

## Break the routine!

Luxembourg  
Christian Theis



Project Stage:

Scaling

Website:

<http://www.croix-rouge.lu>

 SHARE

- [Aging](#)
- [Disability](#)
- [Health care](#)
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### Project Summary

#### Elevator Pitch

#### **Concise Summary: Help us pitch this solution! Provide an explanation within 3-4 short sentences.**

The daily routine of sick, elderly people is often monotonous. We offer stimulation and an escape from isolation through our activities programme.

#### About Project

#### **Problem: What problem is this project trying to address?**

Luxembourg Red Cross healthcare professionals observed for many years that those who were receiving our care were not only having to cope with their ailments but were often suffering from isolation. Feeling alone is a common sentiment experienced by elderly people, particularly for those who have lost their mobility or independence and rely on daily visits from our carers to help with their medication. Other factors such as loss of a partner, friends or geographic location can also lead to isolation and segregation from modern society. Stimulating the brain through socialising and keeping active is an essential part of healthy ageing. Often, sick, elderly people experience the same daily routine, with few visitors and little stimulation. As well as this, they lose their independence and are no longer able to make personal decisions about their lives. A high rate of depression amongst elderly people is a direct result of this and given an ageing population, it's vital that we find a prompt solution to return decisions and enjoyment into the lives of the elderly. Our 'break the routine' programme aims to deal with the above problems by offering clients opportunities which would otherwise be impossible due to their dependence on care and medication. This solution is only available to those in Luxembourg through our programme as private companies usually don't cater for the level of care required by our clients or are too expensive.

#### **Solution: What is the proposed solution? Please be specific!**

Our solution offers elderly people the chance to 'break their routine' by participating in our cultural activities and holiday programme whilst we ensure that their care and medication is accommodated for. We also arrange specialist transport, hotels and excursions to suit our client's needs. Currently, two holidays, as well as daytrips are organised throughout the year, for groups of 12-20 people. This allows participants to socialise with others of a similar age. Not only do we effectively create a 'mobile' care package, our innovative solution involves the client every step of the way. Our clients are asked to complete a questionnaire which gives them the opportunity to be involved with the decision making throughout the process. Questions include everything from location, excursion and activity suggestions to daily habits. We then process this data to offer the opportunity to visit countries or places which have a special meaning or attachment to our clients as well as to create packages which cater to the needs of each individual. We also ask questions and offer help to prepare our clients for their stay, for example, a trip to the hairdressers or ensuring that they have appropriate clothing and cosmetics. Participant's families are also involved in the process and are even welcome to come along. Families are encouraged to participate in the feedback session after the trip where professionals and daily carers assess the impact. We also track changes in participants behavior during the run up to the activity, throughout the holiday. Clients are encouraged to continue participating in our initiatives to sustain the positive results. As mentioned above, this opportunity is not available in Luxembourg to those who require a high level of care or to those who don't have the funds. Another innovative feature was implemented to minimise costs; the accompanying carers and nurses are volunteers. These professionals are paid for an average days work whereas they are on emergency call 24/7. If the cost is still a problem, our clients can apply to our bursary scheme.

### Impact: How does it Work

**Example: Walk us through a specific example(s) of how this solution makes a difference; include its primary activities.**

Our solution makes a difference as the trip becomes an important part of the participant's life, they can express opinions, make decisions and have something to look forward to. For example, one of our clients who had recently suffered from a stroke and was no longer mobile was recommended to our programme by Red Cross healthcare professionals. The nurses noticed that she was depressed with the long winter and lack of sunshine. She was having to remain in the house all day and had lost her independence, which was difficult as she had previously been very active. The lady filled out our questionnaire stating that she had particularly enjoyed going to the seaside as child and would like to do so again. Our team organised a trip for a small group of elderly people and provided support every step of the way including, shopping, packing, a personalized care package and transport. During the stay the lady thoroughly enjoyed being in a different place, having company, participating in our activities and a milder climate. Our post-evaluation usually shows that participants are more content with their lives as well as more optimistic towards receiving treatment.

Sustainability

**Marketplace: Who else is addressing the problem outlined here? How does the proposed project differ from these approaches?**

In Luxembourg, organisations and programmes offering activities and holidays for elderly people do exist (for example, Senior Clubs, Amiperas etc) , however, these offer little competition with our solution as they address the active elderly and hence are appealing to a different market. This is also true for l'a.s.b.l Tricentenaire who also organise adapted excursions and holidays but these are for severely handicapped people (tetraplegic) who require an individual carer for the whole stay and are very expensive (+ 3000€). No solutions offering assisted programmes for sick, elderly people exist in Luxembourg and even if one were to develop, our programme aims to keep prices as affordable as possible by carers volunteering outside of their normal work hours. We also offer support to those who don't have the funds addressing the issue of poverty amongst the elderly.

About You

About You

**First Name**

Christian

**Last Name**

Theis

**Email**

[christian.theis@croix-rouge.lu](mailto:christian.theis@croix-rouge.lu)

Implementer(s) and cooperation partners

**Name**

Croix-Rouge Luxembourgeoise (Luxembourg Red Cross)

**Type**

Non profit/NGO/citizen sector organization

**Country where main implementer is located**

, LL

**How long has the main implementer been operating?**

More than 5 years

**Please provide a short description of the main implementer.**

'Break the routine' is a project which was created and implemented by the Luxembourg Red Cross as part of our healthcare services for Luxembourg residents.

The Luxembourg Red Cross was formed in 1914 and has since remained an independent organisation whose actions help vulnerable people without discriminating age, religion, ethnicity or political beliefs. The Luxembourg Red Cross offers a variety of services which are grouped into four categories; healthcare, socialcare, youth work and humanitarian work. Our projects are chosen by looking nationally at the needs within Luxembourg.

The information you provide here will be used to fill in any parts of your profile that have been left blank, such as interests, organization information, and website. No contact information will be made public. Please uncheck here if you do not want this to happen..

Cooperation partner

**Name**

**Type**

Please select

**Website**

**How does this cooperation partner support the initiative? What competencies and resources does this partner bring to the initiative?**

Cooperation partner

**Name**

**Type**

Please select

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Problem and solution

**Which of these fields of Active and Healthy Ageing are addressed by your initiative?**

Personalized health management, Prevention and early diagnosis of functional and cognitive decline, Integrated care for chronic conditions, Assisted daily living, Social inclusion (intergenerational practice, work and volunteering), Age friendly buildings, environments, and communities.

**If none of the above, answer here:**

**Please describe if and how your stakeholders (cooperation partners, funders, users, etc.) have been participating in defining the problem and developing the solution.**

An analysis of needs and problem concerning elderly people in Luxembourg was carried out by a variety of healthcare professionals (psychologists, nurses, occupational therapists, physiotherapists) . An evaluation was then presented to the Red Cross and compared with the findings of the Red Cross health services. Both studies showed that isolation, depression and lack of stimulation were present in a high rate amongst sick, elderly people which indicated that we rapidly needed to find a solution to encourage healthy ageing. Healthcare professionals are involved in ensuring that a mobile care package is created for every participant and that medication and care needs are fully communicated to the staff who lead the trip. This is usually achieved in a prebriefing with every participants carer.

Users also have an important role to play in developing the solution, particularly when we were in the early stages of implementing the project. Evaluation forms are filled in by all participants to ensure that the best services are provided, such as transport, hotels etc. users also have a say in which activities they would like to do and can suggest places to visit.

**Has your solution been tested in trials, experimentations, or pilot projects? If yes, please describe the process and outcome.**

In 2007, our first group of 12 clients participated in our holiday programme. A thorough evaluation was carried out including every aspect of the procedure. For example, in the transport field, participants identified that longer breaks and a toilet on the bus would be useful. This was then included in the programme for the following year.

We've now been running the programme for around 6 years and we have a procedure in place which has been developed over the years to define the steps thus facilitating the organization. 1. Chose of location, transport and activities confirmed with the tour operator 2. Clients register via our registration system 3. Skilled Supervising staff confirmed 4. Meetings between healthcare professionals to analyse each participants health and care requirements 5. Care programme developed for the activity 6. Daily meetings of the care team throughout the programme 7. Satisfaction questionnaire distributed at the end of their stay to evaluate all aspects 8. General evaluation between carers during the programme, and those who care for the client on a daily basis at home.

**How long has your solution been in operation?**

for 15 years

**Please select the relationship between your solution and related solutions currently established in our society. Is your solution...**

independent (your solution is approaching a problem that has not been approached before)

**What barriers might hinder the success of your initiative? How do you plan to overcome them?**

We currently feel like we have developed a solid, well structured programme. The main factor holding us back is funding. We have tried to develop the best possible option to finance the programme; The participant pays for their participation in an activity or holiday which is the true costs of the holiday plus one quarter of the price for a healthcare worker. Health care workers wages are cofinanced by healthcare insurance and the Red Cross.

Funding is now required to to pay for overhead costs to help us to expand. We hope to provide more recreational and cultural activities and more opportunities for holidays throughout the year to make sure that we can improve the lives of more people and to reach out to the whole of Luxembourg. For this we need to extend our working hours

Organization and funding

**Regularly paid employees**

2

**Volunteers**

60

**Trainees**

0

**External advisers and experts**

20

**Others (please specify)****What are the specific professional backgrounds and competencies your team brings to the initiative?**

Our office-based team consists of 2 regularly paid employees, the first is from a communications and healthcare background and the second is from a logistics and managerial background. These skills are transferred to their daily tasks; planning and organising trips, leading the team of healthcare professionals and communicating with our clients.

The team is complimented by a variety of healthcare professionals from the Red Cross who plan individual care packages and provide supervision and care during the activities - disciplines include nurses, carers, socio-familiar carers and instructors

**Please describe your management or coordination structure in the initiative.**

2 employees manage the teams of carers that organize the activities directly with the clients.

The carers that on a daily basis take care of the clients in a pluri-disciplinary approach participate in the process of organising and preparing the client for the activities or trips. They also accompany their patients on the trip, usually one medical nurse for 4 persons. With people needing special assistance beyond the medical treatment they are supported by other carers.

The teams therefore change for every activity and trip, which poses a special challenge for the management team.

**Please provide the total yearly budget in Euro that your initiative spends on implementing the solution.**

155.353 €

**National public funding**

0 %

**European Union public funding**

0 %

**Economic return from own products/services**

0 %

**Foundations and philanthropy capital**

0 %

**Single donations from private individuals**

0%

**Donations from private companies**

0%

**Crowdfunding platforms**

0 %

**Participation fees**

0% (clients pay for their own travel expenses, these costs do not appear in this budget)

**Other (please specify)**

This budget comprises only the salary of the 2 professionals managing the project. This part is financed by the Red Cross

**Target group, scale and impact****Which target group(s) do you want to reach with your solution?**

Our aim is give all sick, elderly people the opportunity to add some stimulation to their daily routine by participating in our scheme. We particularly encourage clients with reduced mobility or with a limited social network that are often at home for prolonged periods of time.

We deal with elderly clients of all age groups and we offer the programme to everyone in Luxembourg despite their migration background or level of care needs. We aim to keep costs as low as possible to enable participation from all social backgrounds and we also offer financial support to those on the lowest income

**Please estimate the number of persons within your target group (users, clients, etc.) that you currently reach directly with your solution.**

800

**In which local/regional/national area(s) is the solution currently implemented?**

Across the whole country of Luxembourg

**What is the impact on your target group (users, clients) you want to generate?**

We aim to encourage healthy ageing amongst our clients by providing the opportunity, to those who are restricted by health problems, to socialise with others, stimulate the brain with a variety of activities and to have something enjoyable to look forward to in their lives. We also introduce the opportunity to make decisions, returning dignity and choices to our clients. The solution also deals with isolation problems and allows elderly people to feel like they are part of society.

Our overall aim can be summarized as trying to improve the standard of living amongst sick, elderly people.

**What is the wider impact on society you want to generate?**

Our scheme allows participants to feel like they are part of 'normal' society in Luxembourg with the rights to socialise and to participate in activities. Wider society can see that it is still possible for sick, elderly people to participate which results in a perception of them being a normal part of society and they are therefore included. We also want society to know that help is available for elderly people and that society should embrace ageing despite sickness and that they shouldn't worry or be afraid about having a lack of independence.

**What are the impacts on your target group you already achieved?**

Our programme has already been a great success for our clients, they enjoy the opportunity to do something fun and different whilst family and carers often note that our participants are much happier after a holiday or when participating in activities. For example after our holiday trip to Timmendorf during 2012, all clients noted 'very good' for our respect of their personal choices and that they felt 'much happier' after the holiday. Comments such as 'I enjoyed the company and not being alone' are common showing our positive effect and that we are achieving our project aims.

**How has the impact of your initiative been assessed?**

Experience-based self-assessment (you assessed the impacts based on your experiences with the target group), Feedback-based self-assessment (you assessed the impacts based on feedback from the target group without using specific methods), Self-evaluation (you used qualitative and/or quantitative methods to assess impacts), External evaluation of impacts based on qualitative methods (interviews, focus groups, etc.).

Public information and strategy

**What information on your initiative is publicly available?**

Mission and strategy, Organisational structure, Financial report, Activity report.

**Please indicate webpage or contact for obtaining the respective information.**

<http://www.croix-rouge.lu/activites-et-loisirs/> [Gerard.Bazi@croix-rouge.lu](mailto:Gerard.Bazi@croix-rouge.lu)

**What are your milestones for further developing, implementing, and establishing your initiative in the next three years? Please describe 1-3 milestones.**

Our primary milestone is to expand our services to provide a wider range of activities, more frequently throughout the year. To develop this we already have a good working knowledge of enjoyed activities and holidays as well as suggestions from our client questionnaires. We have also established links with travel and accommodation firms.

In order for us to be able to achieve expansion, we need funding for our overhead costs and to have more working hours in the office. We already have interested participants as well as the knowledge and experience to establish and maintain the programme

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