

News

A coffee full of sustainability, environment and insertion of young immigrants



01/11/2019 - 17:57

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'Up Energía' is a pioneering project in Catalonia and in the rest of Spain.

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The project promotes the labor reintegration of young immigrants.



'Up Energía' generates solid biofuel in the form of pellets using coffee waste.

The 'Up Energía' project of the 'Factor Escucha' Association reuses coffee to transform it into different products and incorporates vulnerable groups into the workplace and MENA's.

To achieve the labor insertion of **unaccompanied foreign minors (MENA collective)**, to promote sustainability

and promote the circular economy are the three pillars of the ['Up Energía' project](#) of the ['Factor Escucha'](#) Association.

'Up Energía' generates solid biofuel in the form of pellets using coffee waste that is generated in Barcelona as raw material. "In this way we promote the **circular economy** and work for **extorted youth at risk of social exclusion** and other vulnerable groups," explains the co-founder of the project, **Judith Gilbert**.

'Up Energía' takes advantage of brown coffee to transform it into three products. One of them is **biomass**. This subject allows to make a type of **production of energy cheaper**, renewable and with less emissions by its form of combustion.

The other product is the **'biochar'** that serves as a fertilizer for soils and absorbs and retains much longer the water of plants **causing less waste** of natural resources.

Biochar also keeps the amount of **Co2 in the soil** that has absorbed the plant when it grows, preventing it from coming to the atmosphere.

The third product extracted from coffee is **active carbon** that has many properties: it **absorbs contaminants**, cleanses the water, eliminates the smells of food industries ...

Gilbert explains that the business model consists of **collecting coffee residue** at high consumption points, such as cafes, restaurants or hospitals. Then move to the production center that the entity has in Montcada i Reixach and there, the residue, goes through a **drying process**.

The idea of ??the project was born in 2016 and until 2018 it has been in the testing phase. "The main objective is **to seek sustainability and economic profitability** in each phase of the process," says Gilbert. Add: "that's why we are now testing different models and checking which of the three products is most profitable."

In order to achieve this goal, **'Up Energía'** has the collaboration of other social entities such as ['TEB'](#) or ['Eicascantic'](#), from the public administration through the [Specialized Support Service for young people tutored and extuted](#) (SAEJ), of the private company and of the academic field (UB).

At the moment, 'Up Energía' has already hired **two exiled young people** from Morocco and Pakistan. Thanks to this, these two people have already been able to **regularize their legal situation**.

The forecasts are, according to Gilbert, **employ fifteen people**, as well as managing some thousand tons of waste correctly and avoiding about **500 tonnes of carbon dioxide emissions** into the atmosphere.

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