



# Montrieux le Hameau

David Rivoire

France

Case study collected by: Defismed

Thematic area: Wellbeing

## Type of Initiative:

Montrieu-Le-Hameau is a transformative project focused on sustainable living, participatory governance, and emotional intelligence. It offers a space for reconnection with nature and community, while exploring economic models that prioritize social and environmental impact over profit. This case study showcases how the project blends market and non-market activities to create a resilient, inclusive community centered on well-being and environmental regeneration.

## How it's Different



**Sustainability**

Ecological  
regeneration



**Participatory  
governance**

Inclusive &  
horizontal  
structure



**Resilience**

Environmental,  
social &  
economical



**Emotional  
intelligence**

Empathy, open  
communication

## What was the trigger for your business or entrepreneurial idea?

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The trigger for my entrepreneurial idea was a deep personal reflection on the unsustainable direction of the world, driven by technology, capitalism, and unlimited growth. After experiencing burnout, I realized the need to reconnect with nature, human vulnerability, and collective well-being. This led to a desire to create spaces and projects where these values could be nurtured. I wanted to demonstrate that alternative, more sustainable ways of living and working were possible, and that they could have a meaningful, positive impact on both individuals and communities. This vision eventually manifested in the creation of Montrieu-Le-Hameau, a space focused on sustainability, emotional intelligence, and participatory governance.

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## How does the business help to address regional climate change or sustainability issues?

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Montrieu-Le-Hameau tackles regional climate change by promoting sustainable living through practices like permaculture, agroecology, and soil regeneration. The project focuses on biodiversity, eco-friendly farming, and reducing its ecological footprint. It also educates visitors on climate change through workshops, empowering communities to take action and contribute to environmental stewardship.



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To create real change, we must reconnect with nature, embrace our vulnerability, and build communities rooted in empathy and cooperation

David Rivoire

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## How is your product or service innovative? What gap in the marketplace does it fill?



Montrieu-Le-Hameau is innovative by combining sustainable living practices with participatory governance and emotional intelligence. It fills a gap in the marketplace by offering a holistic model that integrates ecological regeneration, community well-being, and alternative economic structures, offering a real-world example of a thriving, socially and environmentally responsible community. This approach addresses the growing demand for sustainable tourism, personal well-being, and eco-conscious lifestyles in an integrated, hands-on way.

## Where did you source the main support and resources (eg grants and other support)?



The main support and resources for Montrieu-Le-Hameau were sourced through a combination of cooperative investments, partnerships with local organizations, and research collaborations. The project was funded by 11 cooperative families who invested without expecting financial return. Additionally, partnerships with organizations such as INRAE (National Research Institute for Agriculture, Food, and Environment) helped provide research support for sustainable agricultural practices. Grants and external funding for social and environmental initiatives also contributed to the development of the project.

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Success isn't about profit. It's about creating a space where individuals can thrive, where the environment is respected, and where collective responsibility drives us forward.

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**David Rivoire**

### **What advice do you wish you could have accessed when you started?**

I wish I had access to advice on how to balance idealism with practical realities when starting Montrieu-Le-Hameau. It's essential to stay grounded in the day-to-day operational challenges while maintaining a long-term vision for sustainability and social impact. Additionally, guidance on navigating the complexities of cooperative governance and managing diverse stakeholders would have been invaluable. Understanding the importance of patience and persistence in building a resilient community, especially when working with alternative economic models, would have also been helpful.

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### **What were the main obstacles or barriers you encountered?**

The main obstacles we encountered at Montrieu-Le-Hameau included securing sufficient funding, especially for a project with a non-traditional business model that prioritizes social and environmental impact over profit. Convincing stakeholders, especially financial partners, of the long-term viability of the project was challenging. Another barrier was managing the complexities of cooperative governance, ensuring all voices were heard while keeping the project on track. Additionally, balancing the desire to maintain a sustainable, low-impact lifestyle with the operational demands of running a business presented constant challenges.

## How successful has it been?

Montrieu-Le-Hameau has been successful in creating a thriving, sustainable community that prioritizes social and environmental impact. The project has effectively combined market-driven activities with non-market initiatives, fostering local resilience and offering opportunities for professional development, particularly for marginalized youth. It has also established a strong sense of community, with individuals reconnecting to nature and each other. While challenges remain, particularly in balancing financial sustainability with its social mission, the project's positive impact on its participants and the local environment demonstrates its success in pursuing a transformative and inclusive vision.

## Was success a result of individual work or collaboration (or both)?

Success at Montrieu-Le-Hameau was the result of both individual work and collaboration. While David Rivoire's vision and leadership played a crucial role in launching the project, the true success lies in the collaborative effort of the 11 families, local stakeholders, and various partners. The participatory governance model, based on collective decision-making and shared responsibilities, has been central to the project's achievements. Additionally, the integration of emotional intelligence and community-building practices has fostered a strong sense of cooperation, ensuring that everyone is actively involved in shaping the project's future.

