

Creation of an innovative centre for carers in France

French LEADER funds have been used to support a centre for carers and the disabled and elderly recipients of care.

EAFRD-funded projects

Country: France

Location: Bocage territory, Normandy

Programming period: 2014-2020

RDP Priority: P6. Social inclusion and local development

Focus Area: Local development

Measures: M19. LEADER CLLD

Funding:	Total budget	1 123 039 (EUR)
	EAFRD	80 000 (EUR)
	National/regional	20 000 (EUR)
	Private/own	192 366 (EUR)
	Other funding sources	830 673 (EUR)

Timeframe: 01.2018 - 12.2019

Project promoter: UNA du Bocage Ornaïs

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Summary

The project consisted of the renovation of a vacant building by the non-profit organisation Union Nationale de l'Aide (UNA) in order to create a centre dedicated to risk prevention and support for carers, both family members and professionals. The new support centre includes a day care centre, a 'respite spot' for carers, spaces for training and workshops, a 'motricity room' as well as a therapeutic garden. Most significantly, the centre provides studio accommodation for elderly and disabled people in order to offer their carers respite at the weekends. In the various rooms and facilities of the centre, home automation systems that complement human assistance are installed and a team of clinical professionals are involved the provision of a range of services onsite.

Project results

- In 2020, 36 people were welcomed for day care, providing respite for 20 carers.
- Workshops on the topic of memory, nutrition, wellbeing and digital technology attracted 44 participants.
- Five respite weekends were organised for carers.

Lessons & Recommendations

- It was important that the project was co-developed with many partners from the healthcare, social and e-health sectors, as well as with professional carers and family carers.
- For its long-term operation, the centre relies on multiple sources of financial support from both public and private partners.

Context

The demographic change in French rural areas is mainly characterised by ageing populations. This ageing is particularly noticeable in Normandy and in the Bocage area, where 13.3% of the population is over 75 (compared to the national average of 9.3%). Ageing often comes with loss of autonomy and increased care needs. Although home care for elderly people or people with



Union Nationale de l'Aide, des Soins et des Services aux Domiciles.

disabilities is the preferred option, it involves significant support from professional and family helpers. The French law entitled 'Adapting society to an ageing population', which came into force in December 2015, recognises the crucial role of family carers for dependent elderly people aging well at home. The 'right to respite' is also relevant in this context.

The Bocage Ornaïs branch of the Union Nationale de l'Aide (UNA) is a non-profit organisation which works with more than 2 400 households in the Bocage territory in Normandy. The association's employees help to support people at home and are often in contact with family carers, who sometimes feel powerless. For almost seven years, UNA has developed support services such as temporary day care, a 'carers café' discussion group, a remote assistance service, etc. It also organises workshops on topics such as memory, nutrition and mobility. The organisation has made significant investments to establish themselves as a unique and clearly identifiable hub for carers and people with reduced autonomy who are in need of support and assistance. However, increased respite for carers (from a few hours to a whole weekend), along with risk prevention and ongoing training opportunities, have been identified as areas in need of further development.

Objectives

The main aim of this LEADER (Liaison Entre Actions de Développement de l'Économie Rurale) project was to address the societal challenge of how to age well at home by offering a regular or occasional respite service to carers and to support them on a day-to-day basis whilst contributing to the autonomy of those assisted.

Activities

The project was implemented using LEADER funds provided by the 'Pays du Bocage' Local Action Group (LAG), which co-financed the building restoration. Also Economic Regional Development Fund ITIs (integrated territorial investments) co-financed expenses related to the 'gerontechnology' within the framework of its digital tools development policy. Project activities included:

- Acquiring a 450m² building to establish the carers' centre.
- Selecting (at the end of 2018) the contractors for the restoration and refurbishment of the building. The works were completed in 2019.

- Opening the carers' centre on 1 September 2019.
- Defining the project specifications in partnership with care sector organisations and social and healthcare actors. This consultative approach made it possible for them to define the requirements for the carers' centre and to identify the healthcare professionals needed to deliver the services.
- Submitting the application to the Regional Health Care Authority and another local authority. The project was selected in October 2017 and is a recognition of its innovative aspects and the importance of this initiative at regional level.
- Working with a 'smart health' competitiveness cluster called TES on the topic of the 'Silver Economy' in order to understand what technological innovations linked to ageing they could integrate into the new centre.

The carers' centre welcomes carers and disabled or elderly people in pairs for one or a few days. Activities are offered to people with disabilities/elderly people while the carer can take a break. A programme of individual interviews, workshops and training for carers is also provided.

The centre's staff consists of six professionals: a director, neuropsychologists, a nurse and medical-psychology assistants.

The centre organises wellbeing workshops in cooperation with external service providers including occupational therapists, sophrology practitioners, art therapists, musicians and singers, animal mediation facilitators, equine therapy facilitators, clay pottery professionals, psychologists and aestheticians, etc.

Main results

- Beneficiaries and activities organised in 2020 included:
- Welcoming 36 people for day care, providing short periods of respite for 20 carers.
- Organising workshops on the topic of memory, nutrition, wellbeing and digital technology, which were attended by 44 participants.
- Organising five respite weekends for carers.
- Conducting 17 psychological follow-ups with the platform's neuropsychologist and interviewing 105 carers.



Key lessons

- It was important that the project was co-developed with many partners from the health sector (hospitals, memory consultants, rehabilitation centres) and the medical-social sector (centres for the elderly, social workers, etc.), as well as with ageing-at-home professional carers and groups of family carers. The Normandy competitiveness cluster TES is also an associated partner in the technological aspect of the project.
- For its long-term operation, the centre relies on the financial support of many public and private partners including the EU, the Normandy Region, the Regional Health Agency, the Department of Orne, the Fondation Crédit Mutuel and pension funds.

«The carers' centre is an asset for listening, prevention, respite and training for people who call on our services. In the city centre, we offer an inclusive offer, close to shops and services, with flexible solutions regardless of the age or pathology of the people».

Jean-Louis Montembault, President of UNA du Bocage Ornais

Additional information:

www.una.fr/6873-D/una-bocage-ornais-flers.html

<https://france3-regions.francetvinfo.fr/normandie/orne/flers/flers-maison-aidants-structure-reprendre-son-souffle-1738079.html>



Funded by
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