Social Innovation in Marginalised Rural Areas

Call: H2020-ISIB-2015-2

Innovative, Sustainable and Inclusive Bioeconomy

**Work Programme:** Topic ISIB-03-2015. Unlocking the growth potential of rural areas through enhanced governance and social innovation

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**Deliverable 7.3**

**Report on Lessons Learned from Social Innovation Actions in Marginalised Rural Areas**

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List of Acronyms

DNT Norwegian Trekking Associations
CS Case Study
EFI European Forest Institute
GVA Gross Value Added
IA Innovation Action
IAI Innovation Action Implementer
LA Local Actor
LAG Local Action Group
MRA Marginalised Rural Area
NGO Non-Governmental Organization
RDP Rural Development Programme
SDG Sustainable Development Goals
SEEDS-Int Social Economic and Environment Development Services- International
SI Social Innovation
SITT Social Innovation Think Thank
WP Work Package
Executive Summary

In the SIMRA H2020 project, seven innovation actions on grassroots initiatives across Europe and the Mediterranean basin have been initiated in agriculture, forestry, and rural development. The Innovation Actions in SIMRA have enabled actors in marginalised rural areas to test and exploit their potential for social innovation. The main aim was to realize impacts in the territory and the market, and in building capacities within local communities, civic organisations and governments.

The co-construction process of the SIMRA Innovation Actions comprised: (i) Design phase, aiming at defining the scope of action of each initiative, the objectives the stakeholders wish to pursue, and operationalising the Innovation Action activities; (ii) an Implementation phase in which the planned social innovation activities are carried out, including dissemination of the activities, processes and outcomes to the wider public; and (iii) an Evaluation phase in which the achievement of the objectives (performance) is assessed.

During the evaluation phase, three sources of information have been employed to extract lessons from the experiences of the Innovation Actions: an Innovation Action assessment report, a local-level lessons learned workshop, and an international workshop on lessons learned with participation of the Social Innovation Think Tank.

Informed by these sources of information, several elements have emerged as crucial for Social Innovation initiatives to thrive. The most significant of these are: equipping local actors with leadership and networking skills, the promotion and management of relationships and building trust (social capital), complementing local know-how with mentoring and specific training, access to finance (including funders willing to take risks) and smart business model design, as well as policies allowing cross-sectoral initiatives.

The advances achieved by the involvement of the SIMRA project in each Innovation Action were assessed using the measure of Societal Readiness Level. The seven Innovation Actions were assessed to have advanced to differing extents, some at an early stage moving from having identified the problem to initial testing of the proposed solution, through to a high level advancing from a state of solutions having been demonstrated to the solutions being complete. The project partner intervention as facilitator, coach and counsellor of the local actors was found to be useful in guiding the progress of the Social Innovation.
1. Introduction

1.1. Rationale and Objectives of Deliverable 7.3

This report presents analyses the experiences of the seven Innovation Actions (IAs) undertaken in the SIMRA project. The aim of the report is to (pool the knowledge gained in the practical implementation of Social Innovations in marginalised rural areas.

The seven social Innovation Actions in the SIMRA project are:

1. Coaching socially disadvantaged women into developing successful small business initiatives (Lancashire and Cumbria counties, United Kingdom; led by University of Lancaster), referred to as the “Lancaster Innovation Action”;  
2. Economic empowerment of women in Deir El Ahmar (North Bekaa, Lebanon; led by SEEDS-int), referred to as the “Lebanon Innovation Action”;  
3. Community participation for forest value and human wellbeing in the Solsonès county, Lleida (Catalonia, Spain; led by FORECO), referred to as the “Solsonès Innovation Action”;  
4. Implementing a land banking initiative in Gúdar-Javalambre, Teruel (Aragón, Spain; led by EFI), referred to as the “Teruel Innovation Action”;  
5. Integrated ecosystemic value-enhancement of the Guadeloupe forest agrobiodiversity (VALAB) (Guadeloupe, France; led by HUTTON), referred to as the “Guadeloupe Innovation Action”;  
6. Norwegian Trekking Association’s role in integrating immigrants in marginalised rural areas of Norway (Gudbrandsdalen, Norway; led by ØF/ENRI), referred to as the “Gudbrandsdalen Innovation Action”;  
7. Supporting the socio-entrepreneurial potential of local young people in Belluno (Veneto, Italy; led by ETIFOR), referred to as “ValBelluna Innovation Action”.

Figure 1 shows the location of the six of the Innovation Actions which are in continental Europe and the Mediterranean area. The location of Innovation Action in Guadeloupe, France, in the Caribbean Sea, is not shown.

The objective of this document is to present the lessons learned through the design and implementation phases of seven social Innovation Actions (IAs) in Marginalised Rural Areas in Europe and beyond. The deliverable builds on the procedure outlined in the Guidelines for SIMRA Social innovation Actions as described by Gorriz-Mifsud and Marini Govigli (2018; R7.1), and on the feasibility assessment of the Innovation Actions examined and presented by Marini Govigli et al. (2018; R7.2).

According to (Secchi, 1999) “a lesson learned is knowledge or understanding gained by experience. The experience may be positive, as in a successful test or mission, or negative, as in a mishap or failure... A lesson must be significant in that it has a real or assumed impact on operations; valid in that is factually and technically correct; and applicable in that it identifies a specific design, process, or decision that reduces or eliminates the potential for failures and mishaps, or reinforces a positive result.” By documenting the Lessons Learned from Innovation Actions in Marginalised Rural Areas, evidence is provided regarding the enabling and constraining factors during the Innovation Action process, the common challenges, and the changes observed during development and implementation of the initiatives. The experiences distilled from these lessons will benefit the implementation of other similar initiatives.
This project has received funding from the European Union’s Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under Grant Agreement No 677622

Figure 1. Location of six of the SIMRA Innovation Actions. (The location of Innovation Action in Guadeloupe is not shown) Source: Marini Govigli et al. (2018; R7.2), map based upon GoogleEarthPro.

1.2. Scope and Structure of the Document

The scope of Deliverable D7.3 is to:

i) report on the approach applied to generate the lessons learned from the Social Innovation Actions in Marginalised Rural Areas;

ii) present the findings learned through the process of design and implementation of the Innovation Actions in the SIMRA project.

The analysis on the Lessons Learned from the SIMRA Innovation Actions is designed to reply to the following questions:

- What worked well in the design and implementation of Social Innovation Actions? (i.e. factors linked to success);

- What did not work well? (e.g. possible crisis in the initiatives and the reasons for any unsuccessful endeavours);

- Which amendments would have helped strengthen the process of implementation? (i.e. what would have needed to be done differently);

- What recommendations could be made for other groups implementing similar types of Social Innovation initiatives in marginalised rural areas? (e.g. key messages that could help other people engaging in social innovation or social entrepreneurship in rural areas).

This Deliverable is structured into five main sections, focusing on:

- overview of the Social Innovation Actions (Section 2),

- description of the methodology for capturing the lessons learned (Section 3),

- the results on lessons learned (Section 4),

- the assessment of the Social Innovation Action progress (Section 5), and

- concluding with recommendations (Section 6).
2. Understanding the Social Innovation Actions in SIMRA

An “Innovation Action” within SIMRA is defined as “a demonstration or set of pilot activities aiming to explore the technical feasibility of the new or improved knowledge on Social Innovations —in terms of processes, related technology, products or services— in a near-to-operational environment within Marginalised Rural Areas” (adapted from European Commission, 2014). Social Innovation Actions aim to enable the local actors to test and exploit the potential of Social Innovations in their areas.

The Innovation Actions tackle the sixth specific objective of the SIMRA project, of creating collaborative learning and networking opportunities at different scales, with continuous interactions amongst researchers, ‘knowledge brokers’ and stakeholders to foster and mainstream social innovation, leaving a durable legacy. To boost such local collaborative learning and networking processes, activities of the Innovation Actions included:

i) the organization of periodic local meetings to coordinate the concerns and interests of local actors to discuss and initiate innovative approaches to promote and deliver rural development;

ii) the organisation of networking events to encourage interested people to present their initiatives, learn about social innovations, and discuss territorial priorities and possibilities, and/or assess the experiences of Innovation Actions;

iii) the establishment or reinforcement of new networks of local and external actors (if applicable).

The Innovation Action activities have inspired discussions and collaborations across local communities, and governmental and non-governmental organizations. It was hypothesized that the Social Innovation Action process would strengthen bonding social capital (ties between individuals within the same network) and improve bridging and linking social capital (ties with other networks and authorities) (Gorriz-Mifsud and Marini Govigli, 2018; SIMRA Report R7.1).

All of the Social Innovation Actions had an aim to create impacts in the territory and/or the market through reconfiguring societal or institutional practices, creating opportunities for local business development, and building capacity within local governments or communities. The ultimate aim was to contribute to improved societal well-being. Table 1 presents a summary description of the Social Innovation Actions in the SIMRA project.

Table 1. Summary description of the Social Innovation Actions in the SIMRA project.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Innovation Action Topic</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Aim of the Social Innovation Action</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assisting socially disadvantaged women in developing successful business initiatives</td>
<td>Lancaster, UK</td>
<td>The Innovation Action aims to help the marginalised rural area to improve its local economy and ensure the social integration of vulnerable women and their families. The Innovation Action in Lancashire and Cumbria is a not for profit organisation, which provides an alternative model for business training and coaching for women entrepreneurs, who have been overlooked or dismissed by business support services because they run their business from home to fit around their personal circumstances. Therefore, the programme is designed mainly for women from socially disadvantaged backgrounds due to circumstances such as, being stuck in low paid work, living on social benefits, struggling with a disability or primary care responsibilities, or recovering from domestic violence. The Innovation Action also supports women refugees who have recently arrived into Lancashire, UK. The Innovation Action has two back-to-back courses: “The Sowing Club” is the first stage of the process, which aims to</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Community participation for forest value and human wellbeing</strong></td>
<td>Solsona, Spain</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Explore the women’s skills, confidence, support systems and what it means to run a business. Women completing the sowing-club who are ready to start a business can then enter “The Growing Club”, a programme that takes the business to its next stage, with the input and support from other women running businesses to ensure that the business has the best possible chance of growing.</strong></td>
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<tr>
<th><strong>Economic Empowerment of Women</strong></th>
<th>Beirut, Lebanon</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>The Innovation Action aims at transforming traditional homemade food recipes into standardized and scientifically monitored products of jams, pickles, dried fruits, vegetables preserved in oil, sweets and delicacies. The present activity supports local women in Deir el Ahmar village in developing profitable businesses and become a respected reference to the community, while also creating a positive cycle of development and creating successful partnerships with members of the community. The women preserved their successful business model and developed their know-how in practice to become actors of change and partners in the decision-making process at the village level. By increasing the self-confidence of the women, this Innovation Action contributes to improving the sustainability of their well-being and livelihoods. Moreover, establishing a viable business will eventually consolidate the economic situation of the families of the women.</strong></td>
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<tr>
<th><strong>Implementing a land banking initiative</strong></th>
<th>Teruel, Spain</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>The Innovation Action fosters the development of a land banking initiative which aims to reverse the abandonment of agricultural and forestry parcels with a specific emphasis on the prevention of wildfires and reviving traditional varieties. The first embryo of this Innovation Action takes place in the municipality of Olba, with a second started in Albentosa. The establishment of this Innovation Action will help to improve the social and landscape resilience to wildfire risk, and sustain the rural economy through the production of local agricultural products.</strong></td>
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<tr>
<th><strong>Norwegian Trekking Associations role in integrating immigrants in rural</strong></th>
<th>Norway</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>The Innovation Action in Gudbrandsdalen focuses on integrating immigrants, mainly refugees or work migrants, in the rural area by social nudging mechanisms. The trekking associations motivate immigrants to join locals in walking, rambling, trekking or hiking which enables the establishment of social networks, learning and teaching customs and culture of rural areas environments. The Innovation Action contributes to</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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marginalised areas of Norway

(i) building social network that may lead to new and close relations, and help connections with the local labour market; (ii) hand-over a tradition of cherishing and exploiting outdoor activities in a sustainable way to newly established immigrants; (iii) challenging established ways of trekking in rural areas by learning from other traditions and ways of living with nature; (iv) help improve the general health of the migrants through physical and social activity. The formation of this Innovation Action improves the demographic sustainability of the marginalised rural area, through the integration of immigrant groups into the rural society.

| Supporting the socio-entrepreneurial potential of local young people | Valbelluna, Italy | The Innovation Action aims to support the sustainable socio-entrepreneurial potential of local young people in ValBelluna. Activities such as sustainable organic agriculture or short value chains, community tourism and social inclusion provide the basis for developing territorial and multi-sectoral opportunities which are focused on human capabilities and relationships. Addressing the challenge of unemployment and outmigration requires policies and integrated approaches including a new cultural dimension, and support for youth-led innovative entrepreneurial ideas in the cultural, social and environmental sectors, as well as a better environment for emerging start-up businesses. The Innovation Action creates new local networks, develops the entrepreneurial potential of local young people (through a rural hackathon), and supports the start-up financially and the initial training of one selected social innovation initiative. |

| VALAB (Integrated Ecosystemic value-enhancement of the Guadeloupe Forest Agrobiodiversity) | Guadeloupe, France | The Innovation Action aims to support the development of a shared vision of the Integrated ecosystemic value-enhancement of the Guadeloupe Forest Agrobiodiversity amongst local actors. This used a series of activities with the social innovation actors. These activities included a rapid scoping exercise about the social, technical, environmental and institutional constraints met by the Social Innovation actors, writing a Manifesto, and two workshops which focused on production within, and protection of, the Guadeloupean forest understorey. |
3. Approach for Capturing the Lessons Learned from Seven Innovation Actions

As conceptualised in Gorriz-Mifsud and Marini Govigli (2018; R7.1), the SIMRA Innovation Actions are structured into three phases, namely: the Design phase (from July 2017 to September 2018), the Implementation phase (from the end of 2018 to mid-2019), and the Evaluation phase (from June to early September 2019). All three phases integrate the principal of co-construction through which local stakeholders have key roles in identifying and making decisions about the different elements of the Innovation Action. The extraction of lessons learned after implementation of the Innovation Action constitutes the main outcome of the Evaluation phase.

3.1. Summary of the Phases of the SIMRA Innovation Actions

Figure 2 shows a flux diagram of the different phases of the Innovation Actions. The graph shows a quasi-linear procedure. However, the Innovation Action process face several “loops” in their development which vary depending upon the different challenges encountered (Valentino Marini Govigli et al., 2019). Through the Social Innovation Action processes, SIMRA partners have accompanied the local actors by acting as facilitators, scientific mentors, rapporteurs, communicators, and evaluators.

Figure 2. Flux diagram showing the different phases of the Innovation Actions. Source: Gorriz-Mifsud and Marini Govigli (2018).
The Design phase (i.e. conception and formulation) defined the scope of action of the Innovation Actions and the objectives that the stakeholders wished to pursue. This stage covered:

- the identification of the local stakeholders, from which some act as innovators and network agents, hence becoming the Social Innovation Action “local actors”;
- the identification of the objectives and challenges to be addressed;
- the selection of a social innovation angle relevant to the needs of local stakeholders, i.e. the Social Innovation initiative, which included co-constructed activities which would support the achievement of the objectives identified;
- the feasibility assessment of the proposed actions (for further details, see Gorriz-Mifsud and Marini Govigli (2018; R7.1).

The proposed initiatives were assessed with respect to the SIMRA definition of Social Innovation to confirm the suitable fit of their characteristics to the project Innovation Actions.

To assess the feasibility of the selected social innovations, an analysis of the proposed actions, taking account of economic, social and technical criteria, was co-constructed with local actors and presented in Marini Govigli et al. (2018; R7.2). During the Implementation phase the Social Innovation activities were carried out, including dissemination of information about the activities, processes and outcomes to the wider public. In some cases, SIMRA partners (Innovation Action implementers) contributed to the Innovation Actions through the provision of resources for some of the activity costs considered as “seed money” or “small material needs”.

The timing of activities of some Innovation Actions experienced delays due to seasonal (climate-related) factors, such as outdoor activities in Norway, or the agricultural actions in Spain.

In the Evaluation phase bottlenecks and challenges were critically evaluated, extracting and compiling good practices and lessons learned at the level of the Innovation Action, and providing guidance on the potential transferability to other rural areas. The approach for capturing lessons learned is an ongoing process throughout the phases of Innovation Actions referred to above, with the intention of learning from the successes and (possible) failures of the Innovation Actions. Information was gathered for the evaluation by applying specific instruments such as Innovation Action diaries and meetings of the Innovation Action Implementers (coordinated by EFI) by Skype and face-to-face. The reporting on lessons learned following a template developed for the purpose (see Annex 1) which included reporting on local workshop organized and the lessons learned by local actors, the creation of a participatory video, and in the forum provided by the 2nd workshop of the SIMRA Social Innovation Think Tank, held in Aberdeen in October 2019 (see Figure 2).

The role of external agents has also been examined. The SIMRA Innovation Actions have been designed with two main, key agents that interact for building the Social Innovation process: (i) the SIMRA partners (Innovation Action implementers), (ii) and the local clique (Local Actors). This interaction can be characterised by the following collaboration paths (Marini Govigli et al., 2019):

- **Facilitation**: the role of the SIMRA partner consisted of providing tips and practical tools to the local actors enabling the group to work more efficiently;
- **Mentoring**: the team in the SIMRA partner actively guided local actors in the development of the action;
- **Collaborative management**: the SIMRA partner collaborates directly in the management of the action;
- **Direct involvement**: the team in the SIMRA partner is a member, partner or beneficiary of the Social Innovation Action Implementers.

In the SIMRA Innovation Actions, the focus was only on the first two collaboration paths.
3.2. Methodology for Identifying Lessons Learned

The process for capturing the Lessons Learned from Innovation Actions in SIMRA was designed to better understand and critically evaluate: (i) the Social Innovation outcomes, i.e. achievement of the objectives identified during the design phase (performance), and (ii) the Social Innovation process, during the design and implementation phases. To that end, an initial comparative analysis was performed, enriched and validated with local workshops and a European-level expert workshop (Error! Reference source not found.).

Figure 3. Approach applied in SIMRA for capturing the Lessons Learned through the phases of the Innovation Action implementation.

3.2.1. Documenting the process and the evaluation

The sources of information employed for the comparative analysis were the Innovation Action diary, the feasibility assessment report, and the report on lessons learned, as described below.

3.2.1.1. The Innovation Action diary

Conceptualised as a quasi-ethnographic tool, SIMRA partners (Innovation Action Implementers) documented the process throughout the project. They noted the progress and challenges encountered in the local meetings, as well as ways to overcome those challenges, recording other milestones, and final reflections of the Innovation Action Implementers.

3.2.1.2. Innovation Action feasibility assessments

The Innovation Action design phase started with SIMRA partners going through the process of selecting a Social Innovation Action. This step was required given that the situations, and thus the suitability, of the initiatives identified at the stage of the project proposal had changed significantly because they had been already developed or had lost their relevance. The process of selection of the Innovation Actions included a range of activities such as initial scoping meetings with local stakeholders, brainstorming workshops on the Social Innovation initiatives, and meetings with
interested local actors and entrepreneurs. These activities identified potential spaces for the design of Social Innovation Actions and provided the information required for the selection of the Social Innovation Action embryos.

After the initial selection of a Social Innovation initiative, a series of meetings were held with local actors (i.e. the social entrepreneurs) and the SIMRA partners (i.e. the Innovation Action implementers) to co-construct the Innovation Action. These meetings included a diagnosis of the current situation, a detailed design of the proposed activities, and an overall assessment of the feasibility of the Social Innovation idea. The Social Innovation Guidelines (Gorriz-Mifsud and Marini Govigli, 2018; R7.1) guided the approach to the feasibility assessment using the TELCOS approach (Taylor, 2007). The TELCOS feasibility assessment enables verification of whether local actors have the capacity to develop the social innovation across six dimensions. The following are the guide questions for each of these dimensions:

- Technical - Do Local Actors have the technical expertise to complete the project and its required tasks? Is the project proposition practical?
- Economic - Is the proposal economically viable in the long term, providing benefits that compensate for the costs incurred?
- Legal - Does the current legal framework of the Marginalised Rural Area support the Social Innovation implementation?
- Collaborative - Is it feasible to involve all of the key players in the successful implementation of the Social Innovation plan?
- Operational - Does the proposed Social Innovation work well? Will the factors that are hindering the Action be overcome?
- Schedule - Is the timescale of the Social Innovation plan feasible?

A comparative analysis of the findings from the feasibility studies is reported in the SIMRA internal report Marini Govigli et al. (2018; R7.1).

3.2.1.3. Report on Lessons Learned at the level of the Innovation Action

The reports on the lessons learned at the level of the Innovation Action relate to the Design and Implementation phases, on how social innovation actions emerge, and how they are organised and work in practice. Based on the guidelines developed in Work Packages 2, 6 and 7 (see Annex 1), the Innovation Action Implementers reported the experiences gained. The core questions posed were:

- What went well during implementation of the Innovation action?
- What did not go well or had unintended consequences?
- If you would do it again, what would you do differently?
- What recommendations would you make to others doing similar projects or innovation actions?

The assessment of each Innovation Action Implementer was based on participant observation, the Innovation Action diaries, the feasibility assessment, and the final discussions with the local actors captured in the local workshops.

A matrix was also developed which showed the relationships between local actors, in terms of organisations, before and after the Innovation Action activities took place. Later, this matrix was used to perform a Social Network Analysis using UCINET (Hanneman and Riddle, 2005). The relationships
were symmetrised and assumed to be zero for cases about which the Innovation Action Implementer was uncertain. A ratio between new and pre-existing relations shows the increase in the size of the network, after normalisation.

3.2.2. Co-constructing lessons learned through face-to-face discussions

3.2.2.1. Local workshops

The evaluation phase focused on the elaboration of the reports from the Innovation Actions, and the co-construction process for lessons learned from the perspective of the local actors. In 2019, Local Workshops were held by each Innovation Action. These workshops were simultaneously internal and external events: i) internal, because they focused on discussing the advances, challenges, and possibilities when looking to the future; and ii) external, because one of their aims was to disseminate information about the activities of the Innovation Actions to which external actors were invited. These workshops also constitute achievement of Milestone 33.

Guidelines were prepared to harmonise the content of the workshops. Typically, these workshops comprised the Innovation Action Implementers, the local actors, local stakeholders or other interested local people, local or regional policy makers, invited experts, and members of the Social Innovation Think Tank (SITT). Once the Local Workshop was complete, the Innovation Action Implementers prepared a short report. These reports will form part of Deliverable 7.4.

The objectives of the local workshops were specified individually (see Table 2) and consisted of the following:

- To disseminate information about the concept of Social Innovation and the SIMRA project;
- To share the knowledge of the Local Actors and the Innovation Action Implementers, with the participants, about the phases of the Innovation Action;
- To exchange information with invited experts or speakers (e.g. members of the SIMRA Social Innovation Think Tank) related to details of the social innovation;
- To discuss feasible pathways for the evolution of the social innovation into the future, and the steps necessary to keep the initiative active;
- To establish and strengthen new networks;
- To collect the lessons learned from the perspective of the Local Actors;
- To discuss the preliminary lessons learned documented in the first drafts of the reports;
- To disseminate the achievements of the Innovation Action.
Table 2. Local Workshops held by the Innovation Actions of the SIMRA project.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Innovation Action</th>
<th>Location /Language</th>
<th>Date and Time, Title if applicable</th>
<th>Objectives</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Supporting the socio-entrepreneurial potential of local young people | Belluno, Italy Italian | 19 September 2019 17:30 to 19:30            | • Present the results of the Innovation Action on the territory;  
  • Reflect on the future European programming period and future prospects for social innovation in Valbelluna |
| Community participation for creating forest value and human wellbeing | Solsona, Spain Catalan | 21 September 2019 9:30 to 17:00 “Solsonès: sustainable territory” | • Disseminate the ideas of the Innovation Action on how forests and well-being are connected  
  • Disseminate information about the Pilot project organised in Solsona about wellbeing and forests  
  • Familiarisation with other successful initiatives on social innovation in the area  
  • Expand the network                                                                 |
| Assisting socially disadvantaged women in developing successful business initiatives | Lancaster, UK English | 26 September 2019 10:00 to 16:00            | • Present the results of the Innovation Action,  
  • Expand the network in order to help socially disadvantaged women                                                                 |
| Economic Empowerment of Women                                   | Beirut, Lebanon Arabic and English | 3 October 2019 9:00 to 16:00                | • Provide advanced knowledge on Social Innovation in Lebanon  
  • Capture the lessons learned from the implementation of the Social Innovation Action  
  • Identify future steps to initiate innovative inter-sectorial actions for Marginalised Rural Areas  
  • Disseminate the achievements of the Innovation Action to encourage interested actors to establish similar initiatives  
  • Establish a platform to encourage, inspire and engage new innovative actions in Marginalised Areas in Lebanon. |
| Implementing a land banking initiative                          | Teruel, Spain Spanish  | Afternoon events: 7 October 2019 “Networks to reactivate the land: land banking, Workshop in Olba” | • Improve the awareness of farmers and policy makers of the issues relating to land abandonment  
  • Support the creation of new networks between public and private actors  
  • Acknowledge the lessons learnt from the process of the Innovation Action |
| Towards a shared vision of the integrated ecosystemic value-enhancement of the Guadeloupean forest agrobiodiversity | organic farming and traditional varieties” 8 October 2019 “Networks to reactivate the land: Which is the role of municipalities?” | • To reflect upon the potential legacy of what has been done.  
Workshop in Albentosa  
• Improve awareness of the issue of land abandonment amongst policy makers out with the local area  
• Support the creation of new networks across the public and private actors  
• Present to local municipalities what the local actors have been doing, and seek wider policy support;  
• Reflect upon the legacy of what has been done, and identify financial and political support | Towards a shared vision of the integrated ecosystemic value-enhancement of the Guadeloupean forest agrobiodiversity | Guadeloupe French 26-27 January 2019 “Where are we now? Where do we want to go?” 11 May 2019 “The Common Good: what did we inherit, what do we want to leave to our children?” 1st Workshop:  
• To discuss the Innovation Action challenges that need to be tackled (backing up the Manifesto written earlier),  
• To reflect upon the futures they desired for themselves, and the barriers that could prevent them from achieving this vision and the possible solutions that could be implemented to overcome those barriers,  
• To envisage a trajectory from the current situation to a future desired situation. 2nd Workshop:  
• To discuss the protection of the forest understorey, the ecosystem services and biodiversity associated with the forest, and enable them to explain their idea of what the common good is and should be,  
• To elicit the collective mental model of participants of the territory, the ecosystem services it provided, the impact of human activities on ecosystems, and of their role in relation to this environment. | The role of Norwegian Trekking Associations in integrating immigrants in marginalised rural areas of Norway | Vågå, Norway Norwegian 27 September 2019 | • To learn how the participants perceived the process and outcome of the innovation action,  
• To identify what has worked well and what has not, in the innovation action, how could things have been done differently and what lessons we can bring forward,  
• To find out on how the Innovation Action can continue after the end of the SIMRA project. |
3.2.2.2. Lessons Learned Workshop and Participatory Videos

The co-construction of lessons learned was brought to the international level, through the guided discussion during the Lessons Learned Workshop (Aberdeen, UK; 14 to 17 October 2019). This workshop brought together 18 SIMRA partners, including all of those in charge of an Innovation Action (the Innovation Action Implementers), representatives of local actors, and members of the Social Innovation Think Tank (SITT). The Social Innovation Think Tank comprises authorities, practitioners, and researchers involved in social innovation across rural areas in Europe and the Mediterranean basin, and more widely.

The workshop was structured in four sessions:

i. The presentation of the concept of the Innovation Actions and the specific SIMRA Social Innovation initiatives, through a plenary presentation, complemented by a round of poster presentations (day 1);

ii. A world café discussion in which participants were split into four groups to discuss separate topics (day 2 morning);

iii. A participatory video session, including showing of the videos and roundtable discussions (day 2 afternoon);

iv. A session to bring together the lessons learned (day 3).

Apart from the minutes of the discussions of the group and plenary discussions, the view points and recommendations of individual participants were gathered through their preparation of personal dossiers. These documents contained basic information about each Innovation Action, some blank space for taking notes during the discussions, and a final page containing guiding questions in Box 1.

**Box 1. Guiding questions for the Aberdeen dossier.**

- What are the most surprising elements you have learned during these days?
- What are your opinions regarding the transversal issues dealt with in the World Café?
- What are the key factors that support and hinder the implementation of Social Innovation Actions...
  - ... over which the local actors have control?
  - ... over which the local actors do not have (or only limited) control? (structural aspects)
- What are your suggestions for each Social Innovation Action?
- What is your overall opinion about SIMRA Innovation Actions? (project procedure, role of partners)

The dossier was provided to the participants in the workshop on its first day, and their reflections returned on the last day.

A Participatory Video technique was used to contribute to the production of knowledge directed towards fostering social change. The process and outputs are designed to help stimulate dialogue for future negotiation of actions through collaboration with decision-makers, influencing social agendas, promoting the exchange of ideas and developing the internal capabilities of local stakeholders. By working together in the creation of the videos, Participatory Videos enable people explore and present an issue which is intended to bring about positive social change. The approach has developed over the past fifty years into one which is acknowledged and highly valued for engaging and empowering some of the most marginalised and unheard communities in the world (Cumming and Norwood, 2012; Milne et al., 2012).
At the heart of the approach is a set of facilitated techniques and processes for communities to explore their own issues through the production of a video. The process of creating a participatory video provides opportunities for people to collaboratively express, share, prioritise and investigate key issues, and present them based upon their sense of what is important so as to identify possible solutions, and ensure their voices are heard (Cumming and Norwood, 2012; InsightShare, 2019). Participants in such a process are usually representative of the wider community or the action group.

During the workshop, making Participatory Videos was employed for documenting critical reflections on the process and outcomes of the seven Innovation Actions, and for promoting knowledge gained during their implementation. At the beginning of the workshop in Aberdeen, each Innovation Action implementer and a local actor associated with their Action, prepared a video. This was guided by a specialised company (InsightShare).

The draft videos were presented to the other participants at the workshop participants to stimulate a facilitated discussion on the lessons learned from the Innovation Action. Final copies of the videos may be used for communicating results of the SIMRA project to wider external audiences. These videos are available online as listed in Table 3.

### Table 3. Online access to the Participatory Videos of the SIMRA Innovation Actions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Innovation Action</th>
<th>Web Link</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Coaching socially disadvantaged women into developing successful small business initiatives (Lancashire and Cumbria counties, United Kingdom; led by ULANC)</td>
<td><a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DZ21Wwys4MU">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DZ21Wwys4MU</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economic empowerment of women in Deir El Ahmar (North Bekaa, Lebanon; led by SEEDS-int)</td>
<td><a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XATxMLtgc5Q">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XATxMLtgc5Q</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Implementing a land banking initiative in Gúdar-Javalambre, Teruel (Aragón, Spain; led by EFI)</td>
<td><a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zVi343oOPDA">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zVi343oOPDA</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Norwegian Trekking Association’s role in integrating immigrants in marginalised rural areas of Norway (Gudbrandsdalen, Norway; led by ØF/ENRI)</td>
<td><a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mKIGB14aAgk">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mKIGB14aAgk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supporting the socio-entrepreneurial potential of local young people in Belluno (Veneto, Italy; led by ETIFOR)</td>
<td><a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OsS4M2J1GR0">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OsS4M2J1GR0</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community participation for forest value and human wellbeing in the Solsonès county, Lleida (Catalonia, Spain; led by FORECO);</td>
<td><a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4dcuwXdxAFa">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4dcuwXdxAFa</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Integrated Ecosystemic value-enhancement of the Guadeloupe Forest Agrobiodiversity (VALAB) (Guadeloupe, France; led by HUTTON)</td>
<td><a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xhE1Jsp6CDk">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xhE1Jsp6CDk</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The findings of the Lessons learned workshop were collated, and recommendations identified and reported in Section 5.
4. Results: Lessons Learned

4.1. Experiences from the Regular Interactions with Innovation Action Implementers

4.1.1. Lessons Learned from the Design and Feasibility Assessment

Six pilots and Innovations Actions were originally proposed in the SIMRA project. To these six actions a seventh was added with the Guadeloupean Case Study also as an Innovation Action, given the early stages of development of the project. This example enabled a link to be established with an EIP Operational Group, and thus expand the types of lessons to be learnt.

The initial six Innovation Actions prepared feasibility assessments which deepened the technical, economic, legal, collaborative, operational and schedule dimensions of the potential actions. The principal findings of the feasibility study are provided in Report 7.2 (Marini Govigli et al., 2018) which revealed the overall viability of the initiatives, but also the challenges to be faced in the implementation phase.

The feasibility assessment provided evidence and understanding of possible next steps and activities to be undertaken to avoid risks or of crises arising in the implementation phase. During the implementation phase of the social innovations it became clear that the processes are not linear, and instead can be characterised as iterative (Marini Govigli et al., 2019).

Despite the positive feasibility plans, some Innovation Actions encountered challenges to their implementation which related to external factors, seed money eligibility constraints, and the motivations of local actors. This was conspicuous in the case of the Innovation Action in Solsona (Spain). After initial talks with the Local Development of Cardona and Solsona, there was a lack of response to follow-up contacts which led to the removal of this example as a potential innovation action.

Alternative options of an Innovation Action were explored. This included contacting the Association of Rural Initiatives of Catalonia which is the regional coordinator of Local Action Groups. They suggested supporting the establishment of a potential network of grower of aromatic plants in the Pyrenees. However, when the producers were contacted, their interest was strongly focused on individual-based business development, rather than on new forms of cooperation that would fall within the scope of the SIMRA framework.

After this idea was dropped, initiatives were sought in the Solsonès county. There, an NGO was trying to revitalise an abandoned village through different socio-cultural and forest-based activities. However, after several local meetings to design the activities the engagement of key local actors for the implementation faded. It is believed that this revealed diverging interests and unrealistic expectations from the Innovation Action. As a consequence the Innovation Action Implementer refocused the planned activities, and the overall Innovation Action, towards a highly motivated innovator-led work stream focused on “forests and wellbeing”.

The “circles of redesigning” step is not unique to the Solsonès Innovation Action. The Teruel and the Lebanon Innovation Actions also had to redesign their approaches as the implementation phase progressed. In the Teruel case, the Innovation Action Implementers encountered a weak interest from local farmers in expanding their cultivated lands and thus re-activate some of the proposed abandoned parcels. Structural difficulties of attracting new farmers were also encountered, leading to the need of the efforts of volunteers and a refocusing on promoting traditional varieties of crops. In both cases, constraints on the eligibility of the use of the SIMRA budget for seed money (European Commission, 2017) led to disappointment amongst some local actors. Overall, this affected their
relationship with the Innovation Action Implementers. Alternative activities were sought but with limited success.

The Lebanon Innovation Action also refocused on the participatory marketing action plan and dropped its interest in developing solar panels project for energy saving, at least within SIMRA.

The main lesson learned from the design phase was that even when the ex-ante feasibility assessment attests the viability of the Innovation Actions, some conditions can lead to substantially different outcomes, as even small variations may lead to unexpected outcomes. Hence, a limitation of the ex-ante feasibility assessment forced local actors to reflect on specific actions, but did not foresee all of the problems that might arise.

### 4.1.2. Lessons learned from the Implementation

In the regular interactions between the Task Leader and the Innovation Action Implementers, the financing of the activities planned in the Innovation Action emerged as complex. Often, this brought about a complete reorganisation of the strategies of the Social Innovation initiatives. The sources of funding and planned expenses are summarised in Table 3.

**Table 3.** List of expenses incurred by the SIMRA Innovation Actions during the SIMRA project (not exhaustive).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Innovation Action</th>
<th>From Other Sources</th>
<th>SIMRA Financed</th>
<th>Pending Financing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Valbelluna</td>
<td>Salary of the GAL manager (financed by the Rural Development Programme)</td>
<td>Dissemination (Facebook announcements, website)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Preparatory training on business</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Coaching the winning start-ups</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Overall support of the Innovation Action Implementer</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gudsbrandalen</td>
<td>Overall support of the Innovation Action Implementer</td>
<td></td>
<td>Hiking equipment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Solsonès</td>
<td>Routine institutional practices</td>
<td>Overall support of the Innovation Action Implementer</td>
<td>Bus to bring school students to the forest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lancaster</td>
<td>Social Services subsidies</td>
<td>Dissemination (website), promotion</td>
<td>Salary of teachers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Overall support of the Innovation Action Implementer</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teruel</td>
<td>Organic mountain fruit growing course (financed by the Rural Development Programme)</td>
<td>Small dissemination materials</td>
<td>Low value expenses: farming equipment, fencing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Development Programme</td>
<td>Market study</td>
<td>High value expenses: irrigation channels repair work, work on increasing accessibility to land parcels</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------</td>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lebanon</td>
<td>Marketing expert</td>
<td>Solar panels (energy saving)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guadeloupe</td>
<td>AGRI EIP</td>
<td>Overall support of the Innovation Action Implementer</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3 shows two types of expenses faced by the Innovation Actions in their early stages: a) those relating to the time and efforts of the entrepreneurs themselves, and/or the required experts, facilitators, and external consultants; and b) those relating to the activities to conduct the Innovation Action including consumables, infrastructure, travel costs, and equipment.

Regarding the use of the SIMRA funding, the SIMRA project Grant Agreement states “our IAs will include the organization of periodic networking events to encourage interested actors to present, learn about, discuss and initiate innovative inter-sectorial actions for RD; the creation of market places (physical and virtual) for SI projects; and the start up or establishment of new networks amongst local actors”, and “IA implementers will (...) support small material needs (i.e. legal advice, corporate image, promotion material, signs)”. In addition “IA implementers will support (potential or real) innovators in identifying possible funds to implement/maintain SIs in a long-term perspective”.

Therefore, the principal contributions to local actors from SIMRA partners have been items relating to the organisation of Innovation Action-related events (e.g. transport, catering, leaflets, training materials, or bringing external experts to train local actors about Social Innovation and related topics), and items relating to dissemination and promotion (website, corporate image). Additionally, some services have been brought in such as the face-to-face surveys for a market study in Gúdar-Javalambre, and a marketing expert in Lebanon, which contributed to guiding and boosting the corresponding Innovation Action market-related activities, which related to the long-term sustainability of the Innovation Action.

Clarification of eligible costs within the concept of “small material needs” arrived too late for several Innovation Actions (September 2018), by which time the spring planting season in the Mediterranean was finished and thus the potential to provide farming tools was not possible, and the Norwegian hiking season was finished.

Delays in implementation of the Innovation Actions were also due to differences in understanding of the project timeframe by local actors. Partners, from SIMRA and local actors, working in the Innovation Actions perceived the timelines for boosting the Social Innovation differently (for example in the Gudbrandsdalen Innovation Action, Norway).

Thus, lessons learned for managing a social-rooted Innovation Action within H2020 project are:

- Time and clear understanding of how a project can contribute to a selected Social Innovation, and an iterative process linking the design and material needs required by an Innovation Action. Such clarification could have been helped by an earlier identification of the types of contributions by SIMRA partners which would have been considered to be desirable. This
would have given greater flexibility to fix the exact initiatives on which to focus and allow time to contribute to the implementation phase.

There are risks inherent with accompanying initiatives at a very early, embryonic stage which have inherent uncertainties associated with how and what might emerge. The involvement of research teams at a later phase of the initiative would provide the local actors more time to have engaged with it and to demonstrate their motivation or entrepreneurship. Probably it would also be a more cost-efficient use of the project efforts.

4.2. Main Messages from Local Workshops and Lessons

Learned Reports of the Innovation Actions

The reports on the local workshops provided information which was clustered into four main blocks as follows:

i) needs of financing to sustain the initiative in the medium/long term (Section 4.2.1),

ii) knowledge and information employed in the Innovation Action (Section 4.2.2),

iii) the reconfiguration of social networks that has taken place (Section 4.2.3),

iv) the effects of the policy framework in the Innovation Actions (Section 4.2.4).

Some of these topics emerged again in the lessons learned workshop (Section 4.3).

4.2.1. Sustainable financing

Addressing the initial financial needs of the Social Innovation was crucial across all Innovation Actions. Although several sources of founding could have been used, a very common requirement was that of co-funding. However, this proved to be a challenge for voluntary-based initiatives, especially during the earliest stages of their development. For example, although some of the activities were eligible for support through measures in the ERDF (European Regional Development Fund), LIFE or RDP (Rural Development Programme) this often requires co-funding which is not easy to obtain in marginalised rural areas. This is because, very often, such funding is designed to be taken up by for-profit applicants, for whom co-funding is an investment with a future return. Such beneficiaries are likely to be more willing to devote funds to the initiative and take risks on the output.

Financial entities are reluctant to enter into a relationship with social entrepreneurs. ETIFOR suggests supporting the development of those relationships through small investments that are paired with access to mentoring and expertise, and overall financial and accounting knowledge. This may help the initiative develop and reach its planned objectives within deadlines, and ensure its longer term continuity.

The economic crisis which started in 2008 led to constraints in public funding of Social Innovation initiatives. The Teruel Innovation Action is an example of the effects of such budgetary restrictions, specifically the impact of the Spanish Law 27/2013 of Rationalization and Sustainability of Local Administration, which restricts local corporations making financial contributions to initiatives that fall outwith their core competences (e.g. security, waste and cleansing, street lightening, etc). Therefore, the forms of local financial support are likely to be those which incur no extra costs such as the provision of facilities for meeting venues.

4.2.2. Knowledge and information

The types of knowledge used during the design and implementation phases of the Innovation Actions was identified by the Innovation Action Implementers. These were defined as:

- “local/internal” were the actors that represent the group of people who were designing and implementing the Innovation Action (“in-group”)
Regional actors were considered as local if the Innovation Action was designed with a regional scope.

The Innovation Action Implementers assessed the presence and relevance of sources of knowledge employed in their Innovation Actions (Annex 1, question 7). Figure 4 shows the weighted answers (3: relevant, 2: moderate, 1: minimal, 0: not present) of the relevance of each type of knowledge and actor for each phase. This preliminary assessment shows that, during both the design and implementation phases, the knowledge of local actors (local/internal or external) were of the greatest importance, whereas the knowledge of external actors plays a secondary, complementary role. Very often the external actors are the Innovation Action Implementers.

During the design phase, local actors with knowledge and external actors with external knowledge seem to have more significant roles, but local actors with external knowledge become more significant in the implementation phase. This is consistent with the impression of the implementers, who reported that their role as facilitators during the project was important, but that some technical knowledge which is required to crystallise the ideas of the Social Innovation ideas are often missing. Generally, that knowledge would be external. Therefore, training or peer-to-peer learning opportunities during the design phase is valuable is equipping local actors with external knowledge for fine-tuning the Social Innovation design, and for the smoother running of the implementation phase.

The know-how of local actors is crucial to identify the idea that will tackle the local needs. However, the capacity to operationalise such know-how is not always present, either in terms of project management or technical expertise. This requires knowledge transfer, peer-to-peer learning, and specialised support (e.g. financing non-for-profit initiatives, accounting issues). Examples of knowledge transfer in the Innovation Actions were: i) a technical course on fruit production for exploring interest in abandoned mountain parcels, run by the Teruel Innovation Action; ii) engagement with a marketing expert guiding the co-operative of women to revisit their selling strategies and modernise their visual identify (labelling), by the Lebanon Innovation Action.
Mentoring in social entrepreneurship such as business coaching, leadership training, team management skills, emerge as pertinent to support business development and growth. Examples of such mentoring in the Innovation Actions were: i) training specific to approaching young entrepreneurs in rural areas, developed in the ValBelluna Innovation Action; ii) academic support to the social entrepreneur to consolidate her initiative, provided by the Lancaster Innovation Action; iii) guiding the local actors to develop a common vision to work towards the future, in the Guadeloupe Innovation Action.

Limitations identified for the Social Innovation knowledge transfer and/or training sessions, particularly relevant to the marginalisation of the rural areas being studied, were the distances and time required to attend the sessions. Often in such areas public transport services are not suitable for people to participate in such meetings.

Strategies employed to address these limitations included:

i) changing the locations of training to other places around the area (in the ValBelluna Innovation Action);

ii) conducting an initial workshop in the capital of the county followed by final workshops in the municipalities where the social entrepreneurs had emerged (in the Teruel Innovation Action);

iii) paying for the costs of travel (e.g. by bus) for students (in the Solsonès Innovation Action);

iv) concentrating the sessions in a well-connected city (in the Lancaster Innovation Action).

An option for training which could be taken up in future is using Web-based tools. However that would require preparations and effective dissemination to the target audience such as social media for young people, and adapting materials for people who are not familiar or comfortable with WWW-based engagement.

Apart from training, whether in person or online, a further option for sharing knowledge and expertise is the creation of support through mentoring between well-established or recognised entrepreneurs and innovators. This could create a territory-rooted, and probably longer-lasting, knowledge-transfer relationship. It could also help to fill another gap which is the poorly developed concept in the rural areas being studied of business angels.

4.2.3. Reconfiguration of social networks

4.2.3.1. Reconfiguration of social process as an ongoing process

The definition of Social Innovation in the SIMRA project “the reconfiguration of social practices in response to societal challenges, which seeks to enhance outcomes on societal well-being and necessarily includes the engagement of civil society actors” (Polman et al., 2017). From the experience of the Innovation Action Implementers it has been observed that for achieving consolidation the Innovation Action may go through several stages of reconfiguration of the societal practices.

The observed reconfigurations of social practices in the SIMRA Innovation Actions are:

- The Innovation Action in Guadeloupe experiences a second stage of reconfiguration as new relationships emerged during a previous project. The governance arrangements evolved, and actors repositioned themselves while revising their traditional roles.

- The Innovation Action in the UK reports that “The Growing Club is currently reconfiguring social practices as whilst the government and local councils have expressed the need and the will to support women’s entrepreneurship, the current process has not helped get women into entrepreneurship, as it remains highly ‘individualised’, ‘urbanised’ and arguably ‘masculine’ in its approach. It [public support so far] does not take into account issues around ‘class’, as women who are from particular working-class backgrounds who are marginalised in society,
sole caregivers to children and elderly parents, holders of criminal records and those who live in marginalised areas with limited access to resources. The growing club founder is raising awareness to local councils about this ‘gap’ – with the hope these would change into reconfigured social practices run by the government”.

- In the Teruel Innovation Action, the relationships between the association members and the engaged farmer and corresponding landowner have been strengthened. After the local workshops some people who did not know each other, both from the public and the civil society side, exchanged contacts. A new network for creating a county level seed bank was proposed, but has not yet been formalized. The partners (participating farmers, land owners who may cede ownership of parcels) may have changed their attitudes such that they take part in the initiative. One member of the local association became very committed to maintain one of the parcels. New governance arrangements are in preparation which will reduce transaction costs by facilitating the giving up of rights to a parcel (i.e. cession) or rent between landowner and farmer.

- In the Solsonès Innovation Action it is reported that “at this stage, new relationships are being built between the innovator, and the school teachers. Also, attitudes are changing. An example of that would be how before they being in touch, no one had thought about including forests in the syllabus of the school. Nor the innovator, nor the teachers. But through continuous contact and talks with the innovator, the teachers are now developing this new approach for their subjects, which they are hoping to expand to the rest of the school”.

- In the Valbelluna Innovation Action, local actors supported the reconfiguration of new networks, in which other business initiatives similar to SIparte started to be developed in one areas, the town of Feltre, due to the experience gained through SIparte.

### 4.2.3.2. Social Network Analysis

From a comparison of the number of relationships between local actors prior to and post the Innovation Action, an increase in the relationships was found the intensity of which varies between the initiatives. The largest increase in relationships was found in the Guadeloupan case (490% of new relationships), and the lowest increase occurred in the ValBelluna case (26.7% of new relationships). These figures can be interpreted as the typology of network members in the Teruel, ValBelluna and Lebanese cases in which the actors belong to a similar sector, whereas in the Lancaster, Norwegian and Solsona cases the Innovation Action enables contacts to be created between completely different sectors (e.g. social enterprise, university, local councils and business organisations; social services and trekking; or health, children’s education and research). The Guadeloupan Innovation Action benefited from the synergies with the project of the EIP Operation Group, which helped in building a wider network.

Figures 5 to 11 illustrate the social networks of each Innovation Action. The nodes correspond to institutions (NGO, government agency, etc.), and the arrows represent the presence of a relationship between nodes. The grey arrows show the pre-existing relationships and the new relationships established through the Innovation Action are shown in bold.
This project has received funding from the European Union’s Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under Grant Agreement No 677622

These changes are confirmed by the comments by the Innovation Action Implementers. Generally, these reflect positive changes during the implementation of the Innovation Action regarding
“connection of more actors across the area” (network building) as well as “the way the network is functioning now” (trust, voluntary work). It has been acknowledged that the changes in attitudes of local stakeholders towards the activities within the Innovation Actions have been supported and respected by other stakeholders.

4.2.3.3. Social Capital

Social Capital plays a central role in the reconfiguration of social networks, contributing to the increase in the number of relationships and the reconfiguration of social practices.

At the core of all of the Innovation Actions is the high level of dedication of a few people who are either volunteers or for-profit entrepreneurs. The motivation and commitment of the local actors in charge of the implementation is essential to providing the effort necessary for operationalising the initiative and to overcome difficulties, which includes time of people offered voluntarily.

In the ValBelluna Innovation Action, there was no-one to take over the role of the leader of the winning group when they left the social innovation process. The level of engagement of other members was much lower than that of the leader implying that the level of motivation was also lower, and thus crucial in the process of the Social Innovation.

Similarly in the Teruel Innovation Action, the leader of the local association got frustrated when difficulties emerged. Given that the other volunteers were also engaged in other projects they had limited capacity to dedicate more time and constructive efforts towards the land banking.

The leadership capacities of the innovator/clique play a crucial role in orchestrating the different interests and characteristics of the local actors (i.e. the network of initiators, followers, mainstreamers), in terms of their commitment, personality, motivation and passion. Building partnerships and managing the network needs development of trust amongst the stakeholders involved before the relationships can form.

Most Innovation Actions rely on volunteers contributing to the leadership and collective action. Examples of such voluntary contributions in the Innovation Actions studied are: the organisation of the school and health sessions, in the Solsonè innovation Action; the arrangement of the reactivation of abandoned land parcels, in the Teruel Innovation Action; the catalysing of social services with the hiking entities, in the Guadarramasalen Innovation Action; and the organisation of the training of women entrepreneurs in the Lancaster Innovation Action. Therefore, a supportive environment is important for recognising the work of people establishing Social Innovations (e.g. by local/regional authorities), their visibility (e.g. in local media), and to ensure eligibility for financial and non-financial incentives.

Mobilising agency in the rural areas analysed faces two, or sometimes more, characteristics of marginalization. Tackling these requires a different approach to that in other types of areas, such as urban areas. These characteristics are a low level of accessibility (i.e. geographical, transport facilities), and dealing with people who may have multiple disadvantages (e.g. gender, ethnicity, age). Therefore, the business model for the Social Innovation requires features which are able to tackle such structural challenges. For example, in the Lancaster Innovation Action, the public authorities would like to provide support. However, their understanding of the situations of marginalised women is limited and therefore the policies they suggest do not seem to have the intended impacts, leaving a gap which is filled by the Growing Club.

4.2.4. Policy tools

Financial support is not a necessary condition for a Social Innovation to start, but it is crucial for their medium and long term survival. This entails social entrepreneurs being active, continuously raising funds, and appropriate institutional support.
Analysis of the types of financial support available through policy tools showed that it was varied, with no single funding source identified appropriate for the range of Innovation Actions studied. In some cases, funding was almost completely absent despite the merits of the project. Most traditional support mechanisms, such as LEADER, were perceived as being inaccessible because they do not specifically identify Social Innovation for support. If a topic is not in relevant to the corresponding policy strategy it is unlikely to be supported, or it is directed to another possible source of funding. For example, in the Valbelluna Innovation Action, the Local Action Group initiated the idea it considered valuable but there were no means to provide direct financial support. In that case, the initiative of the hackathon was developed with the Innovation Action and the eligible resources of the SIMRA research project.

Private, or public/private entities (e.g. donors, NGOs, foundations) are also sources of financial support for Social Innovation. For example, all of the funding of the project in the Lancaster Innovation Action was provided by the UK Lottery (a form of public funding managed by a private organisation set-up for public good).

Examples exist of policy tools being linked retrospectively with successful social innovations, an example of which is seen in the Gudbrandsdalen Innovation Action, in which DNT tackles social inclusion of migrants in Norway.

Measure 16 (Cooperation) within the Rural Development Programme 2014-2020 can be used as an incentive to support networks which are interested in working together around a specific opportunity. This could benefit small businesses if the Measure was simplified and tailored to be a better fit to their circumstances.

4.3. Findings from the Lessons Learned Workshop with the Social Innovation Think Tank

Reflections received at the lessons learned workshop in Aberdeen, UK, covered the overall concept and implementation of the Social Innovation Actions within SIMRA, and specific aspects of the Social Innovations. These emerged from participants who were members of the Social Innovation Think Tank, Innovation Action Implementers, local actors and project research teams.

Overall feedback from members of the Social Innovation Think Tank was that the theoretical concepts and model of Social Innovation become more useful when they are applied at the community level, so that improvements in the community well-being can be observed. This requires flexibility by the project teams (i.e. Innovation Action Implementers) to adapt the methodology of the Innovation Actions to changing conditions such as evolving contexts, windows of opportunity, and changes in the objectives of stakeholders. This might also result in revisions to the conceptual model which reflect the evidence gained from the Innovation Actions on the ground.

4.3.1. Experience gained from the Innovation Actions

Evidence from the Social Innovation initiatives in marginalised rural areas showed a requirement for greater local empowerment and the promotion of support which is tailored to their needs and circumstances. Recommendations based upon the experiences of the Innovation Action implementers are:

- To promote place-based policy approaches;
- To promote funding which is ring-fencing for social innovation;
- To design the decision-making processes such that they place a priority on the preferences of local actors and local communities, including decisions about funding.
During their time with the social innovations, the Innovation Action implementers developed working relationships with the local actors. The experience gained led to the following observations:

- Determination is needed by the implementers if the Innovation Action seems to fail, but it may require to be with different groups of interested local actors (an example of which was the ValBelluna Innovation Action);
- A failing Social Innovation can be used as a “pilot initiative” from which other implementers in similar situations can learn about obstacles faced (an example of which was the Solsonès Innovation Action process);
- Innovation Action Implementers should carefully consider the benefits and risks of the initiative and the best ways of communicating them to the relevant local communities (examples of which were in the Innovation Actions in Teruel and Lebanon);
- Use of the results and success stories from other places can help the Innovation Action to thrive (an example of which was from the Gudbrandsdalen Innovation Action);
- Promotion and raised awareness of Social Innovation initiatives can be enhanced through outreach, engagement and support of motivated young people, and the articulation and understanding of people’s deeply emotional personal stories (examples of which were reported in the Innovation Actions of Lancaster and Valbelluna);
- A focus on the services already created by successful schemes (e.g. educational trails) will increase the prospects of having interested customers (an example of which was the Solsonès Innovation Action).

4.3.2. Evidence relating to finance, social capital, entrepreneurship and policy tools

A World café format was used to capture opinions and developed lessons learnt on four topics identified as being of particular importance to social innovations: Financing, Social Capital, Entrepreneurship and Policy tools. The conclusions of those discussions were expanded using materials from the dossiers and the outputs from the participatory video focus groups. These are presented in the following sub-sections.

4.3.2.1. Financing social innovation

The Social Innovation should identify a strategy that maximises benefits to the community for the least burden. That strategy should identify and design the most relevant means of financing, and should recognise the challenges which will need addressed or which could arise.

Funding itself is a necessary but not a sufficient condition for a social innovation. Early in the life of the social innovation it is important to identify the business model most suitable to its context. This should be designed to be sustainable and self-supporting. It is likely to include complementary, and possible innovative, sources to guarantee its long-term economic sustainability, as it is likely that neither public nor private sources will be sufficient on their own.

There also needs to be recognition that there is a difference between what needs to be financed and what can actually be financed, and its timing. So, financing should be tailored to the circumstances of the social innovation, and to important milestones in the process of the evolution of the Social Innovation.

The requirements for three forms of funding have been identified:

1. Seed funding – The purpose may be to cover costs associated with the initial operation of assets of the innovation, and exploratory tasks. Funding sources include research projects (such as SIMRA), donations from benefactors, and local authority, national or EU funding...
programmes. The availability of national funds varies between countries, and in some cases the support mechanisms which exist do not match the specific requirements of social innovations.

2. Capital funds – Capital costs may be required for the purchase of assets (e.g. land, buildings, and equipment). Sources of such funding can be:

   a. Donations from public and private sources, NGOs, business sectors through obligations to provide community benefit funds, environmental foundations, and other types of benefactors. Such donations may have to comply with specific regulations relating to taxation (this affected the Lancaster Innovation Action).

   b. Shares sold to investors in the enterprise for capital items. Such funding may or may not be designed to give a financial return (i.e. a financial dividend). The management and mechanisms of such schemes are likely to be facilitated by a financial business. This category of funding includes impact investing, which aims to provide a beneficial social or environmental return.

   c. Bonds sold to investors to raise capital funds, probably facilitated by a financial business.

3. Revenue funding – Funds for the ongoing operation of the social innovation. The challenge is to identify and secure funding which provides support over long term time periods.

   a. Subscriptions or membership fees which provide access to resources and to receive products.

   b. Sale of products from the social innovation or access to new resources. Better links with customers and better marketing can support some Innovation Actions (e.g. evidence from the Teruel Innovation Action).

   c. Donations from public and private sources, NGOs, business sectors through obligations to provide community benefit funds, environmental foundations, and other benefactors. Crowdsourcing of funds was identified as a potential means of funding projects. However, better guidance and support for such raising of funds should be available to communities, and such donations may have to comply with specific regulations relating to taxation.

   d. Businesses through their Corporate Social Responsibility programmes. The purposes for which funding may be used will depend upon the rules and conditions of the individual programmes. In some cases, banks may be able to partner in early initiatives and support financial aspects and provide mentoring on topics of administrative, accounting and the development of a business model.

Alternatives to funding are also used, notably the exchanging of skills and goods in lieu of payments, and peer to peer lending between individuals and the social innovation, which may represent an informal arrangement. Such informal arrangements are of particular importance and accompany those of formal structures. Culturally specific forms of support are available, such as the Muslim Zakat system of making mandatory charitable contributions, which is linked to the availability of personal wealth.

The financing of the social innovation has dependencies linked to its structures and management. Some forms of governance are associated with particular forms of funding such as co-operatives which may be subject to certain constraints (e.g. eligibility to apply for public funding).

The needs and sources of financing of Social Innovation are generic. However, it should be noted that societies of countries which are out the European Union (e.g. in North Africa, eastern Mediterranean,
neighbouring countries) may receive, but cannot expect, funding from EU projects or programmes. Social Innovations in these areas may be more dependent upon State instruments.

The availability of sources of funding may not be compatible with a social innovation. The reasons for this may be ethical, principles, motivations or some aspect of the business activity of the prospective donor, the consequence of which is that funds cannot be accepted from a particular source. However, a challenge for those involved in the Social innovation is to recognise that the acceptability of sources or types of funding may change through time.

Funding bodies need to take risks when supporting Social Innovations. Such risk may be higher with novel Social Innovations. The experiences of the Innovation Actions suggested that the availability of seed corn funding for research into ideas could lead to projects that are sustainable after initial nurturing. However, the long term viability of such projects should be an important criterion in deciding upon an application for support.

Social and human capital are at the core of the social innovation for its development, requirements, and change management. In relation to finance human capital relates to, for example, the application, management and accounting of financial resources.

Underpinning all social innovations are people who contribute their time, expertise and resources on a voluntary basis. This is (almost) essential for enabling the social innovation to become established, in initial discussions and early activities, and at key moments when required by the project. Such voluntary contributions are not always valorised and so their magnitude is not always known or recognised. Voluntary contributions are discussed further in Section 4.3.2.2.

Participants in the Lessons Learned workshop recognised that the processes linked to some sources of funding are “highly bureaucratic and inaccessible”, and so are significant obstacles for ordinary people and groups. In addition, many funding bodies are over-reliant on economic indicators of success, and if there are no obvious economic outcomes then projects that have the potential for providing good social or environmental outcomes may be rejected. So, it is important to advocate the importance of a wider set of indicators of success against which to assess proposals, and amongst third sector funders or intermediaries as well as public bodies.

Finally, the design of strategic funding can avoid funding sources being captured by particular interests. For example, funds made available through LEADER have often been used by farming related interests (e.g. agri-tourism) with a result that other types of initiatives found it harder to get funding.

### 4.3.2.2. The role of Social Capital

Broadly, social capital refers to those factors of effectively functioning social groups that include, for example, interpersonal relationships, a shared sense of identity, a shared understanding, shared norms, shared values, trust, cooperation, and reciprocity. Strong social capital facilitates the building of new opportunities for development in marginalised rural areas, and to set up social innovation projects (Bock, 2015).

Based upon the discussion with the members of the Social Innovation Think Tank and local stakeholders a key conclusion can be drawn that the quality of social relationships in terms of trust influences the success of a social innovation. Building an open network with shared values, interests and trust becomes a supporting element for the Innovation Action. To that end, transparency and continuous communication emerge as key principles of interaction between the actors that enable the Social Innovation to happen.

Cooperation is almost always essential for a successful social innovation. Such cooperation could include municipalities, public agencies, researchers and volunteers. Local participants can shape the
nature of the cooperation as being formal, semi-formal or institutionalised, and long-lasting. Cooperation in terms of cross-sectorial integration is key for certain Innovation Actions (see for example the Gudbrandsdalen Innovation Action, Norway). The level or type of collaboration necessary may be hindered when local actors encounter low levels of interest from local communities or municipalities.

A core group people was identified as being very important for driving social innovation projects (“SI relies on individuals, not on a group”). Positive intra-group relationships (bonding Social Capital), a clear shared vision on the Social Innovation, and shared responsibilities in the implementation of the Social Innovation are necessary but not sufficient conditions for a Social Innovation to thrive.

Preparing and consolidating a network of local actors requires to be tackled before moving to implementing activities (see, for example, the Gudbrandsdalen Innovation Action, Norway). This means that during the design phase there is a need to create new links, ensuring those new relationships are fluent and have high levels of mutual trust, achieving a mutual understanding of the goals and means (see, for example, the Teruel Innovation Action, Spain).

The importance of having a shared vision actors and participants is that as challenges emerge, new alternatives require to be explored to meet the evolving objectives. Otherwise, local actors will likely face frustration which can put the initiative at risk by creating negative social capital. An example would be someone in the core team with an over-pessimistic view which has a negative impact on the opinions or motivations of other members of the network.

These recommendations stem from the experiences of some of the SIMRA Innovation Actions. For example, the Social Innovation embryo in the Solsonés Innovation Action (Spain) which was identified as a potential Innovation Action failed once the local leader left the area. This led to a need for “redesigning” the social innovation idea.

The lessons learned included recognising the importance of mapping stakeholders with respect to the Innovation Action, and creating strong links between them and any relevant existing institutional obligations. This may involve developing a normative framework which provides a supportive environment that paves the way for a legacy of social innovation in the time after the involvement of a charismatic leader or the initiating group. Benefits would also arise from an opportunity to reflect upon how the Social Innovation could become institutionalised.

“Conditions could create a leader and a leader can create conditions”. This phrase describes the experience of SIMRA in the implementation of Social Innovations. A strong leader could promote trust and build a cohesive network which may lead to change in existing institutions and support innovations, as identified in the Case Studies in Vidovici, Croatia (Klvankova et al., 2019; Report R5.4.t) and Pitteperk, The Netherlands (Melnykovych et al., 2019; Report R5.4.c). Interactions with institutions are important, as well as the ability to identify and use the opportunities for such interactions to crystallise (e.g. with the Local Action Group; by developing political momentum).

In a Social Innovation Action, a leader requires specific skills and sense of responsibility, to be able to help others become more successful and to inspire them to engage in the initiative. It can be a complex endeavour to bring together a group of talented and experienced and local stakeholders, many of whom may have and articulate strong opinions. However, sharing the responsibility for the social innovation with a wider group can increase the level of bonding (for example in the Guadaloupe Innovation Action), and relieve the initiative as a whole from being entirely dependent upon one or two innovators/leaders. The leader is the key figure at least in the design phase, animating the local network and often enabling a Social Innovation to move into the implementation phase. Frequently, the leader possesses local and/or external knowledge which was created outside of the community but brought in to help with the implementation of the Social Innovation.
Consequently, human capital has been found as crucial as it influences the collective capability to design realistic activities. Existing capabilities (e.g. technical, personal) drive the scope of the Social Innovation action. It appears that even when local actors have ideas on how to implement a Social Innovation project, it is always worth involving “external knowledge” that potentially contributes to redesigning ideas, using external sources, contacts or links throughout the Innovation Action process. The attitudes of local actors (e.g. proactivity), based on their values (belief in the solutions proposed to tackle the societal challenge) are crucial to accomplishing the planned activities. This also includes their flexibility and adaptability to tackle emerging challenges (e.g. being able to reconfigure the Social Innovation idea) to ensure that the project is sustainable and can last over the long-term. Social innovations need to develop human capital by improving skills, expertise, and knowledge. This may require multiple disciplines such as finance, change management, administration and logistics, thematic topic, locality, communication, and facilitation.

The role of Innovation Action Implementers has been significant for the emergence of resilient Innovation Actions. The local lead Innovation Action partners in Lebanon, UK, Italy, and Spain have acted, mainly, as facilitators with external expertise, triggering further activities within the Innovation Action (i.e. coaching support). In contrast, the mentors appear to be “local and experienced”, with “local and cultural sensitivity”.

### 4.3.2.3. Social entrepreneurship as a driving force for Social Innovations

The term ‘social entrepreneur’ refers to people who launch initiatives which are focused upon solving social, cultural or environmental issues. Such initiatives can be either non-profit, or for-profit while also measuring non-monetary indicators. Social entrepreneurs are tightly linked to leadership of the Social Innovation, as Social innovators often act as social entrepreneurs. Social entrepreneurship is considered as crucial to drive social changes, potentially benefiting society as a diverse and transformational phenomenon. However, social entrepreneurs face two basic tensions.

i) the approach potentially conflicts with neoliberalism, as the need to become competitive is modulated by the fact that their success is not based on maximizing monetary returns;

ii) some critics may see their enterprises as a laissez-faire approach led by the loss of public services.

Social entrepreneurs have to be ready to tackle such arguments.

Motivation was identified by all participants as the most crucial factor for the setting up of social businesses as well as for social innovation processes. “Social Innovation needs dedicated people” (referred to in the participatory video of the Gudbrandsdalen Innovation Action). Without good will and a motivated (group of) individual(s), an initiative and its related network of actors can face difficulties in forming as a coherent group (e.g. the cases of Social Innovation in farming in The Netherlands, Melnykovych et al., 2019; Report 5.4.c, and the Lancaster Innovation Action. A Social Innovation “needs someone who when facing difficulties keeps on believing in it” (referred to in the Solsonès participatory video). The presence of a strong and charismatic leader facilitates the social enterprise. However, motivation and drivers to innovate are varied and can differ between countries and cultural backgrounds, such as between EU and Non-EU countries. In particular, it is desirable to distinguish between:

- “Those who need to do something” and are willing to implement an initiative because it will enable them to improve their economic sustainability, i.e. to make a living or strengthen an existing job. These innovators might start without recognising themselves as being social innovators. The social innovation perspective may become apparent later (e.g. as seen in the Lebanon Innovation Action). In many cases it is the public sector that drives people towards a social innovation pathway, such as the creation of specific subsidies leading to societal-
oriented activities. An example is that of social farming in Slovenia which was boosted by support through public policy. However, in that example it appears that those who lead the initiative only wanted to fulfil the requirements for its funding, and that it was not actually driven by people who were social innovators.

- “Those who want to do something” already have secure livelihoods and are willing to set up a social initiative because of: (i) personal commitment to a cause or community; (ii) identity, (e.g. the protection of a local landscape is the driver for the Teruel Innovation Action and the Vlkolinec Case Study); (iii) personal motivation to do something such as in the Innovation Actions in Guadeloupe and Solsonès.

Motivation can face several barriers, including:

1. Conflicts of interests between interest groups which are equally motivated. This was visible in the Teruel Innovation Action, between those willing to set up a local organic market initiative and those that recognise the economic benefits of expanding it to wider areas to ensure its viability, and so overcoming the low population density in the county and hence limited local demand for the produce.
2. Lack of motivation of the core group of actors. They may already have a secure job and ultimately not be willing to initiate something new with the associated requirement of dedicating time to its development (e.g. Valbelluna Innovation Action).
3. Limited availability of time of the core group of innovators. Establishing a collective action has high transaction costs, chiefly the time spent by volunteers in responding to emails, on the telephone, networking and seeking funds. It has been observed that, particularly in marginalised rural areas affected by depopulation, there are too few motivated individuals, who have time available, to cope with all the voluntary-based initiatives taking place. For example in the Teruel Innovation Action there are people who simultaneously take actions to care for the quality of the river water, the maintenance of the irrigation channels, cultivate their own plots of land, contribute (in an unpaid capacity) to the town council, investigate local varieties of crops, contribute to the local magazine, and take care of the land bank. The opportunity cost of all of these initiatives is that relating to time and activities with their families and to do their job. As a consequence of those costs often it retirees who take initiatives forward. A reduction in motivation due to the lack of time or because innovators have to undertake day-to-day tasks on a voluntarily basis can lead to a feeling of frustration amongst the main innovators. If such frustration is evident and transferred to the rest of network actors it can affect the sustainability of the action, as the innovators are also the “face” of the initiative.

4. If motivation is driven by only one person in the initiative (e.g. the Innovation Actions run by Solsonès and Lancaster) transmission problems can be created when and if that individual suffers ‘burn out’, or steps away permanently, such as in the Social Innovation in the Valbelluna Hackathon, or temporarily such as one of the main innovators in the Noidanlukko Case Study in Finland. In the latter case, the individual went on maternity leave which resulted in the action stopping for several months.

5. If the core group is located far from the area where the action is developed there can be an effect of demotivation and a negative impact on the overall success of the action. This is a hindering factor in the Finnish Case Study (Melnykovych and Sarkki, 2019; Report 5.4.e), in which all of the main core group of actors do not live in the area of the nuclear power plant.

Several ways were suggested for overcoming the barriers identified. In the following list the number corresponds to that of the equivalent barrier above.

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1. (i) Involving external experts, like people with positive thinking who can provide an external view on the issue in order to reduce conflicts of visions; (ii) coaching to support the achievement of a unified vision; (iii) build a long-term vision, such as the Manifesto in the Guadeloupean Innovation Action.

2. (i) Building a joint vision and strategic thinking and the capability for communicating and sharing the idea with the community; (ii) ability to measure the Social Innovation results to provide feedback and motivate with data on achievements; (iii) Identify a leader, which is also essential for public-led social innovations.

3. (i) “Build up the ‘We’ thinking”, meaning that the collective ownership of the initiative will enable other members of the group assume responsibilities rather than only the leader. This entails delegation and a division of tasks. (ii) A mentorship programme which enables quicker learning and help in the process of managing people and motivation people.

4. Creation of a group to support the innovator or leader in performing some tasks, and in expanding the perspective of the Social Innovation (“Can’t be a one person only”). This was set up in the Lancaster Innovation Action where the innovator assembled a board of directors to support them, and to enable trans-generational transfer of knowledge and responsibilities.

5. Processes of scaling-in (i.e. intra-network consolidation) rather than scaling out have been identified as key to supporting transfers of knowledge and responsibilities between generations when the leader leaves their role. Amongst policy tools identified as being useful were the Rural leadership programmes (Scotland, UK). Reference was also made to the absence of a guarantee of the transmission of the Social Innovation initiative and that this “empty space” can be colonized by new innovators with fresh ideas.

In certain cases, motivation and voluntary action are insufficient for an initiative to thrive. Public support has been identified as being key for helping social innovators strengthen their initiative (e.g. the Teruel Innovation Action), and to reduce the burdens on the innovator. In particular, the administration can reduce the bureaucratic procedures requiring to be tackled by Innovation Actions, or facilitate and assist in their completion, which would be welcomed by Social Innovation initiatives (e.g. Valbelluna Innovation Action).

Involving policy makers in the development of the action was identified by some participants as a factor in the success factor of social innovations. This enables the development of a more holistic vision for tackling an issue, and explore options to raise funding (e.g. Payment for Ecosystem Services schemes for the landscape and fire prevention services of the land banking initiative in Teruel).

More problematic can be the direct involvement of the public, of which there was evidence of the imposition on actions of particular visions which can pose risks to the creation of a closer network.

The role of civil society in Social Innovations was discussed, and whether this is a component which is necessary to the process. This was identified as being of considerable importance, but in certain actions the direct involvement of the civil society from the early phases of an action can demotivate other people (especially when challenges are complex) and hinder the process.

Suggestions made included the involvement of civil society later in the process when the initiative is starting to be formalized. The involvement of civil society is a necessary requirement of a Social Innovation under its definition in the SIMRA project. The time and efforts of volunteers are key to maintaining the social capital of the initiative (e.g. building contacts, organisation of events, etc.). Means of overcoming this issue are to ensure it is made clear that achievements and accomplishments are seen to be valued, and to manage the expectations of the actors involved in case of outcomes not be realised. These tasks should be in the remits of the Innovation Action Implementers or their mentors.
A further recommendation is that Innovation Action Implementers sometimes need to take a step back from an initiative, let the changes they facilitated settle, and to monitor the effects of the Innovation Action (as seen in the Lebanese Innovation Action).

4.3.2.4. Policy tools and instruments for driving and/or supporting Social Innovations

State and market failures create the conditions for Social Innovations to emerge. Policy and public acceptance (i.e. the perception of society) are elements that support the objectives and activities of the Social Innovation.

The evidence from the Innovation Actions was that support is required to improve the governance mechanisms for Social Innovation initiatives, recognising that there are appropriate institutional architectures in only some countries. The absence of supportive legislation at the national level can impact negatively upon Social Innovation actions.

Evidence emerged of some resistance of governments to adapting to new challenges and innovative approaches (i.e. Social Innovation initiatives). Policies tend to operate in silos but Social Innovation are cross-cutting. Unless funds are pooled it may be impossible to find opportunities for initiatives that bridge sectors, e.g. health benefits or social care benefits with Rural Development funding lines. Some Social Innovation cases, such as care farming have, at times, been included in Rural Development Programmes. So, it is recommended that there funds for social innovation come from cross-cutting sources. It was also seen as important that EIP Agri extends beyond a focus on technical innovation and take greater account of social innovation.

Place-based devolved budgets and exercises such as participatory budgeting, which make actions more accountable (participatory, citizen/consumer-based monitoring), were seen to have potential in engaging communities which had Social Innovation initiatives. Examples commented upon in the session included a case in The Netherlands that links land-based biodiversity initiatives to local consumers for monitoring, and the potential for developing this model to empower the “consumer”, and involve them in agri-environmental design.

The experiences of the Innovation Actions showed that, often, municipalities do not engage with social innovation initiatives, and if they do it is likely to be a low priority. Innovation Actions were insistent on the need for more and better institutional support because it was not present or in very limited supply.

It was seen as desirable to move towards a greater focus on wellbeing in policies and move away from narrower economic metrics of performance. It is important to monitor the social impacts resulting from an Innovation Action (e.g. as reported in the Gudbrandsdalen and Solsonés Innovation Actions), and tracking indirect benefits achieved by a social innovation action on the territory (e.g. as reported in the Lebanon Innovation Action). Such monitoring should be extended to include the impacts on human capital (e.g. as reported in the Lancaster Innovation Action).

During discussions on Social Innovation actions and the roles of policies in supporting initiatives on the ground, it emerged that "policy is not neutral and often those with a seat at the table have their voice heard". This means that the ability to enter Social Innovation in the policy agenda and lobby for policy support is relevant. Participants also mentioned that better lobbying should be done to influence non-public donors and funders.
5. Social Innovation Actions Advancing Societal Readiness Levels

The SIMRA Innovation Action process has enabled the testing of practical implementation of the Social Innovation concept on the ground in marginalised rural areas. The process of engaging with the Innovation Actions has taken place in parallel to the development of theoretical and methodological materials within the SIMRA project. This is because becoming involved in social processes external to a research project require time, both in terms of the length of time and dedicated time of the researchers. Therefore, the experience of the Innovation Actions has been inductive in nature, in which the SIMRA partners have learned from the real-world situations.

The Innovation Actions faced challenges due to:

i) structural issues of remoteness, depopulating rural areas, complex agricultural conditions, seasonality factors;

ii) agency factors of capabilities, leadership, motivation, crises caused by frustrations amongst participants, capacity to manage financial issues, and tensions between the contribution of voluntary efforts versus a focus on profit and economic sustainability.

SIMRA partners and the local actors addressed those challenges, with varying outcomes. Overall, advances were made from the initial situations of the innovation Actions. Such advances constitute valuable social experiences for the actors engaged having tested means of tackling social needs in real situations. In some cases, the changes have been deeper, such as in Guadeloupe, where the Innovation Action has been a ‘game changer’ from the perspective of the farmers. They have acquired confidence and challenged traditional governance structures in their territory.

To provide an indication of the advance the ‘Societal Readiness Level’ (Innovation Fund Denmark, n.d.) has been used. This approach differs from the impact evaluation developed in Work Package 4 in that the evaluation methodology (Secco et al., 2019; Deliverable 4.3) assesses the process of emergence of the Social Innovation and conducts a comprehensive analysis of the impacts created, whereas the assessment of the Innovation Actions reflects the progress in the agency of local innovators in enabling a Social Innovation initiative to prosper. The SIMRA partners estimated the Social Readiness Levels before and after the involvement of the SIMRA project in the Social Innovations, which are shown in Table 4. The calculation of Societal Readiness Level is in the range of embryonic projects (score of 1 for identifying problem and identifying societal readiness) to advanced initiatives reflecting higher levels of societal adaptation (maximum score of 9 for actual project solution(s) proven in relevant environment).

Table 4. Estimation of the changes in Societal Readiness Levels of the SIMRA Innovation Actions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Innovation Action</th>
<th>Social Readiness Level Before SIMRA Project</th>
<th>Social Readiness Level After SIMRA Project</th>
<th>Notes and Explanations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teruel Innovation Action</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2 to 3</td>
<td>Through SIMRA, the problem and some possible solutions were identified in year 1, followed by the testing of some potential pilots which required refinement (thus, level between 2 and 3.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Solsonès Innovation Action</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>The innovator had already identified the problem (i.e. disconnection from nature) but a specific solution had not been specified. SIMRA acted as a positive</td>
</tr>
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trigger in the identification of relevant stakeholders and a possible solution. It supported the building of the local network with key stakeholders (school, hospital) and the design and initial implementation of a pilot.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lancaster Innovation Action</th>
<th>6 to 7</th>
<th>8</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Innovation Action in the UK was already at an advanced stage. The Innovation Action Implementer supported it with marketing and visual identity tools, consolidating stage 8 of building a proper plan.</td>
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<td></td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Valbelluna Innovation Action</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>3 to 6</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Having identified the problem to be tackled was youth unemployment, a methodology was developed to support start-ups. Using this methodology, participants identified further challenges to their rural area, which informed the identification and creation of opportunities for launching new business ideas. Although the start-up chosen failed in its implementation, the approach led to new networks being created between young entrepreneurs, and a start-up support model being developed which can be replicated in other rural contexts (provided there are resources for paying the mentors). The Local Action Group is willing to identify other situations and projects in which it can be reutilised.</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lebanon Innovation Action</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
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<tr>
<td>The co-operative was already running when the SIMRA project commenced. The Innovation Action Implementer supported the women by tackling one of their weaknesses which was to improve their economic sustainability through boosting the marketing potential. They are now in the phase of checking the market acceptability of the chosen marketing strategy.</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gudbrandsdalen Innovation Action</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2 to 3</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Started from an idea already successfully tested in another context, the Innovation Action Implementer supported its implementation in a new context. However, achievements were limited due to the disengagement of some local actors.</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Guadeloupe Innovation Action</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Problems faced by the local actors were defined and solutions identified by, and with, local stakeholders. A shared understanding and vision were developed through the production of a manifesto, and pathways towards implementing identified solutions were developed and validated by and with local stakeholders.</td>
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</table>
6. Conclusions and Recommendations

In the agri-food, forestry and rural development domains, Social Innovation opens opportunities for novel initiatives that capitalise collective action into socially-oriented businesses or community-oriented initiatives. Innovation Actions in the SIMRA project provided opportunities to create social laboratories for testing the promotion of Social Innovation initiatives in the context of marginalised rural areas. This promotion implies either new governance arrangements, new relationships (networks) and/or new attitudes which build processes amongst local practitioners when tackling a social need. An increase in the Societal Readiness Levels in each case provides an indication of the added value of the SIMRA project.

Boosting social innovation actions is a complex social process, which requires conceptualisation, testing and implementation of actions which are both user-centred and context-specific. Guidelines for the Innovation Actions were developed to harmonise the approach taken within the SIMRA project, with flexibility for adaptation to be most appropriate in the situation of each rural area. The methodology employed to guide the Innovation Actions in the SIMRA project appears to have been successful. However, handling social processes has intrinsic risks which add to those of being located in marginalised rural areas. Thus, specific design and coaching skills are required to provide proper support from a project perspective.

Using a multi-actor approach, the Innovation Actions have used a co-constructed process split into three phases (design-implementation-evaluation), each developed between local actors, SIMRA project partners, and other relevant stakeholders. Complementarily, the transdisciplinary approach introduced by the SIMRA project led to different stakeholders being involved in the co-production of the lessons learned. A greater understanding of the societal challenge and the functioning of the Social Innovation was obtained when the involvement occurred at the local level through the local workshops, leading to specific suggestions and observations about operational issues. When the involvement was at an international level (e.g. through the lessons learned workshop in Aberdeen, UK, October 2019), participants gained understanding of each initiative but with less detail, leading to feedback that was more general or cross-sectoral in nature and content.

The experiences of the Innovation Actions enable several lessons to be drawn for the development and implementation of effective social innovation actions in rural areas, potentially applicable to any rural sector or settings. These lessons correspond to two dimensions:

i) the management of Innovation Actions within a project;

ii) how to enable the crystallization of Social Innovations in marginalised rural contexts and the extent to which they can thrive.

Lessons learned about the requirements for managing a socially-rooted Innovation Action within a H2020 project are:

- Multi-actor processes require time to be effective, and the time of its participants. Hence, boosting social/community-based initiatives within a H2020 project benefits greatly from an early start to the project planning. This gives a margin of manoeuvre which enables the project partners to identify and establish deep contacts with and between local actors, implementers, entrepreneurs and community networks.

- It is desirable to have an earlier and clear understanding of how the project can contribute to the selected Social Innovation, including from a financial point of view. By the earlier selection of an initiative and listing of preferred contributions, clarification could have been obtained on how contributions could be made during the first project periodic review. This would give flexibility from the project proposal and Grant Agreement timing, too early to fix the exact
initiatives on which to focus, but providing sufficient time to contribute to the implementation phase.

- Identify a smart selection of initiatives which have evolved a beyond the embryo phase. However, involvement at a later phase in the initiative would show strong engagement (motivation, entrepreneurship) of the local actors, probably with more progress achieved during the lifetime of the project. This is particularly relevant in the context of rural start-ups in which many good ideas may not be economically sustainable.

- Societal Readiness Levels are a suitable way to assess the added value of the Innovation Action. Such an assessment can be refined to include consideration of the progress made, what has been achieved, developing a strategy, increasing the network, and augmenting its long-term sustainability.

- Facilitation skills for the Innovation Action Implementers, enabling them coaching the process to boost the Social Innovation. The management of expectations of local actors, and managing their frustration is also of high importance.

- Enabling Local empowerment of the internal group. This is a crucial principle for managing an Innovation Action. It is recommended that the decision-making processes are designed so as to place a priority on the preferences of local actors and local communities, including decisions regarding funding.

Lessons learned about supporting Social Innovations in rural areas:

- In the initial phases of a Social Innovation, working with an innovator and/or social entrepreneurs with leadership skills helps in establishing a core group of people who can spread and operationalise the Social Innovation idea. This engagement includes managing a network of people who may have different interests and visions.

- Initiatives which are based on only one person face risks to their viability over the medium to long-term. This is due to the risk of burn out of the individual or consequences of changes in their personal life on the time and input they can make to the Social Innovation.

- The establishment of an effective and functioning core group of people can provide a critical mass of local people involved in the social innovation in an area which may be suffering depopulation.

- Positive intra-group relationships (creating bonding Social Capital), a clear shared vision of the Social Innovation, and shared responsibilities in the implementation of the Social Innovation are necessary but not sufficient conditions for a Social Innovation to thrive.

- Trust, transparency in decision-making, and good quality communications between participants are key factors for consolidating Social Capital intra-clique, and linking with external actors (potential donors, beneficiaries, future project partners).

- Separating motivation from commitment of the local actors is required to ensure that the necessary efforts will very likely be present throughout the process. Actions towards acknowledging and strengthening such engagement are recommended.

- Co-constructing a joint vision for the Social Innovation unites efforts in a clear direction (e.g. following a manifesto). This is of particular relevance when the initiatives are heavily reliant on the time of volunteers.

- Benefits are gained by complementing the know-how of local actors with knowledge-transfer measures, such as the use of traditional courses, field visits and peer-to-peer learning. The content of such knowledge transfer should include technical topics and project management
skills. Enabling access to such training is particularly important in marginalised rural areas where transport options are limited as is digital literacy in certain societal groups. This gap in rural areas could be filled by the creation of mentoring programmes with well-established entrepreneurs and business angels.

- It is important to be ready for iterations of project design, and anticipate that several challenges will be encountered when operationalising the initiative, and being ready to advise not to give up and assist them to be imaginative in rethinking approaches. This entails flexibility and creativity to cope with obstacles as they emerge, and to boost the adaptive capacity of local actors to overcome them. As all Innovation Actions faced iterations either in their design and/or implementation phases, the development of a portfolio of alternative options equips the Innovation Action implementers with constructive suggestions to discuss with the local actors.

- Funding itself is a necessary but not sufficient condition for a social innovation. When designing the social innovation, there is a need to identify the business model best suited to its context. This should be designed so that it can be sustainable and self-supporting. To achieve this the social innovation should identify a strategy that maximises the benefits to the community for the least burden. Several sources of funding can be identified, broadly grouped as public or various types of private donors. Entities willing to finance Social Innovation should understand that it entails a level of risk, and that Social Innovations produce outputs which are more than traditional monetary indicators. Innovative ways of accessing funds include crowdfunding, ring-fencing funding opportunities, consumer engagement, or impact finance.

- The evidence from the Innovation Actions confirms some of the factors identified for success of policy support (Ludvig et al., 2018; Deliverable D6.2) of a lack of policy integration, and the need for flexible and tailored policy design. As Social Innovation often operates across different sectors, supportive policies need to break out from silos. Social Innovation initiatives could be helped by: the creation of a normative framework that provides legal space within which they can operate and thrive; reducing the bureaucratic obstacles or demands faced by social innovations; means of engaging public actors in the Social Innovation; and place-based policy approaches.

Finally, during the preparation of the Participatory Videos, the partners involved in the Innovation Actions, and the local actors in those actions, developed recommendations designed to aid other individuals or groups also considering the implementation of similar types of social innovation initiatives. These recommendations are documented, along with critical reflections by local actors and the implementer(s) on the Innovation Actions, in each participatory video (link to web).

The aim of compiling these lessons learned is to help future practitioners in boosting Social Innovations, and complement outputs from the SIMRA project which relate to theory, and methodology, policy and practice.
This project has received funding from the European Union’s Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under Grant Agreement No 677622.

7. Acknowledgements

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We also thank the members of the SIMRA Social Innovation Think Thank, local actors and stakeholders, who met at the James Hutton Institute, Aberdeen, UK, 14 to -17 October 2019, for their valuable discussions to capture the lessons learned from the SIMRA Social Innovation Actions.
8. References


Melnykovych, M. and Sarkki, S. 2019. The Noidanlukko Co-operative - Pyhäjoki, Finland (led by UOULU). Report 5.4e, Analytical Case Studies (Case Study Type A), Social Innovation in Marginalised Rural Areas (SIMRA). pp. 73.


Descriptive Evaluation of the Innovation Action based on the knowledge of Innovation Action Implementers

This evaluation is based on the knowledge of the Innovation Action Implementers.

(In a later stage - after your local workshop is done – you could enrich/proof the material provided here with the information from the local workshop discussion, including quotations of Local Actors).

Please indicate in which phase is your IA now (e.g. implementation). Describe it in one paragraph.

1. What stage is your IA according to SIMRA definition: reconfiguring social practices or reconfigured social practices? Explain.

2. Please, provide evidence whether and to what extent the IA is able to provide responses to societal challenges of the rural area, which were identified during feasibility assessment? Is there relevance of your Social Innovation Initiative with European societal challenges?
   Please specify which societal challenges and in which way the IA is able to tackle/is tackling them. Describe the ability of the IA to address the needs of the territory. Indicate if those needs match any of European societal challenges as identified in the Europe 2020 strategy (seen in https://ec.europa.eu/programmes/horizon2020/en/h2020-section/societal-challenges). If affirmative, explain how the IA addresses/will address such challenge(s).

3. Summarize the main changes perceived by you after the implementation of the Innovation Action
   (If your IA is still in the implementation phase, please indicate so and provide information on the changes that is observed already, and separately those that are expected in the future).
   Indicate “no changes identified” or “not applicable” if that’s the case.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Changes Type</th>
<th>Most Common Changes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(provide description with example(s))</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>already observed changes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Changes observed in the innovative network</td>
<td>(300 words maximum)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Changes observed in attitudes</td>
<td>(300 words maximum)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Changes observed in public actors’ actions</td>
<td>(300 words maximum)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Changes observed in governance arrangements</td>
<td>(300 words maximum)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4. What is the depth of those identified changes in your IA initiative?

Add one paragraph with short explanation distinguish between “adaptive change” where novel practices become part of an established system (e.g. already existed rules is complemented with new ones), and “transformative change” where substantive changes in the system structures occurred resulting in system modification. You may also consider “resilient change” that is understood as medium range institutionalisation that is reaching further than local change establish (maintains governance/management system of MRA balanced but does lead to overall transformation of the system so far).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Depth of Change</th>
<th>Results</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(please, indicate here what is true for your IA: No appearance, Minimal, Moderate, Dominant, NA)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adaptive</td>
<td>(300 words maximum)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transformative</td>
<td>(300 words maximum)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resilient</td>
<td>(300 words maximum)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

5. Whether the new products / services planned are really emerged during/after the SI implementation?

(if your IA is still in implementation phase, please highlight this and provide information on the products / services that you are expecting in the future)

6. a. How are the roles of the organizations/actors/partners within the SI and the interactions among them after the SI is implemented/ during the implementation? (please, describe how it is at present time)?

Which authorities were/are involved, what was/is their roles, how is the relationship with them?

Describe the engagement of SI actors and stakeholders in the Innovation Action. Which type of efforts has been undertaken by civil society within this innovation action? (e.g. voluntary engagement for organising XXX activity(s), donation, etc.)? If not applicable, please indicate so.

Which institutional actors or organisations are supporting the SI project? (e.g. public: research and training institutions, authorities, advisory services, administration, etc. or private: private organisations or networks, NGOs, consultants, informal networks, other (similar) initiatives in the area or beyond, media, etc.)

6. b. Please indicate the linkages of actors/ institutions involved in your Innovation Action

Assign a number to each local actor and locate them in the columns and rows. Each box represents the relation between actor in row and actor in column. The bottom triangle and diagonal are kept empty. Please insert the value according to your knowledge:

0 if “no relation”;
1 if the relation between actors existed already before IA initiated;
2 if the relation between actors appeared during IA design and/or implementation;

---

According to Kluvankova et al., 2019 (Draft of D3.3) adaptation prevails, where novel practices become part of an established system. Transformative transitions require substantive changes in the system structures and result in system modification that may scale out of the place of origin. For any related doubts, contact Tatiana/Martin.
3 if the relation between actors was present **before and during** the IA implementation.

Leave empty those cells regarding the people you do not know the relations.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Actor name anonymized</th>
<th>1.</th>
<th>2.</th>
<th>3.</th>
<th>4.</th>
<th>5.</th>
<th>6.</th>
<th>7.</th>
<th>8.</th>
<th>9.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>5.</td>
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<td>7.</td>
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<td>8.</td>
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<td>9.</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

7. What types of actors (local/external) and knowledge (local/external) prevail during and after the innovation action process?

*(in this question we aim to explore whether internal (local) knowledge in the territory is important for SI emergence and development or whether key knowledge (idea/inspiration) is coming from outside the territory.)*

Please, provide your answer in the table below, indicating what is true for your IA using the scale:

**No appearance, Minimal, Moderate, Dominant, Not Applicable** and providing short explanatory text)

Please also indicate yourself here. Explain.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Type of actors</strong> and knowledge</th>
<th><strong>During the IA design</strong> (SI process / process of SI emergence)</th>
<th><strong>During the IA implementation</strong> (SI project / process of SI development)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>local actors with local (internal) knowledge</td>
<td>(300 words maximum)</td>
<td>(300 words maximum)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>local actors with partly external knowledge</td>
<td>(300 words maximum)</td>
<td>(300 words maximum)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>external actors with mainly external knowledge</td>
<td>(300 words maximum)</td>
<td>(300 words maximum)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>external actors with mainly internal (local) knowledge</td>
<td>(300 words maximum)</td>
<td>(300 words maximum)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

8. What are the main enabling and constraining factors of your Social Innovation?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Domain</strong></th>
<th><strong>Main Enabling Factors</strong></th>
<th><strong>Main Constraining Factors</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Economic</td>
<td>(300 words maximum)</td>
<td>(300 words maximum)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social</td>
<td>(300 words maximum)</td>
<td>(300 words maximum)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environmental</td>
<td>(300 words maximum)</td>
<td>(300 words maximum)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Institutional/policy</td>
<td>(300 words maximum)</td>
<td>(300 words maximum)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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2 **Local** actors – group of local actors who were designing and implementing the IA (“IN-GROUP” actors), while **external** actors are those who do not belong to them (“OUT-GROUP” actors).

Regional actors can be considered to be as local ones with local knowledge if the SI has regional character (if it is the case, please mention this in the explanation).
9. What are the (expected) achievements of your Innovation Action?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Domain</th>
<th>Positive Achievements Observed</th>
<th>Negative Achievements Observed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Economic</td>
<td>Were some objectives of the SI met as a result of successful activities?</td>
<td>Was any objective unmet during the IA implementation? Was any activity unsuccessful?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social</td>
<td>(300 words maximum)</td>
<td>(300 words maximum)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environmental</td>
<td>(300 words maximum)</td>
<td>(300 words maximum)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Institutional/policy</td>
<td>(300 words maximum)</td>
<td>(300 words maximum)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

10. Could you, please, indicate (possible) undesirable or unfavourable development of your SI (conflicts, stagnation of SI process, degradation of results, etc.)

Please, list here any processes you consider undesirable or unfavourable (e.g., failure of the IA initial idea due to lack of local/policy support, capacity or involvement of local actors, failure of governance regime, or even purposeful failure in order to establish new system/environment that support your SI, etc.)

Please, provide short explanation.

11. a. What is your perception of the support by policies? (e.g., finances, information, networking facilitation, regulations). Was any policy support mechanism important or even decisive in creating the SI or increasing its impact? Which barriers exist in terms of institutional support?

11. b. Future needs in policy support? What policy gaps do you see or how should the political-institutional framework be improved for the benefit of the kind of activities of your IA in future? Which barriers could be expected in the future?

Please, fill in the table, mentioning “none” where inapplicable.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Policy mechanism typology</th>
<th>a) existing support – how important was it?</th>
<th>b) policy gaps/ future needs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>finances</td>
<td>(300 words maximum)</td>
<td>(300 words maximum)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>information</td>
<td>(300 words maximum)</td>
<td>(300 words maximum)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>facilitation of networking</td>
<td>(300 words maximum)</td>
<td>(300 words maximum)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
legal regulations and/or private standard/labelling schemes (name of the policies, promoting institution, year, and how does it support the IA) (300 words maximum) (300 words maximum)

12. Does your IA initiative creates / will create conditions for upscaling, out-scaling, deep-scaling?

Is there enabling environment for your IA activities to be continued, repeated, and/or strengthened?

Out-scaling: describe here if the SI initiative could attract people from different contexts who want to do something similar themselves; what are the elements that could enable the replication of the SI initiative? Impacting greater numbers of people, Replication in other marginal rural areas, increasing number of people or communities impacted?

maximum 300 words
If not relevant for your case, please indicate “not relevant”

Upscaling: Can this IA be expanded to apply to other communities or situations; impacting laws and policy, changing institutions at the level of policy, rules and laws at least at local/regional level?

maximum 300 words
If not relevant for your case, please indicate “not relevant”

Deep-scaling: could you IA Scale Deep, impacting cultural roots? changing relationships, cultural values and attitudes, ‘hearts and minds’ of the community in the area?

maximum 300 words
If not relevant for your case, please indicate “not relevant”

13. Whether the positive effects of the SI initiative had any negative repercussions somewhere else or to other people??

Are there deadweight, displacement or substitution critical effects inside or outside the territory?

14. Sustainability/Permanence: Please, identify of activities or areas needing additional/further effort from Local Actor in order to keep the SI alive/ thriving. Identify the time length of the challenge (punctual & finished, punctual & ongoing, punctual & forthcoming, permanent/recurrent, other...) and the tentative duration of the SI in its present performance.

What are the next steps / activities planned regarding the unmet objectives? (i.e. negative achievements according to Q9). Are the resources and efforts/motivation present or expected within the local actors to perform these activities in the future? Which is the needed permanence of the SI to cope with the challenge.

What are your Lessons Learned?

Please reply on the questions below.
15. What worked well in your Innovation Action?

(300 words maximum, you may include some quotes from Local Actors (participants of Local Workshop) as reflective description if available).

16. What didn’t work so well? Crisis during SI initiatives. Reasons for any unsuccessful activity

(300 words maximum, you may include some quotes from Local Actors (participants of Local Workshop) as reflective description if available).

17. If you had it all to do over again, what would you do differently?

(300 words maximum, you may include some quotes from Local Actors (participants of Local Workshop) as reflective description if available).

18. What recommendations would you make to others implementing same/ similar Innovation Action/ Social Innovation? What are the factors linked to success? What would you highlight to other people engaging in social innovation or social entrepreneurship in rural areas that could help them in their projects?

(300 words maximum, you may include some quotes / prescriptive advice from Local Actors (participants of Local Workshop) as reflective description if available).

19. The collaboration between local actors and the IAI’s aims at strengthening existing SI embryos into long term initiatives. Which working paths do you think this collaboration developed into during your IA?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Collaboration path</th>
<th>Indicate Yes/No and explain in a few sentences.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Facilitation (SIMRA partner team’s role consists in providing tips and practical tools to the local actors enabling the working group to work more efficiently)</td>
<td>(approx. 300 words)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mentoring (SIMRA partner team actively guides local actors in the development of the action)</td>
<td>(approx. 300 words)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collaborative management (SIMRA partner directly collaborates in the management of the action)</td>
<td>(approx. 300 words)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Direct involvement (SIMRA partner team is a member, partner or beneficiary of the action)</td>
<td>(approx. 300 words)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Summary of findings on the lessons learned

(2-3 paragraphs that briefly describes the most critical takeaways as bullet points. Include here good practices emerged, bottlenecks and challenges, provide guidance on the potential transferability to other MRAs. Quotes from Local Actors (participants of Local Workshop) could be included if available).

List here all completed and foreseen dissemination activities (indicating the period).

1. ....
2. ...

Other notes