



European Network for
Rural Development

Network of paths and trails through the nature and culture of Lesvos

LAG Lesvos Local Development Company



Our motivation for working with this topic

We felt the need to re-connect our villages through a common theme both physically and in spirit of cooperation. We wanted to create a vibrant, “living” network to connect us in and ensure mutual development in a sustainable way.

This is what we did and do

We have been building this network in the past 18 years through intensive consultation, animation and consensus building to establish a network that allows each partner to get involved, diversify and differentiate. We used various tools (IOS & Android applications, the www.walking-trails.net & www.diveinourislands.com websites) and funds (ERDF, EMFF, EAFRD LEADER, etc.) to develop and promote a broad range of activities built on the “OIKOTrails” concept.

We managed to connect 42 villages and our network is growing. In doing all this we aim to reconnect nature with culture and people. We attempted to introduce part of the local identity as input for diversification in tourism - especially rural/alternative tourism and to make more visible the quality and uniqueness of local products such as local olive oil, local dairy products, fish and fruit products. A brilliant example is the chestnut production in the Agiassos area - in the centre of the trails - that was non-existent in the market before the Network made the chestnut forest a destination. In this process, we have been re-discovering Lesvos.

Those actors/ groups/ individuals were important

We worked with the villages, the local communities, tourism service providers, and NGOs. We helped set up or link to Cosme/FOOT program for athletic events #FOOT, Fit.On.OliveTrails. European Geoparks/Unesco, 14 international Mountain running and bike events, LESVOS-TRAIL, LAVA-TRAIL, LESVOS-RELAY. Furthermore, #3 Formal Groups – (Associations) are being created in Lesvos “OREIAS” – “MOLYVOS-OIKOPERIIGITES”, LESVOS-RUNNERS Association, all with more than 500 members.

Our learnings/ this is what we can recommend

Time, patience and dedication are essential for results, consensus building animating, making people feel involved. This, coupled with the use of innovative technologies enabled us to re-discover the traditional links between our villages and share it with residents of and visitors to our island alike. The trust and links we built among local communities will allow us to continue this 18-year-old LEADER story for more development in the future.

Find out more

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