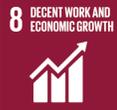


XISQUETA OBRADOR



Concerned SDG(s): 8
Company name: Xisqueta
Industry: Design, crafts, fashion and education

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Challenges addressed

The trademark Xisqueta is the result of a local revitalization project undertaken by Xisqueta Obrador, a non-profit association from the High Catalan Pyrenees who was born in 2009. The original main challenge to be addressed by this project was to get a fair price for wool sheep breed by a series of shepherds and shepherdesses who still have the Xisqueta original race.

From this starting point, Xisqueta brand evolved in order to support shepherds who protect this breed by means of the generation of a wool crafts persons collective. Xisqueta mission then focuses on maintaining alive the ancestral knowledge of shepherds and try to adapt this knowledge to contemporary society. To do so, they created Xisqueta collection, by means of applying new design to freshen up handcraft techniques and to explore the wool potential.

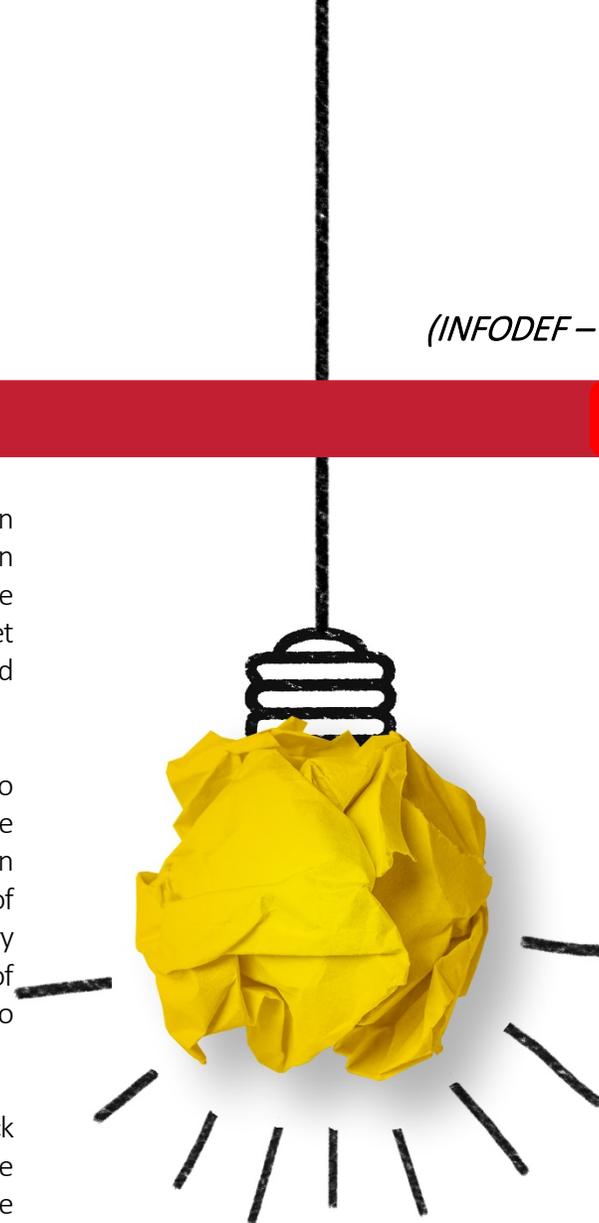
The project try to ensure the generational change of livestock farms by incorporating young people into the activity, the sustainable management of farms and the revitalization of the sector, making it economically viable.

Goals and ambitions

The main goal of Xisqueta is to get the shepherd job back through the promotion of the Xisqueta breed wool. The project transmits modernity based on values such as km 0 consumption, research and development, ecology and sustainability.

The specific objectives of the project are:

- dignify shepherd profession and provide tools for its organization and cooperation
- contribute to train young farmers in new craft techniques
- offer advice to the sector to modernize the business structure through cooperation, orientation towards ecological production and the transformation and commercialization of the product
- contribute to the valorisation of Xisqueta race wool for the recovery of this endemic species in danger of extinction
- sensitize young people to join the agricultural activity





Implementation and approaches

The basic approach consists on the association buying the wool from the Assua Valley shepherds at a fair price, more than 60 tons from the beginning of the project. After this, the association carry out various transformation and commercialization processes with support of regional government, municipalities and SMEs from the area. These processes include textile, interior design, raw material for shepherds and building insulation.

Xisqueta has created a craftsmen network with various people from the area. They form the production team of the project and they make a main part of the products of each collection by creating unique masterpieces. They work with different techniques: felt, weaving loom, knitting and crochet needles.

A very relevant approach for the implementation of the project is based on the design of ethical fashion created from the wool obtained. Numerous items are dyed with natural colorants from plants and insects and the commercialized.

Another approach carried out during the last 4 years is Xisqueta Caravan. This Caravan tries to sensitize and increase awareness about the project in the small villages of the area, offering information and workshops for shepherds and young people interested on the field.





Required resources

- ✓ Cost and resources for the production and management
- ✓ Management of distribution channels
- ✓ Personnel involved in the educational programmes

Obstacles

The main obstacles encountered during the implementation process are those related with reluctance from the professional livestock sector, especially in small villages. The cattle exploitations in the Pyrenees, as in the rest of Spain, did not present a guaranteed continuity tendency so is very difficult to involve youngster.

Financing of the project has been other relevant obstacle, since the project has been promoted by a non-profit association. However, the project has obtained funds from Young People in Practices 2018 program (achieving the hiring of a young person) and funds from the INTERREG POCTEFA during the period of 2013.

Benefits and contributions

The project is an example of ecological and rural entrepreneurship in the crafts sector. They have created new wool products with an important innovation in design putting in value the local resources and the cultural heritage of the region. They have been awarded with the National Crafts Prize in 2014.

Xisqueta promotes habits and consumption patterns based on Circular Economy and a Zero Waste Strategy and has develop a sustainable business model based on the Xisqueta breed which has been in risk of extinction for the last years.

References

1. <http://www.xisqueta.cat/en/>
2. <https://vimeo.com/125128543>
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