

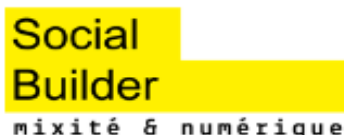
AN INSPIRE SOCIAL ENTERPRISE CASE STUDY

Social Builder, France



Emmanuelle Larroque founded Social Builder, a social enterprise whose mission is to achieve equality and diversity in a digital world. The organization works on 3 pillars: create the conditions for a culture of equality, develop women's skills to become leaders, and give tools for people to become changemakers themselves for an inclusive digital world.

Social Builder has trained 35,000 women in leadership, digital and entrepreneurship skills since 2011. It partners especially with Facebook around bootcamps bringing together up to 2000 women.



Social Builder carries an Innovation Lab that incubates tech4good projects such as Adabot, a chatbot that will help 100 000 women enter the tech industry in 3 years.

Fatma: *Can you tell us your journey, how you decided to be a social entrepreneur rather than the traditional way?*

Emmanuelle: So thank you for this interview. I started 11 years ago to build the Social Builder, that is empowering women in the digital economy. I've always had creative projects. And, you know, being an entrepreneur is not only creating a company, but you know, I created a nonprofit, and I really was involved in different kinds of projects really trying to shape solutions. And 11 years ago, when I was wondering, what would be my next step, to have an impact, I was either going to work for the United Nation, or for a campus, you know, for education. And I was really, I really asked myself what I wanted to have an impact on. And I decided that it was for gender equality that I wanted to fight for. And then at that time, when I was looking at the ecosystem, who was working on that kind of issue, there was very seldom organization, there were more traditional nonprofits, but not very startup minded with high objectives and maybe an objective for disseminating all over the world. And so I decided that it was my time also to try to shape something new, with that kind of ambition. So I started from scratch. And we're 40 People now, with an impact of more than 7000 women already that have supported, doing lobbying, also, in France, for women empowerment in the tech industry. And, and I think it's, so it's a long journey. But it makes total sense, once you want to create something new, to have. And to have an impact to really use the, I would say the tools of entrepreneurship, to kind of reshape the way we are supporting and changing the dynamics for social impact.

Fatma: *Thank you so much. It's really amazing, inspiring to know about your journey. What kind of skill the social entrepreneur needs to run, when they decide to start their journey?*

Emmanuelle: From my experience, and also looking at other social entrepreneurs, the first thing is really, very being very pragmatic. I think that what we need are solutions, and to build new ways of supporting people or looking at problems differently, or also offering governments or companies new ways of challenging or targeting or supporting an issue. It really requires people to, to be pragmatic,

we need to look at problems, look at problems, look at problems, and then reshape the ones the way we address those problems. So that would be the first thing. The other thing is to be a pragmatic problem solver. We need really to, to not only talk, but really try to find new ways of communicating or addressing issues of engineering things. So yeah, that's another problem problem solving. And I think also, working with different stakeholders is really partnership building, we address issues of magnificent scale, that really need for people to really work together. That's the most challenging part. So being really looking at who can bring what's as part of the solution and how I can really complement this or work with them, or help them work differently. So it's really a lot of humility, a lot of empathy and a lot of you know, finding a good way of interacting with other stakeholders. And that's pretty much it. And of course, the last skill is being resilient.

Fatma: But what kind of need and skill do you need to start your own entrepreneurship? What can an entrepreneur do against a problem and some difficult situation? What kind of skill do you think you should have that okay, I need to improve my skill in this field?

Emmanuella: I think as any entrepreneur, we need to kill the HR skill, the management skills. So I think what is very important is to know how to make people work together with the budget constraints, constraints, and the people who join our organizations, they are very dedicated to have an impact. And as any other organization that may be more in social entrepreneurship, you need to have very good management and organization skills so that people can feel that they have an impact. And at the same time that they're working in an environment that is structured that can bring the right information and where they can have, you know, value. So our main skill and I think peer to peer learning is very important.

Fatma: Did you get support while trying to start your company, any foundation you get at the beginning or you use your own source as a final financial effect?

Emmanuella: So at the start of the first year, we were selling our services to women directly. And then after year three, we started to have support from private companies. They were actually buying certain services, or the government through subsidiaries. And around five to six years after the start, we started to be very attractive for foundations and international organizations that have had foundations. And with time we are actually getting more interested in the bigger, bigger foundation.

Fatma: What do you think about support and ongoing support for social entrepreneurship? How do you compare it to other European countries or just demand the regional perspective or the International? Are the government's supporter to develop the social entrepreneurship in France actually like to think about that the government support is support in interesting only process or they support also in same time the monitoring and guidance or how is the politics before social?

Emmanuella: So, the ecosystem of the robotic social attributes thing has gotten stronger in the past couple of years. There is impact hubs which is a an organization that is more likely to not only social entrepreneurship, but impact organization that is providing kind of a moral lobbying, that helps you know, explain what difficulties we are going through as far as capturing funding constraints, you know, building the organization with the constraints we have or that also try to get more positive conditions to access public contracts. For example, we have also University of Management schools like a sec or HEC, they have specific program for social entrepreneurs that are free and accessible at

different time of their gross benefited from the support of Autopia on topia, which is one of the main ecosystem where main actor to accelerate impact and social impact are in addition, there are other actors like Ashoka or other organization with that gift prices. I would say that what is lacking the most is financing. We have a very few organizations. We have one that is called perspective that gives credits or subsidies to a social entrepreneur, but it's not enough to cover the needs.

Fatma: What were the main obstacles and how did you overcome the obstacles?

Emmanuella: The main obstacle was first to really understand what was the need that I wanted to address. So the first thing was really understanding the problem. Then, the other obstacle was getting my message out there meaning like when nobody knows you, and nobody trusts that, you know, we can change the rules or create something new. So it took a long time for us to be taken seriously. So that's the other obstacle. And the third obstacle is to work with very, very small resources. At a time when you need to communicate a lot you need to do to build a strong solution. And if you don't have money to pay nobody. To overcome the problem, the first thing that I did was to personally contribute my own money to the project. The other thing is I tried to knock at a lot of doors, talking to everybody about the project, and see who was interested in supporting it in one way or another. So I did a lot of outreach to people and my philosophy was talk to anyone about what you're doing, and there will be people coming in to you for more information. And the third thing is, I spent quite a lot of time learning by myself about all the other issues that I was going through, you know, from creating my own website to facilitating group exchange and training myself coaching. And so I spend a lot of time learning to be able to handle any kind of jobs that need to be done, and to be able to recruit better people. And that's pretty much it.

Fatma: Did you get support from other social entrepreneurs?

Emmanuella: I didn't have much but from social entrepreneurs, because I didn't know so many of them. So I had support from other entrepreneurs who gave me information and access to networks so that I could, you know, figure out things or capture, support, money, monetary support. And I started to have peer to peer learning from other social entrepreneurs three years ago. So six, eight years after the creation of the organization, when I was introduced to a group that was content. It's a pure learning group. For social entrepreneurs, and that was a very, very interesting way of, of, you know, learning. But before that, it took quite a while.

Fatma: What would be your advice for the newcomers?

Emmanuella: So the suggestion for newcomers is to talk to anyone about your idea, I think it's very important people can get very private about their ideas. And it's really pushing ideas into the world that helps to have feedback. I would say try to get into programs that help entrepreneurs, whether it's social entrepreneurs or not, to meet other entrepreneurs very rapidly. And because the program is often connected to a source of financing, whether its foundation or you know, so it's very important to be seen, and those actors, ecosystem, you know, accelerators, their job is really to identify entrepreneurs and support them. And the third thing that I would say is, is to think it's very important to find some people who will support you when it's difficult. And it could be a partner, your partner, it could be your kids, it could be an aunt or friends, I think it's very important to identify very rapidly

people who will cheer you up. When, when you are in, in, you know, in the difficult times, so that you don't give up.

Fatma: Thank you so much for taking your time to tell your story for us and for the entrepreneurs yet to come. It was really inspiring to have a conversation with you.

Emmanuella: You're welcome.



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