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## MAISON FAMILIALE RURALE (MFR) DU GRANIT

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ISSUE: Building on mobilization and involvement from local communities

### ITINERARY 2C

Date: Thursday, September 12, 2013

Location: La Source argentée

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## PROMOTER and SPEAKER

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### **Presentation of the issue:**

At the time, Saint-Romain counted 40% of drop-outs. We have to motivate the manually gifted youth to complete high-school. It is important to find a solution tailored for their needs. It seems that the DEP Programs (Vocational diploma) are not adequate. Moreover, there is no agricultural training available in the MRC, which causes the uprooting of young people interested in this sector, a lack of succession in agroforestry and a difficulty in recruiting qualified staff to work in this industry.

### **Project description:**

Mrs. Rancourt and Mr. Campeau heard about a family rural house (MFR) initiated in France whose clientele was similar to theirs. They went to see. Excited, they were convinced that this was what they needed for Saint-Romain. They immediately started to mobilize families, young people and the community.

MFR du Granit is a concept based on a work-study program aimed specifically at young people for whom the conventional school fails to motivate them and/or for young people who are passionate about agroforestry professions.

MFR Saint-Romain was the first to be established in Canada, which forced the promoters to adapt the concept to the Quebec reality.

It's not easy to innovate; the territory is large, and the population is small; we need to find enough customers to have a good ratio, but we also need to find the educators.

**The key elements to remember according to the promoter and speaker:**

- before anything, prepare a solid strategic plan;
- establish links with France;
- bring over French trainees to reassure the supervising teachers and convince them of their competence;
- convince and enlist the support of the school board;
- develop a training plan that meets the requirements of the Department;
- offer a program that meets the needs of the community and young people;
- 80% of the land is forest, and 20% is agricultural;
- favorable context: the developers are supported by the UPA (Agricultural Producers' Union), and the community is favorable;
- finding the right organizational structure, namely a solidarity cooperative.

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## RESEARCHER

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Mario Handfield, UQAR | E-mail: Mario\_Handfield@uqar.ca

**Summary of the researcher's presentation:**

Mr. Handfield stresses that Catherine Théberge, the student he appointed to work for this research project, is on maternity leave and could not join him. Three MFR projects were part of the study: two were successful and one failed.

**Motivations for establishing an MFR:**

- fill a need for skilled labor;
- lower the drop-out rate;
- value the skilled trades of the community;
- train the young people in their communities;
- promote the development of the community businesses.

**Participants Concerns:**

- MFR's survival is fragile;
- unattractive sector to the customers;
- school board is ill-suited for this model;
- lack of qualified personnel or no interest in the profession;
- image of a school for drop-outs.

**The key elements to remember according to the researcher:**

- 1 project director + 2-3 assistants;
- get support and funding;
- develop credibility;
- be convincing;
- work with well-known organizations and contacts = better coordination;
- obtain community and youth support;
- get help from the economic and political actors within the community;
- obtain cooperation from the school board; they must be receptive to the project.

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**QUESTION PERIOD**

Q.: What is the biggest challenge in the development of an MFR?

A.: The core is the school boards. They are usually reluctant, closed and uncooperative. That is the reason why one of the proposed projects failed.

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**ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTATION**

**NOTE: All linked documents (PowerPoint, Prezi, etc.) are only available in their original French version.**

[PowerPoint from Mario Handfield, UQAR](#)