

## MEDICINAL AROMATIC PLANT CULTIVATION AS A SUSTAINABLE ALTERNATIVE TO CANNABIS IN PËRMET – MAPCULT

### Context

In recent years, due to favourable climate and terrain conditions and high unemployment in rural areas, the Municipality of Përmet in the region of Gjirokastra, has seen an increase in cannabis cultivation, turning it into the main source of income for family farmers living in these areas. According to the National Action Plan against cannabis cultivation and trafficking, national and local governments should take measures to tackle cannabis cultivation in the areas affected by this phenomenon. The foreseen measures include raising awareness about the legal consequences of involvement in criminal activity, encouraging self-employment and creating legitimate employment alternatives for most vulnerable groups, promoting training programs in order to increase employment opportunities for young people and women, and developing programs to motivate, promote and support the cultivation of medicinal aromatic plants (MAPs).

### Project Objectives

The overall objective of this project is to improve access to socio-economic development and employment opportunities in communities vulnerable to cannabis cultivation and trafficking. The project's specific objectives are:

- (i) Supporting the cultivation of rosa-canina and other MAPs in the municipality of Përmet, as an economically viable alternative to cannabis cultivation;
- (ii) Enhancing capacities and knowledge on MAPs cultivation and production of artisanal cosmetic products among young men and women with primary and/or secondary education and unemployed women;
- (iii) Increasing public awareness on cannabis cultivation and trafficking, paying particular attention to villages affected by cannabis cultivation.

### Expected Deliverables

- 5 hectares of land cultivated with rosa-canina and other MAPs;
- Purchase a MAPs dryer machine and set up a lab for the production of artisanal cosmetic products;
- Trainings with municipal officials to increase public awareness on issues related to cannabis cultivation;
- Study tour in neighbouring countries to increase capacities of family farmers and municipal members and exchange experience on MAPs cultivation;
- Trainings with family farmers on the best techniques for cultivating MAPs;
- Training with young men and women and unemployed women to increase capacities on production and promotion of artisanal cosmetic products.



#### GENERAL INFORMATION

DONORS:  
European Commission

PARTNERS:  
• The Municipality of Përmet  
• Urban Research Institute (URI)

DURATION:  
01/09/2021 - 01/09/2024

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### About URI

Since 1999, the Urban Research Institute (URI) has been delivering big results for development projects and programmers carried out throughout Albania. Our core business focuses on community development, local government strengthening, environmental protection, decentralization, and public services. We conduct studies, lobby the government, train local government units, increase public access to information, and connect development partners. URI has worked with donors such as USAID, Swiss Cooperation, the Netherlands Embassy, UNDP, World Bank, EU, SIDA, Open Society Foundation, etc.



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