role for many initiatives. Information and communication technology usually has an assistive function rather than being a core element of the innovative solutions with the *Kineage* computer game being the only real exception. It is evident that the third sector is usually not directly linked to technology development and lacks the corresponding competencies. Technology development is still expensive and risky. The innovative thinking is thus mainly oriented at social practices of direct communication and interaction with or between users. *Kineage* exemplifies a strategy which could support the adoption of technology by the NGO/Non-profit sector by adapting existing commercial technology to meet project objectives.

Use of more sophisticated and impact-focused evaluation tools is required. Impact evaluation is a complex issue; firstly, because social or psychological impact is more difficult to measure than financial impact; secondly, because many solutions have multiple impacts: self-esteem, general wellbeing, health, social inclusion, etc. and thirdly, because of the flexibility in how users can adapt the innovative solutions. Less standardization and greater flexibility makes impact evaluation much more difficult. Currently, there seems to be an increased demand from funders regarding impact assessment as public institutions look for the best “investment” for their declining budgets. As a consequence we also observe an increased interest in specific impact evaluation methodologies such as experimental and quasi-experimental designs (“social experimentation”) or social return on investment (SROI). In an ideal world these methodologies would provide clear evidence of impacts on which decisions by funders could be based. In the real world these methodologies bring with them many challenging aspects for smaller initiatives. An urgent question emerging from the analysis of these highly effective initiatives remains: how to provide an effective framework for the evaluation of such diverse initiatives with wide ranging and both multi and trans-disciplinary/agency formats?

Extension and diversification of cooperation networks supports success. For projects aiming to promote social change, whether changing attitudes by breaking societal stereotypes about older people or changing care practices based on research and experience, the difference between success and struggle can lie as much in effective collaboration or partnerships as in the acquisition of additional funding. The initiatives of the 20 finalists depend on a range of individual and organisational stakeholders to make their visions a reality. Their cooperation networks are surprisingly sophisticated with most having cross-sectoral partner networks including companies, public bodies, research bodies and other NGO/Non-profit organisations. The initiatives make strategic decisions in the selection of cooperation partners. The quantity of “cooperation partners” is less relevant than the quality of partners and the nature of their active involvement. Partner organisations bring their special competencies and have clearly defined functions within the initiatives, such as funding, evaluation or

dissemination. Specific initiatives such as *Learning Centre Good Dementia* or *P3*, are defined by their integrative bridging function. They combine competences and resources to provide an integrated and tailor-made service to their clients thereby connecting many different “stakeholders”. For many others stakeholder cooperation is central to the operation and diffusion of the initiative. Regardless of the focus of the project, the immeasurable determination, vision, cooperation, participation, commitment and contribution of all stakeholders, from funders to volunteers and from staff to users, are essential to their success. These finalists have shown that multi-stakeholder participation can generate innovative and creative solutions and that broader impact can be achieved through trans-disciplinary collaboration.

The initiatives themselves are eager to expand their collaborative networks with some hoping to expand their projects into new regions by engaging new partners. In the current social, political and economic environment demand for measured outputs and deliverables has become the norm. Nevertheless, creative and new projects can struggle to promote their solutions within a complex maze of funding, legal and administrative structures. The initiatives are universally open to innovative partnership arrangements that can be mutually rewarding and it is hoped that the in-depth analysis of the projects highlighted in this report will facilitate the exploration and establishment of supportive collaborations. The research team and adjudicating panel express their appreciation to the implementers, staff, volunteers and users of the final 20 initiatives for their patience, openness and cooperation during the evaluation process, which sought to deeply examine all aspects of their projects, processes and outcomes. We look forward to watching the future growth, collaborations and wider social impact of these impressive projects.

The consortium partners:

Ageing Research Centre, Karolinska Institutet (ARC), Sweden (web: <http://ki-su-arc.se/>)

The Aging Research Centre (ARC) is an internationally renowned multidisciplinary centre and a collaboration between the Karolinska Institutet (KI) and Stockholm University. ARC research activity concerns brain ageing and dementia, health status, and multimorbidity. The main tasks of the Centre are research, information sharing and education on ageing related issues. It has broad national and international networks with other research centres, communities and policy makers.

AGE Platform Europe (AGE) (web: <http://www.age-platform.eu/>)

AGE Platform Europe is a European Network of more than 160 organisations of people aged 50+. All together AGE members represent about 28 million older people across the EU-27 and candidate countries. AGE aims at voicing and promoting the interests of senior citizens (150 million inhabitants aged 50+ in the EU) and at serving as a bridge between its member organisations and the EU Institutions, to ensure that older people’s issues are on the EU agenda and their views are taken on board in EU policy development.

Ashoka Innovation for the public (Ashoka) (web: <https://www.ashoka.org/>)

Ashoka is the global association of the world's leading social entrepreneurs – individuals with system-changing solutions for the world's most urgent social problems. Ashoka is redefining the global citizen sector by creating a system of collaborative entrepreneurship. Connecting the work of individual social entrepreneurs to business, academic and public sector partners, Ashoka creates a network effect driving the sector forward and developing new solutions to global problems.

Centre for Social Innovation (Zentrum für Soziale Innovation, ZSI), Austria (web: www.zsi.at)

The ZSI applies socio-scientific research, education, advisory and networking services to reduce the gap between social needs and potentials of the knowledge based information society. Our work in trans-disciplinary projects is geared towards supporting a socially, ecologically and economically sustainable development of the Information Society.

Italian National Research Centre on Ageing (Istituto Nazionale di Ricovero e Cura per Anziani, INRCA), Italy (web: <http://www.inrca.it>)

INRCA is the leading Italian public institute in gerontology and geriatrics, devoted to improve quality of life of older persons through seven different centres in Italy. Due to the multidisciplinary nature of INRCA's mission, its research activity aims institutionally at: promoting well-being of older people and their family carers; and implementing and monitoring support services and policies addressing the needs of the older population, especially if frail and disabled.

Netwell Centre, School of Health & Science, Dundalk Institute of Technology (DkIT), Ireland (web: www.netwellcentre.org)

The Netwell Centre was formed in 2006 within the School of Health and Science at the Dundalk Institute of Technology in Ireland. The focus of the Centre is the development of community-oriented models for ageing-in-place. Netwell is trans-disciplinary in form and structure integrating psychology, social policy, environmental design, technology and social and health care. It operates in an open cross-sectoral collaborative framework with regional and local authorities, health services and other public, private and 3rd sector service providers.



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