



Development of the NRN Rural Entrepreneurship Thematic Initiative

Synthesis Paper (April, 2011)

1. Evolution of the Initiative

The need for the NRNs to work together to strengthen rural entrepreneurship was first identified during the 7th NRN meeting in Brussels (December 2009). The **NRN Rural Entrepreneurship Thematic Initiative** was then launched at the 8th NRN meeting in Rome (March 2010) with the aim of helping to *"...identify and promote viable strategies and actions to respond to economic change in rural areas"*.

1.1. Context analysis in 2010

During spring 2010 a baseline survey was carried out by the ENRD Contact Point among the NRNs of which a total of 15 responded. There were large variations in the socio-economic context and enterprise culture of the networks that responded, but successful rural entrepreneurs were consistently recognised as having the following key characteristics:

- good management skills;
- easy access to capital;
- ability to communicate and network;
- vision and the ability to identify opportunity;
- ability to find new solutions;
- willing to take risks, and
- creativity.

The key target groups for actions to strengthen rural entrepreneurship were identified as:

- young people;
- women, and
- small-scale farmers.

The Context Analysis was finalized in February 2011(http://enrd.ec.europa.eu/national-rural-networks/joint-nrn-activities/nrn-rural-entrepreneurship-thematic-initiative_en/en/nrn-rural-entrepreneurship-thematic-initiative_home_en.cfm)

1.2. The 9th NRN meeting in Malta

A workshop was organised at the 9th NRN meeting in Malta (July 2010). The outcome of the was a clustering of the potential issues for NRN co-operation related to rural entrepreneurship under 4 main headings:

1. Tools to Support Rural Entrepreneurship
2. Emerging Sectors for the Rural Economy
3. Overcoming Obstacles to Entrepreneurship
4. Social Aspects of Entrepreneurship

1.3. Call for NRN interest – champions

At the 10th NRN meeting in Edinburgh, the ENRD Contact Point asked the NRNs about their interest in the thematic initiative regarding Entrepreneurship asking specifically for volunteering "champions" to take the lead. A group of about 10 NRNs answered by expressing interest and some also volunteered to take a more leading part.

1.4. Concept Note

As illustrated below, the conclusions from the context analysis in the baseline survey and the following workshop in Malta were articulated in a concept note circulated to all NRNs by the end of February 2011. The activities of the thematic initiative should have two main themes:

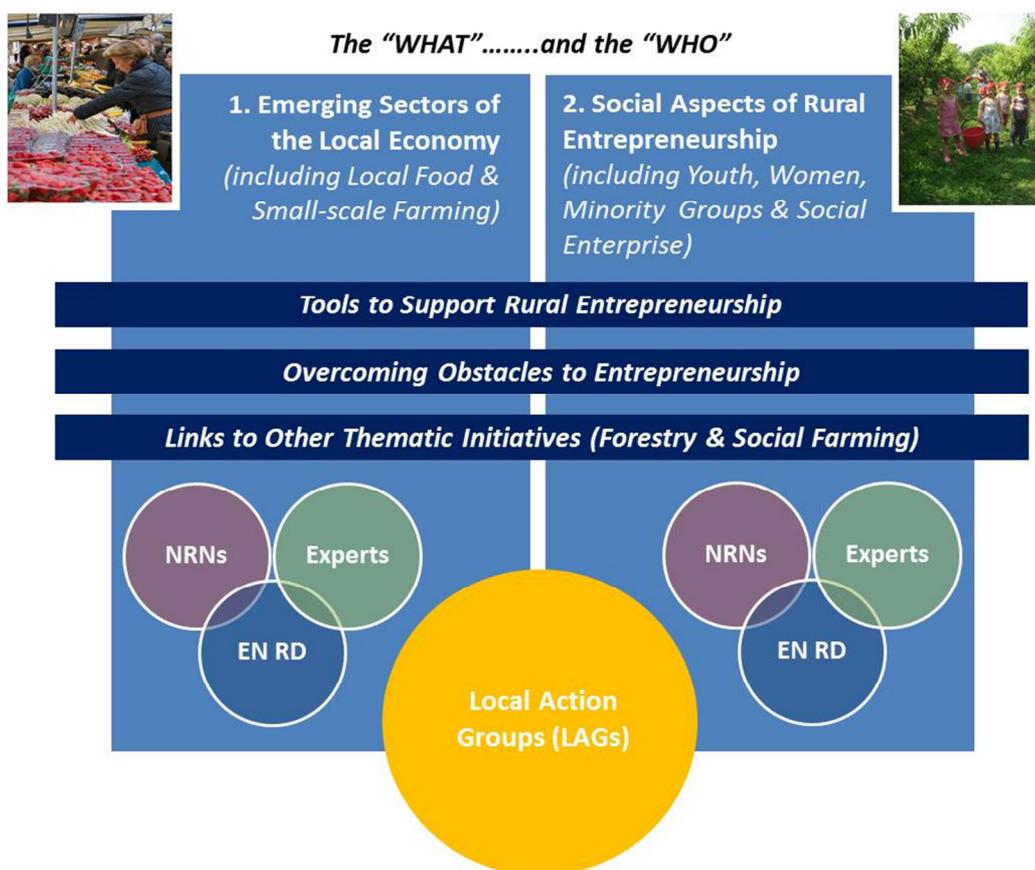
- Emerging Sectors of the Local Economy;
- Social Aspects of Rural Entrepreneurship.

The NRNs were asked to mention their interest to join those possible thematic groups.

As horizontal measures, or ideas, there are the following:

- Tools to support Rural Entrepreneurship
- Overcoming Obstacles to Entrepreneurship
- Links to other thematic initiatives (Forestry and Social Farming)

Proposed Framework for the Future Activities of the NRN Rural Entrepreneurship Thematic Initiative



The concept note was also proposing a list of potential concrete joint activities that could be launched by that might be developed within the framework of the Rural Entrepreneurship Initiative. A few are outlined below as inspiring ideas.

Activity	Emerging Sectors for the Rural Economy	Social Aspects of Entrepreneurship
Thematic background papers, including the identification of relevant experience/examples	Equally relevant to both Thematic Groups	
Thematic workshops on "Tools for Supporting Rural Entrepreneurship"	e.g. Financial tools How to support existing businesses Start-up businesses Young entrepreneurs Access to capital	e.g. Social enterprise as a basis for business Developing social capital Access to support for social enterprise
Development and promotion of "The Rural Entrepreneurship POWER Tool-Kit"	Simple and adaptable policy tools for supporting the local food sector	Simple and adaptable policy tools for supporting social enterprise in rural areas
"Thinking Outside of the Box" – a rolling roadshow of creative and inspirational seminars/workshops about entrepreneurship targeted at LAGs and other key actors	At NRN meetings or regionally as an "Inspiration Tour" with co-operation between 2-3 NRNs in each regional seminar/workshop. Key themes such as Knowledge and Creativity; Capital and Financial Support; New Markets; Strategic Networking for Small Businesses; An Enterprising Public Sector.....etc.	
"Making a Success of Rural Enterprise: A Practical European Handbook"	Multi-lingual step-by-step guide to the main decision-making processes associated with starting or diversifying a rural business – illustrated with examples (EAFRD project postcards) from across the EU	
Workshops/seminars/activities focusing specially on youth and how to foster an entrepreneurial mindset	Good examples of young rural entrepreneurs – linked to a special forum/social network tool on relevant youth issues	How to involve youth in community development and other social dimensions of entrepreneurship
"Rural Entrepreneurs' Blog Spot"	Links from the ENRD website to blogs by new entrepreneurs using EAFRD funds	
Special seminar about overcoming Obstacles to Entrepreneurship - directed at Managing Authorities, Paying Agencies, NRNs and related policy-makers	Speakers on: The role of the networks in policy implementation; Removing bureaucratic obstacles; Financial engineering etc.	
Web-based training courses for NRNs, LAGs and other key RDP stakeholders	Diversification; Joint marketing; Logistic co-operation in short supply chains	Social enterprise as basis for business; Social Capital; Access to support for social enterprise
Trans-national Co-operation and Rural Entrepreneurship	Numerous opportunities for co-operating NRNs to encourage LAG trans-national co-operation on various themes relating to rural enterprise and entrepreneurship	
A European conference about rural youth/women, how to engage and involve youth/women, future visions for rural youth/women and how to support innovation so that relevant visions can be realized.	Including youth and women as an emerging group of entrepreneurs	Including also the potential of social enterprise

1.5. Short survey among interested NRNs

Based upon some initial feedback on the concept note, a quick survey was made among the interested NRNs prior to two video conferences in March 2011. The NRNs were asked to provide:

1. Good examples of entrepreneurship initiatives that they (or their key stakeholder groups) had organized or participated in;
2. Details of planned activities which could be interesting for other NRNs to participate in;
3. Specific problems for rural entrepreneurs which need to be addressed.

The survey successfully identified a lot of ongoing activities and planned events which could be used for co-operative actions between NRNs. It was also clear that there are several relevant national thematic working groups organized by NRNs involving good experts in rural entrepreneurship issues. Furthermore some existing experiences to build on were also identified in form of reports, national observatories, etc.

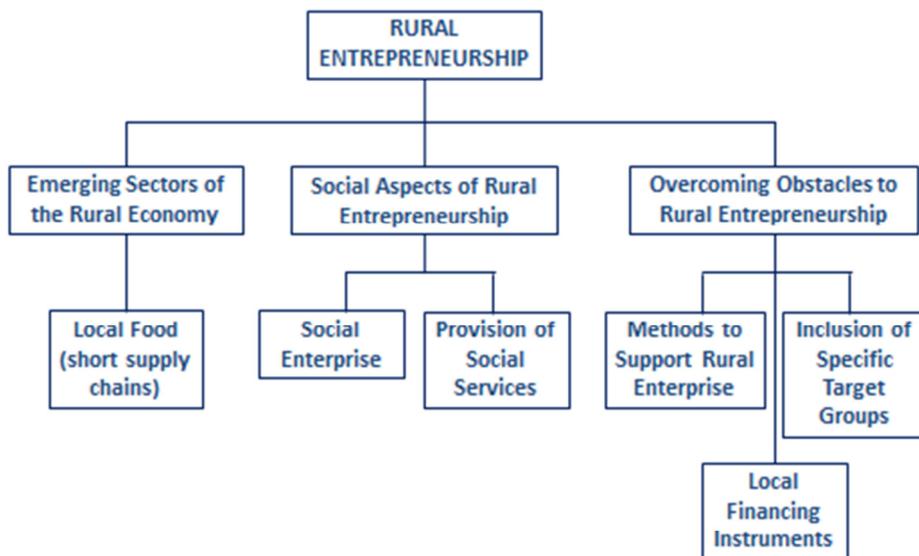
1.6. Video conferences and feedback with suggestions and actions

Despite some technical problems in the video conferences they were useful to discuss the initiative and create common understanding of the purposes. Together with written feedback and direct communication with some of the most enthusiastic and interested NRNs, the following consultation conclusions have been made.

From NRNs' feedback, a general point of view is that the thematic initiative has to focus on **concrete actions** and not only "creating reports and Word files". Some examples suggested are listed below:

- a very simple and concrete activity is to prepare meeting points for the national thematic working groups within similar themes;
- connecting with activities already planned by some NRNs and giving them also a European angle is another way of doing concrete actions;
- organizing workshops inviting NRNs, MAs and LAG members using some good methods for entrepreneurship support suggested is a dynamic way to contribute to the exchange of experiences and gather examples of successful initiatives and methods;
- organisation of transnational study trips, like travelling workshops, to study and benchmark different ways of promoting rural entrepreneurship were also suggested.

In terms of topics of interest based on the framework proposed in the concept note (see above), the NRNs' feedback can be summarized as follows:



1.6.1. Emerging sectors of the rural economy

It has been emphasized by the Commission and also in the answers from the NRNs, specially noted by the French NRN, that **local food production / short supply chains** should be among the target groups of emerging sectors.

However it is also important to take into account the great variety of non-agricultural businesses existing in rural areas now and in the future as well as the potential in diversification of traditional farms.

1.6.2. Social aspects of rural entrepreneurship

Two main areas of interest have been suggested

- **Social enterprise:** business which is undertaken primarily for social purposes, utilizes social capital as well as financial capital, does not focus upon profit maximization, and redistributes all surpluses through reinvestment in the community
- A business oriented aspect regarding local entrepreneurs providing/producing **social services** like health care, well fare services etc. Social farming is one example.

1.6.3. Overcoming obstacles to entrepreneurship

- **Methods** of supporting entrepreneurship;
- **New local financing instruments;**
- Inclusion of **specific target groups:** providing a social environment promoting an entrepreneurial mind and foster new, especially young entrepreneurs.

2. Experiences provided by NRNs as a basis to structure cooperative actions

2.1. ENRD Rural Entrepreneurship Gateway

Based on good examples of entrepreneurship initiatives that NRNs (or their key stakeholder groups) had organized or participated (see 1.5. above), the Contact Point has started to develop a Rural Entrepreneurship "centre of resources" to further become accessible on ENRD Public website by the end of June 2011. This Rural Entrepreneurship Gateway which will further expanded on an on-going basis.

A draft of the ENRD Rural Entrepreneurship Gateway will be presented at the NRN meeting

2.2. Cross-fertilisation between national thematic groups

We find the existing national thematic working groups as an important pool of experts from the national stakeholders. Since there are working groups with similar themes in many countries one of our activities should be to connect them and invite them to workshops for exchange of experience and knowledge and common understanding.

NRN JOINT ACTIONS that can support any of rural entrepreneurship themes of common interest. Some proposals?

2.3. Emerging Sectors of the Rural Economy

- Local food/short supply chains (FR, PT, FI, SE, HU, DK, EE)
 - a. Acknowledge and support the initiative made by the French NRN to focus on Local food / Short Supply Chains (See annex 1 message sent by FR NRN to interested NRNs and Discussion paper on the state of art on short supply chains elaborated by FR NRN);
 - b. Invite NRNs to cooperate with the Italian NRN in surveying logistic needs for local food;

- c. Exchange study visit between PACA region rural network (FR) and the Finnish NRN (fall 2011);
- d. SE: Local food tour to establish regional platforms for local food connecting producers, hospitality businesses, public bodies, etc;
- e. HU: "Local product academy 1, 2, 3";
- f. DK: Internet portal for food SME;
- g. EE: A web-based guide for small-scale local food producers and –processors, practical step by step
- h. EE: Support measures to a Local food Network in Estonia
- i. SE National Resource Centre for Local Food

A JOINT NRN ACTIVITY building on/developing those proposed actions/experiences/tools/events/study tour?

→ENRD CP will propose some potential joint actions to be discussed at the NRN meeting

2.4. Social aspects of Rural Entrepreneurship

- Social Services (EE, HU, BE-FL)
 - a. Promote and arrange a European workshop under the seminar in Estonia about Social Farming;
 - b. HU seminar on Social responsibility in preserving rural heritage
- Social Enterprise (NL, NIE, HU):
 - a. Promote and arrange a European workshop under the seminar in Hungary about the role of social partners.

A JOINT NRN ACTIVITY building on/developing those proposed actions/experiences/tools/events/study tour?

→ ENRD CP will propose some potential joint actions to be discussed at the NRN meeting

2.5. Overcoming obstacles to entrepreneurship

- Methods (IT, SE, PT, FR, MT):
 - a. Arrange one or several workshops targeting the EC, MAs, NRNs, LAGs to transfer good methods of supporting entrepreneurship like the IT online system to prepare business plans, the SE concept of "Entrepreneurship game" to raise awareness among decision makers, CRER – Creation of Enterprises in Rural Area, a methodology to support entrepreneurs, developed by ADRIMAG (PT), European Network to Entrepreneurship Support–Transnational Cooperation Project involving two Portuguese LAG and other French and Malta organizations, workshop outcomes on entrepreneurship in rural areas, promoting successful cases (PT)
- Inclusion (BE-WAL, BE-FL, IT, EE, FR, ES, SE, PT, Baltic Sea NRNs)
 - a. Connecting existing plans of production of a film about Young Farmers in BE-WAL (See Annex 2 proposal sent by the BE-WAL on 08/04/2011) with the IT Your Rural Web, IT National Atlas of Young Farmers, OIGA (IT) observatory for young farmers and the EE Web portal for a rural youth job market.
 - b. Connecting with ONILFA, national observatory for female enterprise, National Atlas of Female entrepreneurship (IT), LAG MONTE experience inspired by the experience of "Women Resource Centre" – Greece, Region of Western Macedonia (PT, IT, EE);
 - c. Connecting the planned ODISEO transnational project (SE and ES) with other youth oriented cooperations like the flagship project in the Baltic Sea Region.

- Financing (SE, NIE, IT)
 - a. Exchange experiences related to financing schemes for rural enterprises, local financial capital, revolving funds;
 - b. Undertake a survey over existing systems for financing in the MS, especially those who are using the RDP or other structural funds or raise local or regional funds;
 - c. Arrange a workshop for MAs, NRNs, EC, LAGs and others to present and discuss interesting innovative methods for financing that could be part of the next programming period;
 - d. Invite to a workshop about new financing instruments to fund local development and the role of Social Corporate Responsibility to create benefits for the local communities (See Annex 3 The Swedish Rural Network Working Group for Local Financial Capital Supply).

A JOINT NRN ACTIVITY building on/developing those proposed actions/experiences/tools/events/study tour?

→ ENRD CP will propose some potential joint actions to be discussed at the NRN meeting

Annex 1: Local food / Short Supply Chains: French Rural Network proposal

1. The French Rural Network proposals - local production / local markets (29/03/2011)

From: Christophe Buffet <c.buffet@rct-territoires.com>

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Dear NRN,

Following the two video-conferences that were organized by the Contact Point last week, the French Rural Network confirms its interest in working and sharing experiences with other NRNs on rural entrepreneurship and therefore taking an active part to the European thematic working group and to any workshop, conferences and events organized within the group.

The French Rural network is therefore glad to recall you all of our proposals:

Creation of a sub-group on local production / local markets:

The French Rural Network is especially interested in **local production and local markets** - also called "short supply chains". The network has been actively exploring the thematic through the creation of a national working group two years ago. The group has already published outcomes and reports that we will be able to disseminate soon among the network.

The French rural network proposes to start thinking on the issue of **local production / local markets** and to create a sub-group on this thematic. **This group could be launched during the 11th NRN meeting in Germany.**

Please find below the activities and the calendar the French rural network suggests for the next few weeks / months, so as to prepare the launching of the group:

Activities and calendar proposed:

By the 11th NRN meeting (27th of April, Germany):

- Identify the NRNs interested in short supply chains/local markets
- Collect information, intentions and opinions of each NRNs on the topic
- Provide a synthesis of the point of views on how local production / local market are implemented in different countries before the seminar which will take place on the 27th of April in Germany

During the 11th NRN meeting (Germany):

- Organize a first meeting between all the NRNs interested in the topic
- The possibility to invite experts on local production / local markets is offered to all NRNs : any NRN interested by this opportunity should reach the Contact point

After the 11th NRN meeting:

- Organize a workshop, gathering all interested NRNs - possibly during the next NRN meeting which could take place in Brussels in June (to be confirmed)

The French Rural Network would be grateful if any NRN interested in taking part to the group or interested in the topic could get back to us and answer the following questions:

- To what extent are you interested in this topic / to what extent is this topic relevant to your country?
- What do you expect from the group?

Any contribution (remark, suggestion or any document) will be of much interest to us, helping us identify your approach to the topic and your possible contribution to the group. We will very much appreciate if you could get back to us by the 6th of April, so as to get prepared to the German seminar. The French Rural Network would appreciate if you could also send a copy of your contributions to the Contact Point.

The French NRN is looking forward to hearing from you all and to share this new experience with you!

We thank you all in advance for your contribution.

Kind regards,

Christophe Buffet

2. State of Art on short supply chains in France: Discussion paper provided by French NRN

This discussion paper is the synthesis of a document written by Brigitte Midoux, official representative for the directorate general of agriculture, agro-food and territories policies within the French Ministry of agriculture, food, rurality, fisheries and territorial planning (MAAPRAT), under the works of the French rural network.

Dossier



Overview of short supply chains in France

The development of short supply food chains¹ appears now as one of the solutions to meet challenges that territories face nowadays: by creating added value, short supply chains contribute to the development of a more sustainable and responsible consumption, to maintaining agriculture in tourist and peri-urban areas in conjunction with the city (they are then called "proximity" supply chains). Moreover, short supply chains promote and allow the emergence of new synergies and forms of solidarity between local players.

The working group on "economic development of local resources: agriculture and food", has taken further the thematic on short supply chains with two goals: promote exchanges between concerned players, and identify interesting experiences to enhance. The work of this group identifies several areas of work, condition for both implementation and achievement of short supply chains. They show that:

- The development of short supply chains is a complex process that relies on an integrated approach at the scale of a territory, which supposes to develop different actions simultaneously with a whole variety of actors.
- It is necessary to act on product supply, on linking supply and demand as well as on consumers, all in a social cohesion approach that guarantees a fair access to quality food between population groups.

THE IMPLEMENTATION OF SHORT SUPPLY CHAINS: A COMPLEX INTEGRATED APPROACH

The installation or diversification of producers, are key factors for the development of short supply chains. The success of these approaches is greatly enhanced by the existence of territorial coherent strategies that involve in a coordinated way all the actors. But the installation or diversification project will be successful only if there are adapted tools and opportunities on the territory. As such, it is necessary to keep processing plants adapted at a local level, to develop group workshops, to structure short supply chains at a territorial scale so as to ensure costs sharing, to organize supply and opportunities. The success of installations in short supply chains relies also on adapted project support and networking of players, diversified financial support, and taking better account of land-use issues especially in urban planning documents.

References on types of support for installation in short supply chains (in French): [Prise en compte de l'agriculture dans les documents d'urbanisme \(scot\)](#), [synthèse atelier](#), [fiches techniques](#)

¹ A short supply chain is a marketing method for farm products that is realized either by direct selling from producer to consumer, or by indirect selling provided that there is only one intermediary.

A POTENTIAL OPPORTUNITY IN COLLECTIVE CATERING

If catering is proving an attractive market opportunity, the need for stable volumes and quality, such as EU rules on non-distortion of competition, are bottlenecks in the development of catering.

It is the reason why introducing local products in catering requires the commitment of local elected officials through a project approach, the development of coaching and training for professionals, thoughts on the use of the public procurement code in order to give producers the opportunity to access preferentially to public demand, to strengthen the integration of short supply chains in distribution patterns and the professionalization of the sector via a structure that improves supply.

The voluntary approach to shop with local products implies significant changes in the practices of different actors of catering, from the conception of food plans to managers' habits, who have to modify their purchasing practices, as well as the farmer who has to anticipate from upstream the volumes that he will have to supply, to balance the roles of producer, seller and facilitator for the territory and the farming sector.

References (in French): [Actes, fiches techniques , Guide de la restauration collective](#)

SHORT SUPPLY CHAINS: A STRONG COHESION VECTOR

It seems necessary nowadays to consider ways of reconciling social cohesion and short supply chains. This consideration concerns particularly implementation ways to facilitate access to quality food for all. Short supply chains can therefore prove some interest as they generate dynamics if they come with specific actions in favor of the poor. Indeed, they can strengthen more easily the capacity of affected populations ("empowerment"), the "social mix" and the construction of social cohesion.

Reference (in French): [synthèse et fiches techniques](#)

SYNERGIES BETWEEN ECONOMIC ACTORS TO STRENGTHEN

Short supply chains imply the coordination of multiple actions at the scale of a territory, while involving diverse actors: a few experiences have proven that the creation of dynamics between players, from upstream (production) as well as from downstream (marketing) is necessary to promote the emergence and also the structuring of short supply chains. The willful resolution of actors and their ability to work together are pre-requisites for the success of these chains, which now leads the players to question the forms of governance to develop.

References (in French): [synthèse et fiches techniques](#)

THE FORM OF GOVERNANCE TO ADOPT: A CENTRAL ISSUE

In the current context of changes in the agricultural sector, of new social, environmental and economic challenges, designing new governance for the local food chain appears as a possible catalyst for a sustainable development of territories as well as for local food production to strengthen short supply chains.

But the complexity of territories and diversity of concerned actors may prove a barrier to the development of effective governance. To elaborate a structured strategy within a territory project can be an appropriate response to those challenges. It is therefore necessary to question the appropriate level of implementation, re-thinking the territory in terms of product flows, pooling resources, organizing space and information traffic. Governance will also imply institutionalizing consultation, encouraging public-private partnerships in the interest of territorial cooperation and social cohesion.

If national and EU policies may represent real levers for food governance, especially in terms of production and processing methods, regulation and supervision along the food chain, local governance has a very clear role to play in the implementation of those food policies.

References (in French): [Gouvernance alimentaire des agglomérations françaises](#),

[mise en perspective des circuits courts avec les enjeux alimentaires](#), [guide à l'attention des élus et des animateurs de territoires](#), [Observatoire des circuits courts](#)

CONCLUSION

The observation of multiple local dynamics around short supply chains, made in the context of the rural network, at national as well as regional level, suggests that those chains could eventually represent a market segment rather than a "niche", especially because they contribute to new structures and habits on the territories.

In terms of potential, the challenges of short supply chains are described as substantial since, besides the capture of value for the producer, they allow savings on other segments of the costs chain and the creation of value on intangible assets (branding, local rooting, authenticity and social bonds).

To harness this potential while ensuring fair compensation for different levels of the sector and a socially inclusive territorial integration, the works of the French rural network show that the organization of short supply chains require a territorialized comprehensive policy, both at European and national level.

Annex 2: Inclusion of specific target groups: BE-WAL Rural Network proposal

1. The BE-WAL proposal- production of a short video on young farmers and new challenges they have to face in rural areas (08/04/2011)

From: Cécile Schalenbourg <c.schalenbourg@skynet.be>

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Dear all,

Please find a proposal from Walloon network.

We produce a short video on young farmers and new challenges they have to face in rural areas.

We are ready to share this experience and compile, in a long European version, some videos built in a same spirit and with a common framework by UE networks.

Yes, we should use MyENRD forum :-)))

Let me know your interest by e-mail. We will "formalize" practical aspects and collaboration in Germany.

Best regards

Cécile

2. Proposal on Young Farmers



FILM « YOUNG FARMERS »

Leadership :

Cécile Schalembourg – Walloon Rural Network (Belgium)

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Context

After a work session with farmers representatives (Young Farmers Federation), it appears that needs for training and support increase during installation phase. The process of installation as farmer is reduced to a technical and economical study. Social needs are not taken into account. Similarly, training opportunities (after installation) need to be updated to reflect changes and evolutions in farmer profession : a new panel of training sessions need to be set up.

A second aspect is how young farmers face announced changes : climatic change, environment, energy and multifunctionality. How do they adapt their practices and way of thinking ? Are they pro-active ? What do they still develop?

We propose to create a video that will highlight important aspects of young farmers situation. What are interesting practices, relevant experiences that could illustrate :

- To start or continue a farming activity (included for young people out of family farming) : what motivations, levers and difficulties, life project, lifecourse and career.
- Multifunctional agriculture : what interests for young farmers to develop a multifunctional farm : to produce, to process, to sell, to open its farm ? Why ? Which challenges does it meet ? What social demand ?
- Environment and energy : how do Young farmers face energy and environment challenges ? Are they receptive ? What impact on their farm development, on the general perception of agriculture ? Is it more expensive to produce with green-friendly methods ? is environment conflicting with productivity ? Living observation, management of soils and water, improvement of farming practices and controlling the flows,... are they ready to integrate these dimensions in their daily life ? Are they ready to enter in future CAP new dimensions ?
- Networks : young farmer evolves in a social network (neighbors, village, activity in rural area, maintain of essential functions for people,...), in a territorial network (interactions with the life of a territory, use and production of local resources,...), a professional network (others farmers, training sector, providers, banks, local developers,...)
- Entrepreneur and businessman : a farm needs to be managed as any enterprise. It requires specific and strong skills in administrative and financial management, controlling data, knowledge of challenges and actuality, adaptability, curiosity and openness.
- Regulatory aspects : each farm has to deal with standards and norms, with CAP regulations. How are aspects of control and quality, food safety taken in account ? How to take advantage / benefit from norms and standards ? What tools developed by Member States and EU are helpful for farmers ?

How to use this video?

- As an animation tool for farmers associations, rural NGO, local communities in order to launch the debate around new challenges, training of young farmers and recommendations for future RDP. We propose to work on a methodological guideline for the use of this video.
- As a way to promote agriculture and young farmers near a wider public (diffusion via other medias, local televisions,...)
- As a way to show European dimension of agriculture and how young farmers evolve and face new challenges in different Member States. We are not alone ☺

Planning for Walloon video

	Subject	Date	Where
1	Scénario, main questions and casting	April	Under construction ☺
2	Presentation to EU networks and collection of interests	April	NNU Meeting Germany
3	Film of Walloon videos	May / June	
4	Montage	July / Augustus	
5	Promotion	September	

Proposal to other networks

- Creation of a virtual work group to complete the content above (other challenges, questions, aspects,...)
- Each network partner organizes itself (and finances) the production of six small videos by using same technical conditions as Walloon network (common standards and way of filming). We can provide a technical framework. These videos are in local language, but each video is subtitled in English by the partner itself.
- Is it possible for PCE to finance the final montage or have we to include that in our budget ?

Technical aspects

- 6 small interviews showing young farmer speaking and in activity (context, farm,...) : max 4 minutes / video
- subtitled in English
- use of common standards (defined by Walloon network for its video)

Annex 3: Local Financing instruments: The Swedish Rural Network Working Group for Local Financial Capital Supply

The members of the working group for local financial capital supply are presented below. Are you interested of these questions, please feel free to get in touch!

NAME	ORGANISATION	TELEPHONE
Chairman		
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The European Agricultural Fund
for Rural Development.
Europe investing in rural areas



The Swedish Rural Network Working Group for Local Financial Capital Supply

Background and mission

Many Swedish companies have, in comparison with other countries, a high rate of loans, in percentage of its capital. This is due even for rural businesses. Entrepreneurs and organisations in rural areas also have difficulty to expand their activities since it is difficult to get enough bank credits. It is therefore important to help them find capital and new approaches to fund investments in rural areas.

In the working group we are aware that this is not the case for every rural entrepreneur or organisation. But the problem of finding investment capital is nevertheless big enough for us to focus upon finding new solutions.

Due to new and stricter rules, the banks have problems to meet the demand for loans from the public, the private and the non-profit sector. Furthermore the number of local bank offices is decreasing and also subsequently so is the number staff with experience in evaluating the success potential for business ideas from a local community perspective. At the same time, there are few possibilities for individuals to direct their savings to be used for local investments. There are some local initiatives existing, but there is still a lot to do to be able to transfer these initiatives as working concepts to be used in other areas. The task of the Thematic Working Group for Local Financial Capital Supply can therefore be expressed as:

The group is working to raise the availability of risk capital, donation capital and loan capital to be used for development of local economies in Sweden.

Two ways forward...

The Working Group has identified two ways to develop possible solutions. One is to create a broad practitioners network joining existing and potential actors working for local financial capital supply. The other way is to support the existing successful actors who have chosen to work with local "savings companies".

Network for practitioners

Do you have a local organization/structure with the aim to provide local financial capital supply or are you just about to start one?

Please get in touch with us! All Sweden Shall Live in cooperation with Coompanion and the Eco bank is working to establish a national "practitioners network". The aim is to identify and create a network, and to analyse and disseminate information about local organisations that provide investment capital and about their ways of working.

As practitioners we regard local initiatives as those established to use local capital to fund projects, activities or businesses. This can be an economic association created to start a cooperative school, a development company or village company working with local development; a risk capital company working to support local businesses; a donation and scholarship fund supporting local projects and initiatives; a bank with financial instruments for local recycling systems, or; a savings funds where you can save and borrow local capital, etc. You can read more in the brochure "Vi samlar lokalt kapital" (www.helasverige.se, click on "Hämta våra skrifter") which is about villages who have already started such initiatives.

Local recycling of funding and capital is just at its starting point. But it is an effective way to partly or totally finance local development in a sustainable way. In this network we want to exchange experiences but also share them with other local actors interested in developing solutions for local financing:

Please get in touch with the practitioners network through Eric Edung at eric@ekobanken.se

tel: +46 8 551 714 70 or Ulla Herlitz at ulla.herlitz@helasverige.se tel: +46 703 62 82 34

Local Savings Companies

Locally-based economies will be a necessary basic infrastructure in a future and more sustainable society. The ability to organize saving and financing at a local level will determine if the transition to greater efficiency in resource management will succeed or not.

However the local economies are facing major concrete challenges:

- To organise the need of sharing risk and profit of local savings with a business fabric (private, public or non profit) with which the locals feel they have a relationship and a responsibility for, and;
- To evaluate the sustainability and give priority to one investment before another according to its ability to "refund" and "give back" to the local economy.

Our aim is to identify, analyse and support the development of practical educative examples of local savings companies with local savings and financing through a "development workshop" or incubator. This includes raise raising awareness of the importance of these new financing structures for local development in general and for the transition to a more resource efficient society in particular.

Are you interested to know more about Local Savings Companies please get in touch with: Jörgen Andersson at jorgen@fjallbete.nu tel: +46 706 30 98 74