The emergence of collective entrepreneurship

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Résumé :

The literature on Community-based entreprises provides a good framework for studying the dynamics of collective entrepreneurship. However, today it is still unclear how collective projects serving the community emerge and take shape in the first months of their existence. To understand the emergence of this kind of venture we adopt an entrepreneuring view which allows us to propose a process perspective on entrepreneurship (Steyaert, 2007). Thus, this paper will specifically address the following question: beyond the entrepreneur and the entrepreneurial team, how does the collective agency of the community enable the creation of new ventures over time? We rely on two case studies located in the Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes region to identify the collective dynamics of this type of entrepreneurial venture. Our contribution provides a new understanding of the community ventures process and contributes more broadly to the literature on collective entrepreneurship.

Mots-clés : Entrepreneuriat ; Etude de cas ; Collective entrepreneurship; Community-based enterprises; entrepreneuring

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INTRODUCTION

Is entrepreneurship possible without the (individual) entrepreneur? If the question seems audacious, it is clear that the myth of the *deus ex machina* entrepreneur (Ogbor, 2000) – a heroic and isolated individual – has passed. While entrepreneurship has often been described as the result of a nexus between the entrepreneur and an opportunity (Shane & Venkataraman, 2000) or a project, research has gradually enlarged its analytical framework to integrate a more collective approach of entrepreneurship, be it entrepreneurial teams (Ben-Hafaïedh & Cooney, 2017) or collective social entrepreneurship (Montgomery et al., 2012) for example.

There is a general recognition of the immense potential to enrich entrepreneurship research through the study of the community (Shepherd & Patzelt, 2017), in particular to understand the functioning of collective action. This is why, in this article, we focus on the literature on community enterprises (Peredo & Chrisman, 2006) which is a form of collective action to establish enterprises with the specific purpose of creation of benefits that address the needs of the local community. By joining forces and acting collectively, communities can create enterprises that contribute to sustainable local and societal development, achieving beneficial outcomes unattainable by individual entrepreneurs or entrepreneurial teams.

However, today it is still unclear how collective projects serving the community emerge and take shape in the first months of their existence (Hertel et al., 2019). To understand the emergence of this kind of venture we propose to adopt an entrepreneuring view which allows us to propose a process perspective on entrepreneurship (Steyaert, 2007; Hjorth, 2014). This article studies the creation of collectives of stakeholders gathered around entrepreneurial projects in the territory. These collectives are not stable over time and nevertheless the projects develop. Thus, this paper will specifically address the following question: how a collective of localized actors ("collective agency" Gaddefors et al. 2020) succeed in carrying out a social entrepreneurial process and maintaining coherence in action over time?

To answer this question, we propose to build on two case studies. We draw from empirical material generated in a longitudinal approach during the first years of two French ventures (GLASS-RE-USE and GLASS-WASH). These two projects emerge in very different local contexts but are linked by a common point, Start-Up de Territoire ('Start Up of Territory')

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dynamic (SUT). This is an initiative whose objective is to create an entrepreneurial community that triggers and supports the creation of collective community ventures. This paper will contribute to the literature by unfolding the practices of nascent collective enterprises. In particular, if we agree with Gartner (1988) that asking 'who is the entrepreneur' is a wrong question, we will show that in the case of community venture, who are the entrepreneurs may be of greatest interest.

The paper is structured in four parts. We first present the literature review, then the qualitative methodology. The results are organized around the nature of the entrepreneurial project and the different actors involved in it. The discussion points out the importance of SUT, a true beacon in the evolution of the project and the definition of a new collective team, constituted with volunteers.

1. LITERATURE REVIEW

Three key concepts are related to our research question: collective entrepreneurship, community entrepreneurship and entrepreneuring.

1.1. Collective entrepreneurship

The field of entrepreneurship has long been built around a focus on the 'traits' of the entrepreneur (Carland et al., 1988), i.e. a search for the intrinsic qualities of an individual to succeed in a venture. Criticized in particular by Gartner (1988), this approach has subsequently been replaced by a reflection on an 'individual-opportunity nexus' (Shane & Eckhardt, 2003). The analysis has been progressively refined to move away from a vision focused mainly on the role of an entrepreneur often portrayed as heroic in the creation of new businesses. As Ben-Hafaïedh & Conney (2017) recall, over the past 15 years that there has been an exponential increase in research on entrepreneurial teams defined by Klotz et al. (2014, p. 227) as '*the group of individuals that is chiefly responsible for the strategic decision-making and ongoing operations of a new venture'*. Many studies have focused on the formation and evolution of entrepreneurial teams in order to better understand the dynamics of project creation. The formation of entrepreneurial teams is generally explained in the literature from different points of view. On the one hand, for the economic-instrumental approach, the formation of an entrepreneurial team is necessary in order to gather the resources required for success (i.e. financial resources, knowledge, skills) (Ucbasaran et al., 2003). (2). On the other hand, for the socio-psychological approach, two categories of reasons guide the formation of an entrepreneurial team: strategic reasons and social reasons. This approach sees the team as the product of interpersonal attraction and social networks (Forbes et al., 2006).

Other streams of research have enlarged the focus on collective enterprises. A long history of collective enterprise has analysed cooperatives, associations and mutual companies (Stott et al., 2019). The collective dimension is argued to stem from the structure of the social enterprise. Unlike joint-stock companies, these organizations are based on the principle of 'one person, one vote' and must therefore invent appropriate modes of decision and governance for their collective functioning - for instance, involvement of stakeholders in the governance of cooperatives (Shaw & Carter, 2007; Lacroix & Slitine, 2019). In the same vein, literature on social entrepreneurship has traditionally acknowledged a collective dynamic inherent in the entrepreneurial process (Defourny & Nyssens, 2017). Here, the collective dimension not

necessarily rely on the status of the organization but is often the result of a collective process undertaken by a coalition of individuals forming a team with the ambition to create social value together (Dufays & Huybrechts, 2016).

But the question remains as to the emergence of these entrepreneurial team.

1.2. Community entrepreneurship

By expanding the perspective of collective even further, many scholars have addressed the relationship between community and entrepreneurship to the point that some have considered this issue as the 'next frontier' (Lyons et al., 2012) of research. Starting from the seminal work of Peredo and Chrisman (2006), a stream of research has developed around community (based) entrepreneurship. According to Hertel (2018), community enterprise '*are collectively established, owned and controlled by the members of a local community, in which they are embedded and for which they aim to generate economic, social and/or ecological benefits*' (p. 12). Community-based enterprises (CBEs) play an important societal function for coping with today's global challenges (Daskalaki et al., 2015). In this perspective, the traditional action of an entrepreneur –or a group of entrepreneurs- is not sufficient to solve complex local social or ecological problems and contribute to increase local resilience to global change (Gaddefors et al., 2019). There is a need for the communities to engage in collective action in order to establish enterprises with the purpose of creating beneficial outcomes that address the needs of the local community.

If Bacq & Janssenv (2011) recall that community entrepreneurship is not a new phenomenon, there is still much to learn. Some scholars have started to better delineate and situate community enterprise (Somerville & McElwee, 2011; Hertel, 2018). Others have explored the formation of an entrepreneurial community with the intend to create local wealth (Kennedy, 2021) and have highlighted the importance of a shared vision and a common culture. In parallel, some studies have helped to analyse why community enterprises are more likely to emerge in some communities and not in others (Hertel et al., 2019). The analysis is focused mainly in already existing community-based enterprises (Cucchi et al., 2021). However, few studies (with the notable exception of Haugh (2007) have studied in detail the emergence of a collective community venture. We observe them once they are implemented in the literature. There is no processual and detailed analysis of the birth of collective entrepreneurship teams: what it means, how it evolves, what the difficulties are. How does collective entrepreneurship work? We are writing this article to address this gap. As Gaddefors et al. (2019, p. 2) put it, it is still largely

unclear how a collective of localized actors engage in an agency for, and with the community: '*The literature is still theoretically underdeveloped on the question of how and why these collective entrepreneurial processes are initiated*'. We suggest entering in the black box of the community enterprise in order to unpack the question of the emergence of entrepreneurship as collective action.

1.3. An entrepreneuring perspective

To understand in detail the emergence of these collective initiatives, we propose to adopt a process perspective on entrepreneurship, captured by the notion of "entrepreneuring" (Steyaert, 2007; Johannisson, 2011). This orientation is underpinned by '*an understanding of entrepreneurship as the act of "becoming", where dynamics, relations, enactment, sensitivity to context, and social embeddedness can be understood only in their context of occurrence (entrepreneurial practices)*' (Champenois et al., 2020, p 19). While we already know that entrepreneuring is fundamentally collective, as pertains to the '*creative and social/collective organizing process that materializes in aventure*' (Johannisson, 2011, p. 137), it is to note that the notion of entrepreneuring has been only recently applied to the context of communities (Jain & Koch, 2020; Cucchi et al. 2021).

We study community entrepreneuring by using a practice lens (Schatzki, 2005), which is suitable for understanding the ongoing collective action among community members to launch a new venture. A practice approach considers practices as a fundamental unit of analysis and enables to '*study the real-time doing and sayings of practitioners involved in entrepreneurship*' (Champenois et al. 2019, p. 1). Instead of concentrating in the individual or the structure (institutions, organizations) only, the practice tradition considers practices – defined as a constellation of '*doings and sayings which are hierarchically organized to comprise increasingly complex wholes called tasks and projects*' (Schatski, 2005, p. 471) as the centre of the analysis. Entrepreneurship research has started to take the 'practice turn' (Thompson et al., 2020). In this study, we suggest following the call of Champenois et al. (2019) for an extension of the entrepreneurship-as-practice perspective to a 'multiple-practitioner perspective'. This encourages us to consider practitioners other than entrepreneurs, who are engaged in the entrepreneurial ecosystem, and '*who hold such collectively shared knowledge*' (Champenois et al, 2019, p. 22). We therefore propose to understand the collective entrepreneurial process beyond the entrepreneur and the entrepreneurial team.

2. METHODOLOGY

2.1. Research design

We draw from empirical material generated during the first years of two local enterprises (GLASS-RE-USE and GLASS-WASH) in order to unfold the practices of nascent venture. To understand the process of becoming, we engaged in enactive research (Johannisson, 2011; Johannisson, 2020): the researcher is involved in the reality under study. One researcher is a volunteer in the project GLASS-RE-USE, involved at the beginning of the association, has followed the evolution of the project, from the association status to the cooperative community-oriented enterprise (SCIC legal status: Société Coopérative d'Intérêt Collectif) and is now a shareholder. The other researcher studied more closely the upper environmental level of the two projects (in particular the Start Up Territory dynamic) and has followed the project GLASS-WASH from the beginning until the beginning of 2022 and is now a shareholder of the SCIC. Both run a longitudinal study for almost 3 years. The research design is qualitative and researchers are quite close to their empirical field (Champenois et al., 2019). It can be assimilated to the participant approach like that run by (Bizjak et al., 2017).

We base our analysis on two case studies in an entrepreneurial community. The case study approach makes it possible to analyse new and complex subjects in detail and in depth in their specific context (Yin, 2017) with the aim of 'comparing theory with the empirical world' (Piekkari et al., 2009). The two cases under study, GLASS-WASH and GLASS-RE-USE, are citizen initiatives aimed at re-launching the collecting and washing of glass bottles (mainly wine and beer) for reuse in the local community. They are based on the glass deposit. These projects aim at reducing waste, promoting local agriculture and creating local jobs. Although they are independent of each other, and have emerged from two different regions in South-East France, they are related in an industrial way as GLASS-WASH washes the bottles gathered by GLASS-RE-USE. Both have emerged from initiatives around the territory accompanied by two territorial devices and resulting from the SUT dynamics.

The objective of SUT is to allow the creation of groups of citizens open to all, to work collectively and lead to the creation of activities necessary to the community. Created in 2016, SUT is an innovating initiative created to '*set in motion and inspire the actors of a territory and support them in the concretization of entrepreneurial projects that carry solutions and have*

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*a strong impact in the sectors of the future: energy, transport, agriculture, circular economy, et*c[1]'. This process aims to provide a new way of doing entrepreneurship by mobilizing all the inhabitants and institutions of a given territory so that they can identify local opportunities and lead to the creation of community enterprises. SUT began in fact with evening events in which at least 500 citizens participated. The events (organized in 2017 for GLASS-WASH and in 2018 for GLASS-RE-USE) were intended, through creativity methods, to make participants think about themes that could lead to the emergence of job-creating business projects at the service of the community. The participants were gathered around universes: taking care of the environment, living together, enhancing our culture and heritage, giving a second life, sharing and cooperating, banking on solidarity, consuming differently, taking care of people. Both GLASS WASH and GLASS-RE-USE projects emerged in the 'give a second life' universe. Participants had to think about bottle collection methods, related activities and services, innovative actions, partnerships, communication, economic model, logistics, etc. At the end of the event, both projects gathered enough participants for the group to continue its reflections.

GLASS WASH: Solen started to think about the idea a few months before talking with Christophe the initiator of the SUT dynamic. He convinced her to suggest her project during the ideation event. Thus, SUT acted as a trigger. Following the event, Solen began to develop the business model with a friend, Clémence, also a resident of the area, who would later become president of the association. Quite rapidly, professionals (in particular brewers) showed interest in the subject which gradually took the form of an association during 2017. From this date, the project gradually developed by mobilizing different types of actors (volunteers, professionals of the sector, inhabitants of the territory…). In 2018, when Solen decided to stop her involvement as project coordinator to engage in a new professional experience, Clémence took her role. Solen then became president of the structure. In 2019, the investment for the purchase of a bottle washing unit was a key step in the development of the project. At the end of 2021, the association becomes a SCIC in order to integrate the different stakeholders in its governance.

GLASS-RE-US : There was already a project initiator before the setting up of the evening SUT. Yves, the project facilitator (a volunteer who is not the project leader) was in charge of organizing the meetings. Between October 2018 and January 2020, 6 generic workshop

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[1] http://startupdeterritoire.fr/la-dynamique/

meetings were organized. The project was led by two people, Nathan and Sarah, who have started an association in 2018. The role of Yves, the facilitator, has been both to act as a link between the project holders and the volunteers, but also to help the project holders to take a step back. The group initially brings together 11 citizen volunteers. Nathan and Sarah started to communicate on the projects in the purpose to convince local political. A meeting involving all the actors of the sector (metropolis, institutions, financiers, traders, producers, customers) was organized in June 2019, a second meeting of the same type was planned for March 2020 but aborted because of the sanitary worldwide crisis. In October 2019, at the end of his unemployment benefits, Nathan takes a salaried job, remains involved in the project, in a more distant way. In the fall of 2019, the collective group constituted by Stephanie and the volunteers decided to face the market and launched a test for a month with potential customers users of the glass deposit. Six citizen volunteers were particularly involved and several ad hoc meetings were organized. The result of the test, which took place at the end of the year, was conclusive and gave an idea of the enthusiasm of Grenoble users for glass reuse. The 4400 collected bottles have been sent to GLASS WASH located in 50 kilometres. In March 2020, Sarah also reached the end of her unemployment benefits. She was looking for a job, ideally part-time, to continue the GLASS-RE-USE. She remained attached to the project and would continue as a volunteer if she decided to take a full-time job. A third project leader (Alain) then appears and took over. Rapidly the project has merged with another local association also focused on the glass bottle deposit (led by Céline) to become the SCIC GLASS-ALPS in December 2020. At the head of GLASS-ALPS there were Alain, Céline and Marie. Together they develop the project, found customers and began the whole circle of exploitation. They rapidly convinced political partners to gain subventions and invest in their own washing materials (scheduled in 2022). In 2022, Alain leaves the project. At this date, Yves is still working with the leaders of the firm, not as a facilitator but rather as a volunteer, and about 20 volunteers work more or less intensively with them.

2.2. Data collection and data analysis

To realize the case studies, we combined diverse set of empirical material. We conducted 22 semi-structured interviews with players connected with the Start Up de Territoire initiative and both GLASS-RE-USE and GLASS-WASH initiatives. We also conducted interviews with the mayor of Valence and the economic services department of the Valence-Romans conurbation. Three interviews' guides have been built: 1) for the project leader, 2) for the volunteers and the

facilitator, 3) for people involved in SUT. These 30 minutes- to two-hour interviews were fully transcribed (282 pages of verbatim). We also carried out various field observation visits, in particular for the SUT events in 2018 and in September 2020 both in Grenoble and Valence-Romans. Furthermore, our ease of field access made it possible to collect documents for external use (books, activity reports, press reviews), as well as internal and confidential documents (emails, internal reports, in particular for the tax authorities, etc.). Finally, we reused the qualitative data (Chabaud and Germain, 2006) that had been collected by one of the authors when writing a book on the Archer Group in 2011 (series of interviews). One of the authors has been deeply involved in test to market organized by GLASS-RE-USE. The inside look has been observed and transcribed in a daily journal at this step. She is now a shareholder and has access to newsletters and reports from the board. Table 1 presents the interviewed people and the duration of the interviews.

Table 1: Persons interviewed

Firm	People interviewed	Rôle	Time of interview
SUT	Valérie	SUT manager (Grenoble)	75 minutes
	Christophe (4 interviews)	SUT founder	255 minutes
	Michel	SUT director (Valence-Romans)	90 minutes
	Nicolas	Mayor of Valence and President of Valence-Romans conurbation	46 minutes
GLASS-RE-USE	Yves	Facilitator	64 minutes
	Nathan	Co-founder (step 1)	52 minutes
	Sarah	Co-founder (step 1)	68 minutes
	Alain	Co-founder (step 2)	42 minutes
	Roger	Volunteer	28 minutes
	Béatrice	Volunteer	30 minutes
GLASS-WASH	Clémence (3 interviews)	Co-founder	125 minutes
	Solen (2 interviews)	Co-founder	98 minutes
	Valérie	President	65 minutes
GLASS-ALPS	Céline	Co-founder	61 minutes
	Marie	Co-founder	65 minutes
	Christine	Volunteer	53 minutes
Total	22 interviews		1217 minutes, 20 hours 28 minutes 282 pages of retranscription

We coded the transcribed texts using the method detailed by Saldaña (2016) and with the help of *Altas.ti* software. At the end of a first 'open' coding cycle, which was based as closely as

possible on the text and verbatim reports, we identified 65 different codes. An 'inter-coding' phase carried out by the authors made it possible to compare our coding visions, identify possible groupings and specify the definitions of the main codes. The second coding cycle was used to merge, rename and delete nonsignificant codes with regard to the research question; this resulted in 36 codes. After a second inter-coding phase, our third coding cycle resulted in 'meta codes' (Miles et al. 2018) related to major themes and the identification of relationships between emerging categories.

3. RESULTS

We are studying the emergence of collective entrepreneurial projects in the territory. We note a paradox: the collective we have observed is not stable and yet the project continues to exist and to progress. Our results are surprising at several levels: the actors who don't last ; the project which goes on regardless who is in charge ; the central role of SUT for the continuity of the project.

3.1. A collective in motion

The collective was therefore quickly made up of project leaders and citizens, and even actors who became project partners. The de facto entrepreneurial process was collective from the start.

Project leaders: The entrepreneurial teams seem to have been built around the values contained in the projects. '*We believe that there is a need for the deposit, we are personally in the process of doing something else. We want to change and do something for the planet. And we say to ourselves, here we are, we are ready to devote a large part of our time to do this*' (Sarah). '*There is something interesting going on here and it has fuelled my desire and interest in the subject. We were complementary, but, above all, there was a kind of understanding, fluidity, in fact, some ease in working together*' (Solen). The project leaders are complementary and often have different visions of the project and its development. '*I have an industrial vision, we have to make money, and they are very cooperative, and very ... with the volunteers, all that. And a lot of partnerships, well connections, with the communities and all that*' (Alain).

However, we note that the teams are not stable over time. The project leaders leave the project for financial reasons (Nathan, Sandrine, Carole), out of exhaustion (Sarah) or for professional reasons (Alain, Solen). They are personally in transition. Initially receiving unemployment benefits (Sarah, Nathan, Céline, Marie, Alain), they set up the project in the hope of being able to earn money, which takes time due to the nature of these projects. If it doesn't happen, they have no choice but leave. '*It doesn't surprise me that there are departures, because what they*

do is extremely hard' (Valerie). However, we see that these departures do not hinder the continuation of the projects. '*We understood that things in the team might change and that everyone was going to make sure it didn't have too much impact. We are lucky that it won't affect the development*' (Céline). Those who leave know that the project has stabilized; they are not worried about the consequences of their departure on the future of the activity. '*I said to myself: 'I'll put in the time to get it up and running, then we'll see in a year's time, etc. If we recruit someone else, I'll hand over and it might be fine for me to hand over at that point*' (Clémence). '*Céline and Marie are very committed, so for me, leaving the project early does not worry me*' (Alain). The transitions are mostly made through exchange, training and sharing. '*I warn people that I'm going to leave little by little, but that I won't leave until Alain is trained… I mean, we built GLASS-RE-USE with Nathan, I don't want to leave the thing like that, I want it to continue*' (Sarah). The people who left maintain a link with the project (by being a member of the SCIC's Board of Directors, or on very functional tasks such as communication - Nathan is a graphic designer). The departures had no impact on the continuation of the projects because each time a new project leader was able to ensure the continuity. However, these departures are not easy to manage for those who remain. '*I hadn't imagined it like that. I thought he was going to take on short missions here and there. In fact, he fell into a big contract, where he was busy all the time, and from one day to the next, he was no longer present. And that was really hard and I didn't see anyone anymore. I had anxiety attacks. I had never had that in my life*' (Sarah). '*That's the life of projects, at the beginning of a project there are always stories of disagreement, stories of people leaving, coming back…*' (Roger).

Volunteers: Working groups are organized after the SUT launches to reflect on the projects, to develop them, to make them operational, to think of the commercial potential, the profitability, and to make them a reality. These volunteers are citizens, inhabitants of the areas under consideration, or producers, testers of the solutions envisaged. The contribution of these volunteers seems undeniable. They come to help because they feel they are contributing to changing the world and have the impression that they can be useful. '*Afterwards, the role of the inhabitants and citizens was also a determining factor because I felt that it was a subject… The deposit is something that really speaks to people, of all generations, there is a kind of obvious side with a kind of adhesion that really appears to everyone*' (Solen). '*Working with external*

people allowed us to consolidate our arguments, because we spent a lot of time understanding each other, it clarified things that were not clear in our discourse' (Nathan).

Volunteers bring skills and resources and make a contribution for and with the project leaders. '*Very quickly, we set up working groups. The first was a technical working group with producers; after that, I set up a group that focused more on marketing, on how we establish our commercial offer*' (Clémence). They are therefore mobilized on very concrete actions, and sometimes in a very autonomous way. '*She left us in subgroups to work on the test phase. What we called phase one of the tests or how we were going to carry out a real test, already, on a very small scale, in Chambéry, with identifying two or three shops, identifying a few producers, seeing how to do it… There were no specifications template yet*' (Christine). In Grenoble a full test of the exploitation cycle was set up. One part of this test was to check if the labels can be easily removed, in order to put them back in the sales circuit with the producers. This test would not have been possible without the volunteers who gave up time for preparation beforehand and invested a lot of time during the event. '*The idea was to inform consumers, collect the bottles, take them to the washing centre and return them to the producers. For a month, we were involved in communication, running the stand for the harvest, and logistics. It was an extraordinary adventure to explain the project to the inhabitants, to see the enthusiasm, to see the harvests grow*' (Béatrice). These contributions prove to be fundamental for the project leaders. Céline explains that she needed this support, this help from volunteers, because at one point she was the only project leader in her area: '*our great strength was also having this group behind us, people who were motivated to help us, because the project is great*'.

The commitment of the volunteers also depends in part on the project leaders and their ability to mobilize and share the role of the volunteers in a pleasant manner. A project leader who leaves may cause volunteers to leave, and the new project leader must mobilize them quickly to avoid losing them. '*There was a friendly side, a desire to interact, a desire to be together, to spend time together, to consult each other when we were in difficulty, that's it, a pleasure in working together*' (Solen). In some cases, the main stakeholders in the solution were also able to get involved from the start of the project and become partners. '*I approached people who, very quickly, particularly brewers, were interested in the subject, but also on a technical level. That is to say, they saw that we were just starting out on this issue and so they wanted to participate in the reflection. In fact, the producers, the brewers, the winegrowers, the fruit juice producers, turned out to be partners for some of them, whereas I didn't expect that at the beginning. That was a great surprise and it was also very, very inspiring for the group*' (Solen).

However, this involvement of volunteers is not self-evident. It needs to be accompanied and organized. '*We quickly understand what needs to be directed and that's perhaps what we didn't do well at the beginning, I think. And then Yves, he started with his animation techniques, except that in the evening we didn't have that much time, between the moment when he was doing his ice-breaker, the moment when we started working and in fact we had very little time and we came out a bit … we didn't necessarily produce much*' (Sarah). The volunteers are not chosen. They want to come, they are welcomed. They sometimes miss some of the working sessions, lose track, come back later. In the meantime, new ones have arrived with new ideas or ideas that have already been discarded and therefore need to be returned to and re-explained. '*But, each time there were new people, there were people who came back, there were some people who were not very constructive, not ill-willed, but in any case who didn't really understand what was being asked of them, so it was a matter of leading the group, and that's how I got my start*' (Yves).

Volunteers' time frames are different from those of the project leaders, who are in a hurry, waiting for a solution, a one-off help. Volunteers are not necessarily available to meet these expectations. Since the creation of GLASS-ALPS, the team admits to being very busy and lacking time to mobilize volunteers. Volunteers are identified and called upon from time to time according to their skills. If they are available to respond to the request, it works; if not, then the team moves forward without 'losing' time. The fact that the project leaders are too busy to manage volunteer resources and the sanitary worldwide context explains why volunteers are less involved. "*We launched a washing unit in July 2019 and now (2020), typically, we can mobilize much less energy in terms of the various working groups, governance, etc. We meet less, there is less time to get involved. There is also the Covid effect which has clearly been hyper-hyper-complicated for everyone*" (Clémence). '*We'll say that covid didn't help much either because there were obstacles in the contacts we could have with the producers directly, so a lot of things were done on the phone*' (Christine).

3.2. A collective entrepreneurship in the DNA of the project

The projects are collective in nature, from their emergence and remain collective. They were initiated, accompanied at a very early stage and supported from the outset by SUT, which has acted as a catalyst for the community entrepreneurship. SUT works alongside committed entrepreneurs, each in their own geographical area, to consult citizens in order to bring out the

needs of society. These needs were translated into ideas and proposed, by themes, during an event of ideation that brought together 450 people in each territory. Citizens, elected representatives, business leaders participated on an equal footing as a resident of the territory. That is why everybody present themselves with their first name only '*to break the weight of the institutions that everyone is called by their first name, whether they are a doctor, a prefect or a shopkeepe*r' (Christophe). Thus, it was the inhabitants who participated and brainstormed to make the project ideas evolve. In some cases, the project leaders were revealed at the time of these evenings; for others, such as GLASS-RE-USE, the team of project leaders had already been formed and sought to unite around them during these evenings' events.

These territorial entrepreneurial projects have mobilized the inhabitants. The need has emerged from the citizens, the projects are transforming for the territory and more widely for the Society. The aim of the evenings is to encourage creativity in order to dream and create collective ambitions. '*What I see in SUT is also, ok, an event to explore issues and to say that we are more intelligent together and we don't need to be an engineer on the subject to be knowledgeable*' (Yves). '*What is important is that everyone let go, that there were many things that came out and we kept them, the sheets and there are many things that we took up afterwards in the ideas … and then it was all the people who were around, in fact, it is the richness, it is the people that you meet at that time and all these ideas that they have*' (Sarah). '*When we set up the project, the people who initially set up the project really did so from this perspective of territorial resilience. For several reasons, the first was to create local employment and the second was clearly so that producers could also find local container solutions because for the most part, they were having a hard time dealing with large groups that had more or less oligopolies, to which they were supplied when it suited the groups, etc. And to create something that was also local. And to create something that was also quite joyful, quite enthusiastic, which was really our starting point*' (Clémence).

The entrepreneurial projects of the territory have therefore been collective from the start, since they were born from the needs of the inhabitants of the territory and were matured by the inhabitants of the territory. They are anchored in the territory. '*As these are the needs of the territory, we are certain that these are companies that will stay here, create jobs here, create wealth here. And they will respect the environment*' (Nicolas). This does not prevent ambitions for a wider area. '*We have taken the gamble that territorial projects can multiply that they know their clients better, etc., but that we must work on things in a very common way. So we work on this in the national network, the "Deposit Network". Every time there are laws, we meet the*

rapporteurs of the laws, our deputies, etc. We are part of the various co-construction bodies on reuse' (Solen). The projects are also collective because working groups were constituted as an issue of the SUT events. The objective was then to federate a group around the project leaders and to concretely launch into the setting up and running of the project. '*In the working group, it was all the same to land on a more concrete problem of the stages of their project*' (Yves).

Due to the very nature of the projects, these entrepreneurial projects need to mature. They require a great deal of thought upstream on how to bring together all the stakeholders. It is important to convince them of the common interest (for society), but also of the individual interest of the project (the producer, the consumer). These projects are therefore implicitly associated with a necessary education of the population. This education cannot be provided by the project leaders alone. Political support at the level of the wider territory is therefore essential (to communicate institutionally, to obtain subsidies). To be profitable, the activity requires volume; volume comes from consumers who must be convinced of the project. Territorial projects therefore need to extend over wider territories. '*To make volume, the producers in our territory it's great, but it is clearly not enough. The second issue is that there are big industrialists who are starting to set up in the game and if we want to be credible in order to win markets, we need to be able to harmonize at the level of the different territories*' (Clémence). The Business Model of GLASS-ALPS showed that operating with GLASS-WASH was not profitable. '*One of the main conclusions was that we need a washing device as far as possible. The question of distance, of transport, was really a flagrant marker. We had to work together* (with GLASS-WASH*) and exchange information on washing issues to get started. It was in our interest, and theirs, to bring back bottles. But within two years, we had to set up our centre in order to go and look for real big markets and prepare a permanent solution for us in five years' time*' (Alain).

For the project leaders, the very nature of the projects implies going beyond the territory. They carry within them the desire for transformation. '*What clearly motivates me is the political vision of reuse*' (Clémence). Strategic visions also evolve according to the project leaders. For example, '*I think I would never have launched it the way Sarah did, i.e. as an association. For me it was either a profitable business or nothing*' (Alain). This is a clear message for SUT toward project leaders: '*you are carrying a project that has a collective ambition and interest, do not apologize for carrying this project. You are in fact the bearers of solutions. And when you go to see the politicians, you are not an association that is going to ask for money, you are ambitious, militant project leaders who take risks*' (Valérie).

It is therefore important to mobilize enough actors to prove that the need is there and that the solution works. This maturation takes time. Feasibility studies have been carried out and concluded that it is necessary to widen the territories concerned and to join forces with any similar project on glass bottle deposits. This explains the need for project leaders to have personal financial resources (savings or unemployment benefits) and to seek external funding. The scope of financial support is gradually widening (SUT, ADEME, Region). The projects were also incubated with the help of SUT. '*Basically, they lent us premises, they made the entire advance on salaries, because we had funding, but that came a little later. So they really supported and incubated the project in its first months of life*' (Clémence). Small financial partners also participated, as did individuals who invested personally in territorial projects. Some volunteers are shareholders; the initial project leaders are shareholders; some stakeholders (producers, harvesting shops) are shareholders.

3.3. SUT guiding line for the emergence of community venture

SUT intervenes at different stages of the process. Through the evening meetings, the scheme proposes themes that have emerged from the needs of citizens, in connection with the territories and likely to be transformed into entrepreneurial projects. '*Since we targeted 500 people, 50 workshops and we had to get the ball rolling, to mobilize partners in the area who could help us with the organization, the support and then also the follow-up. We worked a lot on meetings, we made 90 appointments with actors before the ideation event*' (Valérie). It then helps groups of citizens to get involved and become volunteers in the emerging projects, or even shareholders once the legal structure has matured. SUT also monitors the development of the project and acts as a real-resource centre and listening space. '*They saw each other regularly with Nathan and Sarah, to possibly find some funding for this and that, to finance the self-financing for the preliminary feasibility study, from which they were able to submit applications for funding*'. Yves. SUT assumes the roles of a facilitator, supporter, funder and linker with other territorial project leaders or local political actors. Nicolas, the President of Valence-Romans Cornurbation is also strongly involved in Start Up de Territoire. For him, '*SUT is an innovation of territorial development that we are experimenting and my duty is to support the actors by participating actively politically and financially*'. At the heart of projects and territories, they play a central role, surrounded by all the actors useful for the development of projects, in a more macroeconomic vision of the territory. '*We have already created 20 successful firms, and the*

best ones came out of the citizens' evenings' (Christophe). '*Our specificity is to accompany projects in their connection with stakeholders, in their cooperation; our added value is in this, in relation to territorial animation*' (Valérie).

The collectives formed on this occasion were coached and facilitated by volunteers trained by Start Up de Territoire. '*We realize that it is not so simple, that the facilitators have to be given a roadmap. They're nice, they're volunteers, but it still has to be well structured, accompanied, all that, so it takes time*' (Valérie). Some are more involved than others, with professional tools for sharing information. When the facilitators are less involved, SUT provides co-facilitation. These facilitators represent a link between the project leaders and the volunteers. Some volunteers have sometimes wondered about this intermediate link, but the energy that comes from these meetings is the most important result. '*For us, it's a lot of preparation, because every time we tried to plan, we tried to take time with Yves to build, the ice-breaking time, plus what we did afterwards and everything, it took us a lot of time. But there had always been a great energy and having people who were interested, who were motivated, that's… I think that's why we kept going*'. (Stephanie).

We note that the Pôle Emploi, i.e. the State, plays a significant role in the launch of the project. We can consider that the State pays a person for two years to develop a project on the territory. '*It does not develop a business project whose objective is just to make a profit, but a socially useful project, which will have an impact on the community*' (Valerie).

DISCUSSION

Our research explains how a territorial entrepreneurial collective emerges and develops over time an entrepreneurial opportunity that directly interests a territory. Adopting an entrepreneuring perspective, our contribution provides a new understanding of the community ventures process and contributes more broadly to the literature on collective entrepreneurship.

Community-Based Entrepreneurship

By the nature of the projects and the territorial community involved, the case studies definitely stand in the community-based entrepreneurship (Gaddefors et al., 2019). On the one hand, our analysis shows the creative potential of a community that organizes itself to create new businesses on its territory (Hertel et al., 2019). This highlights the differences between a community thought as beneficiaries of entrepreneurial action and a community as entrepreneur itself. Entrepreneurial communities do not only act as an 'enabling context' (as in the literature

for ecosystems (Audretsch et al., 2019) but as an actor in itself to trigger territorial entrepreneurial ventures.

On the other hand, in the extension of Haugh's 2007 research, this contribution allows us to understand how community-based enterprises emerge. Although Haugh's article (2007) is the first article to examine the early stages of community-led ventures, his model – opportunity identification, idea articulation, idea ownership, stakeholder mobilization, opportunity exploitation and stakeholder reflection – does not take into account the role of an entrepreneurial community in the emergence of projects. Our analysis fills this gap by highlighting the interrelationship between a community venture and an entrepreneurial community throughout the creation of a project. In particular, entrepreneurial opportunities come from the needs of the community for the considered territory at first, then for society at large; and these opportunities are 'confirmed' by the citizens who commit in the projects. In line with Murphy et al., (2020), we can draw on the notion of 'collective effectuation' to show that effectuation can be extended to community settings as a way of understanding '*how dispossessed or dormant resources might be reclaimed and revitalized in pursuit of entrepreneurial opportunities*' (p.2). Moreover, we have shown that for these community ventures, Start Up de Territoire plays a key role and represents a stable actor that contributes to the emergence of projects, despite the sometimes important instability of project leaders. In this way, our research refines the composition of an entrepreneurial community by showing the strong and persistent involvement of entrepreneurial support actors and volunteers in a project that is not always conducted by the same project leaders. These different insights enable to refine Haugh's model (2007) to understand the creation process of community-based enterprises.

Lastly, the comparison between two entrepreneurial communities (Grenoble and Valence-Romans) also provides an understanding of their particular contribution to the emergence of new community ventures. In this respect, we are in a contextualized entrepreneurship (Baker & Welter, 2020), since the experiences we relate and analyse are localized.

Collective Entrepreneurship

Condor & Chabaud (2012) show that it is necessary to have a vision on how the entrepreneurial team is formed that integrates the early phase of the organization's creation and that highlights the entry and exit movements of members. Our contribution extends this perspective beyond the entrepreneurial team to include all the actors involved in the entrepreneurial collective

(project leaders, volunteer citizens, institutional actors in the territory, etc.) in order to foster the emergence of community ventures. As we have pointed out, these projects are collective from the start, and a number of actions are taken to maintain this entrepreneurial venture a collective one throughout the creation process. One of the challenges, in line with the analysis of Seyb et al. (2019), is to achieve '*a common topic or focus*' (p. 3) of the different actors in a community. We show that this focus must be maintained despite the rapid evolution of the entrepreneurial collective. Thus, when volunteers are concretely involved and contribute as if they were on the team, they co-construct the project. By looking for partners, testing the market, they are involved in actions traditionally carried out by project leaders.

Moreover, drawing on the concentric circle vision of the entrepreneurial team (Ben-Hafaïedh, 2006), we identify several levels. It seems here that there are two types of entrepreneurial collectives, one reinforcing the other. First, the entrepreneurial team made up of the project leaders. They share values and are personally questioning their lives to make a collective sense (Forbes et al., 2017). Secondly, the collective composed of the inhabitants of the territory and the volunteers who are formally or informally involved in a more sustainable way. Our contribution extends this approach by proposing an 'in-motion ' vision of the entrepreneurial collective. Volunteers can move from one circle to another (for example, a volunteer who becomes a member of the cooperative assumes a recognized official role). This territory collective integrates employees from different organizations (e.g., SUT facilitator, social finance actors, local authority, etc.), whose role may also evolve throughout the project. Volunteers participate in the project for its values, to which they give meaning, and in this sense belong to a community (Murphy et al., 2020). Ultimately, the bond that unites these individuals is a shared commitment that goes beyond the institution to which the individual belongs : citizens and the project leaders share values and vision (Kennedy, 2021).

However, our research has limitations. Although the data collected is very rich, it only concerns two cases. We could consider studying other business creations from these territories to consolidate our findings. We could also study SUT initiatives in other territories to see if their actions have the same impact on the territorial communities they support.

CONCLUSION

Faced with the 'double unsustainability' (Eynaud & Carvalho de França Filho, 2019) of the ecological and social issues, more and more citizens want to be actors of economic change in a meaningful entrepreneurial dynamic. This reality may encourage public authorities to take a greater interest in how to trigger collective ventures to serve the community. It is true that creating collective projects in a given territory is more complex than creating an ecosystem to support individual project leaders. But it is a credible way to generate ambitious projects, transformative for society in the long term. It merits greater consideration by those who wish to act in the service of the general interest. The public authorities have a strong interest in supporting and even developing initiatives such as SUT. Actors of social and solidarity economy can also learn from this research the interest of taking into account the territorial and collective dimensions of the projects in order to support them in an adequate way. Finally, our research can be useful for community venture entrepreneurs themselves. They will find explanations on the emergence and animation of a community of volunteers working alongside them.

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