

# GENDER SENSITIVE POST-EARTHQUAKE RECOVERY AND RECONSTRUCTION PROJECT

Gender Sensitive Value Chain Analysis (GSVCA)  
in the Municipality of Durrës

DECEMBER 2021



GENDER SENSITIVE VALUE CHAIN ANALYSIS (GSVCA)  
IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF DURRËS

December 2021

The Gender Sensitive Value Chain Analysis (GSVCA) in the Municipality of Vora was conducted by Smart ICT on behalf of the Gender Sensitive Post-Earthquake Recovery and Reconstruction Project, implemented by UN Women in Albania, with the financial support of the Government of Sweden.

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*Disclaimer:*

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## ABBREVIATIONS

AU	Administrative Units
APP	Albanian-Austrian Partnership Foundation
ARDA	Agricultural and Rural Development Agency
ATTC	Agricultural Technology Transfer Centers
CBT	Community-Based Tourism
CEMR	Council of European Municipalities and Regions
DCED	Donors Committee for Economic Development
ETC	Etcetera
EU	European Union
GLP	General Local Plan
GSVCA	Gender Sensitive Value Chain Analysis
HACCP	Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point
INSTAT	Albanian National Institute of Statistics
IPA	Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance
IPARD	Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance for Rural Development
LED	Local Economic Development
MAP	Medicinal and Aromatic Plants
NFA	National Food Authority
NGO	Non-governmental organization
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
PDNA	Post-Disaster Needs Assessment
PDyV	Mandatory Local Plan
SEA	Strategic Environmental Assessment
SWOT	Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats

TDP	Territorial Development Plan
TS	Territorial Strategy
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UN Women	The United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women
VC	Value Chain
WEE	Women's Economic Empowerment
AU	Administrative Units

# 1. GENERAL INFORMATION

## 1.1 INTRODUCTION

As part of the post-earthquake reconstruction efforts of 2019, UN Women in Albania, with the financial support of the Swedish government, is implementing the "Gender Sensitive Recovery and Reconstruction Project" focusing on supporting and empowering women in 11 affected municipalities - Shijak, Durrës, Krujë, Tiranë, Kamëz, Kavajë, Vorë, Rrogozhinë, Kurbin, Mirditë and Lezha, both in rural and urban areas.

Past experiences have shown that girls and women are differently and often disproportionately affected by disasters and crises and have unequal levels of recovery. That was also the same with the deadly earthquake of November 2019 in Albania, which had a disproportional impact on girls and women. In particular the earthquake, followed by the COVID-19 health crisis, has affected women in rural areas who face the risk of losing vital agricultural production; single mothers or women who are head of family, that are at risk of poverty and losing their homes; victims of domestic violence and / or intimate partner violence and other highly vulnerable groups, such as women and men with disabilities, the elderly, LGBTI and women and men of the Roma and Egyptian communities.

The project focuses on three main areas:

1. Supporting national and local authorities in preparing and developing risk reduction plans, which include the priorities of girls and women.
  - The objective of these plans is to increase the capacity of LGUs, by not only providing immediate relief to the disaster-affected population, but also by taking into account the specific needs of girls and women and providing support for their long-term economic and social recovery.
2. Supporting girls and women in affected areas to access and benefit from economic opportunities. Concrete activities include:
  - Women's Economic Empowerment (WEE) through the development of Gender Sensitive Value Chain Analysis (GSVCA) to identify employment opportunities and market access for women;
  - Full implementation of activities for the post-earthquake sustainability through the development of the value chain, economic inclusion and empowerment of women by aiming to increase the family income;
  - Local Economic Development (LED) through gender equality approaches and women's empowerment activities to bring sustainable local economic growth and improved livelihoods;
  - Providing legal support and assistance to women and men in affected communities for registering new homes and apartments, as well as reconstructed buildings on behalf of both spouses based on Albanian legislation;

3. Treating domestic violence and gender-based violence in earthquake-affected areas through:

- Creating capacities of referral mechanisms and other service providers for managing cases of violence between women and their preparation to provide these services even during emergency situations.

Providing direct legal and psychological assistance as well as other services to girls and women in the affected areas

Gender sensitive value chain analysis in the Municipality of Durrës was conducted within the area of 2. *Supporting girls and women in the affected areas for accessing and benefiting from economic opportunities*. Its primary objective was to identify the main sectors in this municipality, presenting opportunities for inclusive economic growth and development, as well as evaluating the involvement of women in the processes and their opportunities for empowerment; and secondly, focusing on value chains with the greatest potential for development, by providing recommendations for specific measures to enhance the role of women and eliminate gender-based initiatives.

Inclusive development will be achieved by: (i) supporting of job creations for women in sectors where women find work; (ii) increasing the number of women (poor, marginalized and vulnerable) in employment, production, processing and marketing; and (iii) increasing the productivity and competitiveness of the products produced by these women.

This objective translates into specific intervention to increase the number of farmers / workers / producers - especially poor, earthquake-affected, vulnerable and marginalized women - who effectively and formally engage in employment or self-employment, take part in value chains and market systems, earn higher returns and enjoy economic security.

This approach is based on the Market Systems Development methodology ("Making Markets Work for the Poor" - M4P) and follows the guidelines of the Donors Committee for Economic Development (DCED) for Women Economic Empowerment (WEE) in the context of private sector development. The activities will be coordinated and supervised by UN Women and implemented by professionals who provide NGOs / associations with a solid history of technical engagement in inclusive private sector development and gender responsive, as well as knowledge for communities.

The specific activities are fully in line with the short-term solutions suggested by the OECD for the Western Balkans<sup>1</sup> and are based on the recent experience of gender-sensitive interventions in improving value chains in the country<sup>2</sup>

The focus of this study is the practical analysis of the main value chains in the Municipality of Lezha, from the perspective of the gender attribute. The main purpose of the gender-sensitive value chain analysis is to provide the Municipality of Durrës with practical recommendations that affect the population of the municipality as a whole (with a special

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1 OECD (2020). COVID-19 crisis in Western Balkans. Economic impact, policy responses and long-term sustainable solutions. <http://www.oecd.org/south-east-europe/COVID-19-Crisis-Response-Western-Balkans.pdf>

2 Gender sensitive approach to the value chain development: Summary document. Prepared and published by TETRA TECH for the USAID project of Planning and Local Governance in Albania 2020.

focus on women in rural areas), that will create employment or self-employment of women, strengthen their role in selected VCs, their grouping and cooperation to increase their influence as main actors in VCs and as the result improving the living conditions of women (and families) and their role in community.

This analysis was made possible due to the excellent cooperation with the staff of the Municipality of Durrës.

*This study is directly related to these objectives by supporting the women economic empowerment and promoting gender equality, at the same time improving the selected value chains (VC) in the Municipality of Durrës. This activity supports capacity creation of local value chain actors and supporting functions, as a better way to support value chain development by taking into account the gender aspect.*

## 1.2 NATIONAL CONTEXT FOR GENDER EQUALITY

Gender equality describes the concept according to which all human beings, both women and men, are free to develop their personality skills and make their choices without restrictions set by stereotypes, rigid gender roles or prejudices. Gender equality means that the different behaviors, aspirations and needs of women and men are considered, valued and favored equally. It does not mean that women and men should be made equal, but that their rights, responsibilities and opportunities will not depend on whether they are born female or male. (UN Women, 2011)

Over the years, Albania has developed a sustainable legal and institutional framework to promote gender equality and the protection of women's rights. The legal framework for promoting legal equality has been significantly improved by the ratification of a large number of important international instruments and other amendments. Below are some of the most important documents:

- The Constitution of Albania adopted in 1998 provides and guarantees equality between men and women and provides policies for equal opportunities and prevention of discrimination, among other causes, based on gender (Article 18).
- The Law on Gender Equality was adopted in 2008. This law regulates the basic principles of gender equality, requiring equal participation of women and men in all areas of life, equal status between women and men, equal opportunities and to enjoy rights and fulfill their obligations in society and to receive equal benefits from their achievements. The law defines "gender-based discrimination" (Article 11).
- The Law on Protection from Discrimination was adopted in 2010. Under this law, no one can discriminate on any grounds such as gender, race, color, ethnicity, language, gender identity, sexual orientation, political, religious or philosophical beliefs, economic, educational or social status, pregnancy, family background, parental responsibility, age, family or marital status, civil status, place of residence, health status, genetic predisposition, disability, belonging to a particular group or based on some other cause.
- National Strategy for Gender Equality, 2021-2030, approved by decision of the Council of Ministers no. 400, dated 30.6.2021, is a guide to a society where all individuals women, men, youngsters, girls and boys, regardless of age, gender, place of birth and residence, ethnic or social group, disability, affiliation of religious belief, expression of

gender identity and sexual orientation, as well as other individual characteristics, are given equal opportunities to develop their potentials; to participate equally in political and public decision-making; to elect and be elected; to be educated and trained throughout life; to be employed and employ by advancing towards new professions, challenging stereotypes and gender division of labor; to influence the social and economic development of the country and to be supported of their socially and economically development; create healthy families, where parents share responsibilities equally and where communication is the key to problem solving; to live free from harmful practices and violence; and where vulnerable groups are treated with priority until they are empowered and enjoy equal rights and opportunities in all walks of life - a society where equality is not confused with uniformity and where no one should be left behind.

**Strategic goal I** - *Fulfillment of economic and social rights for women, youngsters, girls and men, young people, boys in society and empowerment of women, young girls from all groups, aiming at the growth and sustainability of the (green) environmental economy, as well as their equal participation in digitalization.*

- *Application of the legal framework and improved policies that provide equal sharing of work and unpaid family care between women and men, youngsters, girls and boys.*
- *Increasing the access of women, youngsters from all groups (to financial services and products, as well as to productive resources.*
- *Reducing barriers that keep women and girls away from the job market, as well as increasing the access of women and girls from all groups, to decent work even in non-traditional sectors of employment (in particular in science, technology, engineering, mathematics).*

At the local level, the promotion of inclusion and equality is a component of legal frameworks and policies, which highlight the obligations of local government units in the aspect of gender equality (UN Women, 2019). For example, the Law on “Gender Equality” addresses the need to promote gender equality in local government and the specific units that are responsible for presenting, overseeing and monitoring performance and service, including gender equality. Efforts have been made by several municipalities to meet the regulation of the Council of European Municipalities and Regions (CEMR) and EU standards, adopting a clear structure, priorities, responsibilities and budgets that respond equally to the needs of women, men, youth (UN Women, 2018). Municipality of Durrës has not yet signed the European Charter for Equality of Women and Men in Local Life.

As a result of proactive laws, policies and principles, Albania has made improvements in many aspects of gender equality, for example, at the role that women play in private sector development. Compared to 2016, the percentage of enterprises owned or run by women has increased in all regions of Albania in 2017. However, decentralization and successful implementation of legal and development frameworks is still challenging, and the pace of change in terms of women's economic empowerment through private sector is slow, especially for women in rural areas. Gender norms, roles, responsibilities and prejudices in women's ability to access productive resources (such as land, finance,

networks, technology and equipment) and business services show that women and men still do not have an equal level in the economic and social aspect.

Some obvious impacts of gender prejudices in Albania in terms of economic empowerment through enterprises are for example:

- The employment rate for the population aged 15-64 is 77.1% for men and 61.2% for women of this age group. About 22.8% of women are unpaid workers in the family business, while for men this percentage is only 13.1%. A significant proportion of men are self-employed 33.3%, while the share of self-employed women goes up to 21.5%.<sup>3</sup>
- For women and men aged 15-64, the employment in the agricultural sector predominates. In 2020, 41.4% of female employees were employed in the agricultural sector. The second sector that occupies the largest share in the employment of women and men after the agricultural sector is trade, transport, hotels, business and administrative services, respectively with 21.6% employed women and 31.7% men. The gender pay gap is 6.6%. So, men have an average gross monthly salary 6.6% higher than women. Compared to 2019, in 2020 there is a reduction of the gender pay gap by 3.5%.
- Women own or manage 25.5% of all enterprises. <sup>4</sup> Divided by business size, it turns out:
  - Business up to 4 employees 25.8%
  - Business with 05-09 employees 23.9%
  - Business with 10-49 employees 22%
  - Business with +50 employees 22.8%
- In Albania, more than 80 percent of land titles are under the name of "head of household" or former head of household (father-in-law, father or grandfather). Women in rural areas have limited access to land information, limited access to support services, and perceive high levels of inequality in family decision-making and land rights compared to male family members (Zhllima, Edvin et al., 2016).
- Women in agricultural farm management represent only 7% of the total number of farms in Albania (INSTAT 2020). Although the number of female and male farm workers is at comparable levels in rural areas (224,639 males and 267,098 females), there is a large difference between them in terms of non-farm work (UNDP, 2016)

In most cases, on family farms there is a noticeable division by gender of farm work processes. Men's roles are work-related that include control over decision-making, agricultural assets, commodity mobility, and the market; while women's roles are related to manual labor in agriculture and livestock, including activities related to the cultivation or feeding of animals, harvesting, milking, processing of agricultural and livestock products and food, also household chores. This distribution of labor has resulted in women having limited opportunities and control over agricultural assets, decision-making processes, and commercial transactions. Although rural women have been a priority of support programs offered to the agricultural sector, only 64 of them have benefited from IPARD funds,

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3 Men and Women in Albania 2021. INSTAT

4 Men and Women in Albania 2021. INSTAT

approximately 10.1 million Euros. Of the support schemes implemented during 2020, only 15% of beneficiary farmers were women (MARD 2021).

### 1.3 UN WOMEN IN ALBANIA

The United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment, also known as **UN Women**, is a United Nations entity working for the empowerment of women. UN Women is a member of the United Nations Development Group. UN Women was created to accelerate progress in meeting the needs of women and girls, worldwide. UN Women supports the United Nations Member States as they set global standards for achieving gender equality and works with governments and civil society to design the laws, policies, programs and services needed to ensure that the standards are effectively implemented and to really benefit women and girls all over the world. It works globally to make the vision of the **Goal for Sustainable Development** a reality for women and girls in all aspects of life.

UN Women, based on the vision for equality embodied in the United Nations Charter, aims to eliminate discrimination against women and girls; women's empowerment; and achieving equality between women and men as partners and beneficiaries of development, human rights, humanitarian action, peace and security. By putting women's rights at the heart of all its efforts, UN Women leads and coordinates the efforts of the United Nations system to ensure that commitments to gender equality and gender integration to go into action around the world.

Active in Albania since establishing the Country Program in 2007, UN Women works closely with government and civil society to design and implement laws, policies, programs and services needed to improve the status of women and achieve global standards for gender equality. Within the **"One UN"** Program in Albania, UN Women Albania leads in gender equality issues and provides coordination and support for related activities by focusing on initiatives in four priority areas that are fundamental to women's equality and that can pave the way for all in Albania:

- ❖ Leadership and political participation
- ❖ Economic empowerment
- ❖ Ending of violence against women
- ❖ National planning and budgeting

To address some of these post-earthquake needs of November 26, 2019, and as part of post-earthquake reconstruction efforts in 2019, UN Women in Albania, with financial support from the Swedish government, is implementing a project focusing on supporting and strengthening women in the 11 affected municipalities - Shijak, Durres, Kruij , Tiranë, Kamëz, Kavajë, Vorë, Rrogozhinë, Kurbin, Mirditë and Lezha, both in rural and urban areas.

The "Gender Sensitive for Post-Earthquake Recovery and Reconstruction" project, which is implemented in close cooperation with the Municipality of Durrës , provides support to local authorities in preparing and developing risk reduction plans, which include the priorities of girls and women; supporting women and girls in affected areas to access and benefit from economic opportunities.

The overall purpose of this report, prepared by Smart ICT Services Ltd, within the above-mentioned project is the analysis and identification of key sectors in the Municipality of Durrës, which present opportunities for economic growth and development, assessing the involvement of women in processes and their chances for empowerment.

An important part of this report is also the in-depth analysis of 1-2 value chains with more potential for development, as well as the preparation of specific recommendations and development plans, which aim to increase the role of women and eliminate actions with gender prejudice.

## 1.4 USED METHODOLOGY AND ITS LIMITATIONS

The selected method for evaluation has been adapted from the methodologies successfully applied in several other countries, and is particularly suitable for countries which are in the initial stages of local government reform and have limited statistical data. This methodology combines information collected and processed in the field (primary sources) with those administered by the Municipality and various government institutions (secondary sources).

This report developed by Smart ICT Services has as its primary objective the identification of key sectors in the municipality of Durrës, presenting opportunities for growth and economic development, as well as assessing the involvement of women in the processes and their opportunities for empowerment, and secondly, focusing on value chains with the greatest potential for development, providing recommendations for specific measures to enhance the role of women and eliminate gender-biased initiatives.

According to the general description of the municipality of Durrës, its economic development and the main potential economic sectors are taken from the reports prepared in the framework of the "General Local Plan of the Municipality of Durrës (GLP)", respectively "Territorial Development Plan (TDP)", and "Territorial Strategy" (TS), approved by the Decision of the National Council of the Territory no. 2 dated 20.06.2018; as well as the report "Strategic Environmental Assessment of Durrës (SEA)". The information was also supplemented with data from the official website of the Municipality of Durrës and official publications and statistical information from the Institute of Statistics in Albania. The information was updated and the data were obtained from the statistical database of the Institute of Statistics in Albania (INSTAT) in 2021, for the period 2018-2020.

During the subsequent evaluation of value chains in the agricultural sector, the methodologies considered were "Market and value chain analysis of selected sectors in Albania for rural economic diversification and women's economic empowerment" (FAO 2018), "Chapter 4: Value Chain Sketching Tool" and "Module II: Sustainable Value Chains"(GIZ), which served as a reference during the construction of the value chain map (sketch).

Regarding the information from the earthquake analysis and the effects it had on the affected municipalities, and specifically the municipality of Durrës, the information was obtained from the "Volume A Report of the Post-Disaster Needs Assessment of Albania (PDNA)", developed in the February Report "Situation Assessment of the Earthquake of

Families with Children Living in Temporary Shelters in Albania", developed by the UNICEF Office in Albania & IDRA Research and Consulting.

**Sector Selection.** Primary resources such as field research, including group consultations and discussion sessions with municipal representatives, producers and experts were used to select sectors. This step was split into two phases. In the first phase, a preliminary evaluation of value chains was conducted, through discussions and meetings with representatives of the municipality, producers, representatives of supporting organizations and field coordinators of the project, as a way to identify value chain opportunities. This phase ended with the organization of groups of interest meeting, during which participants had the opportunity to present and discuss additional details, share the opportunities and constraints and get a clear picture and understanding of the value chains which helped them to select value chains in vineyard and wine production market as the main areas where to focus. In the second phase, field visits, observations of activities, surveys and semi-structured interviews were conducted with questionnaires adapted for different actors in the value chain.

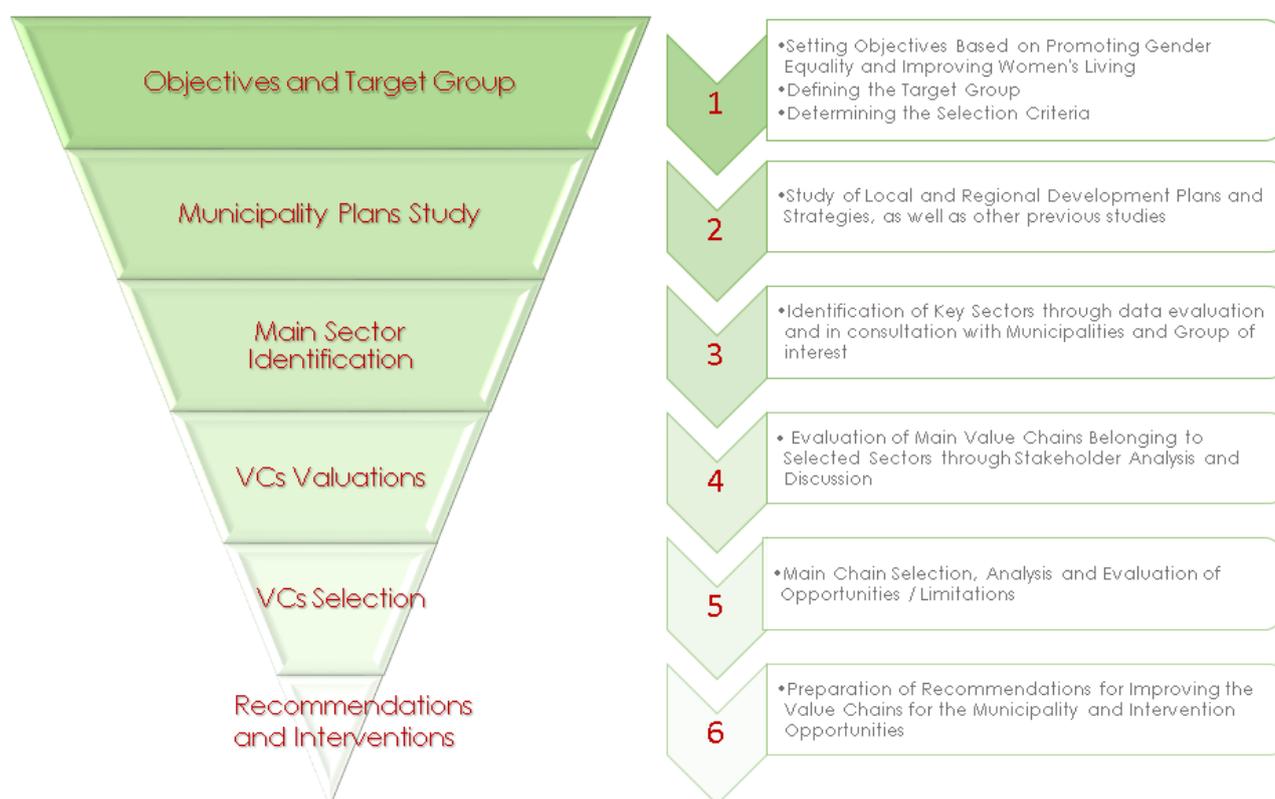


Figure 1. Methodology Approach

The main steps of the process are described below:

1. **Objectives and Target Group:** Defining objectives based on national and municipal goals (improving living and promoting gender equality) and defining the target group and selection criteria:
  - a. Target group: Women and men with low-income at the municipal level.

- b. Criteria: the importance of the sector in creating living conditions for women and men.
2. **Study of Municipal Plans:** Initial study of municipal plans and research work, based on plans, strategies, previous studies, etc.
  3. **Main Sectors:** Identification of main sectors using various reports, data and publications.
  4. **Evaluation of VCs:** Evaluation of the main value chains belonging to the selected sectors through brainstorming, discussions, focus groups.
  5. **Selection of VCs:** Selection of one or two main value chains and evaluation of opportunities, constraints and areas of intervention, through field research.
  6. **Recommendations:** Prepare the recommendations for improving the value chain for the municipality and the possibilities of intervention.

**Limits of Research Work.** The focus of this report is the practical analysis of the main value chains in the Municipality of Durrës, seen from the gender perspective. One of the biggest challenges faced during this study is the lack of secondary resources.

Currently, in Albania do not exist reliable statistical data, due to two factors: i) high level of informality, ii) differences in methodologies used by local authorities and INSTAT for statistical analysis utilized. Therefore, the results of research work (for main sectors / value chains) often did not match the results obtained during the group work sessions and groups of interest interviews. Moreover, most public data are often not disaggregated by gender and a large part of the statistical data published by INSTAT are not disaggregated by municipalities. The biggest problem with this data is that, with the exception of CENSUS 2011 data, there is no data on the resident population. The most recent data on the resident population is that of the 2011 CENSUS, making it quite difficult to obtain reliable statistical data.

Conceptually, implementing gender sensitivity analysis in value chains can often be problematic. Findings of research work are often general and depending on the purpose (improving women's lives or in other words, empowering women), can lead to the provision of intervention scenarios that aim more at economic development and not specifically improving the situation of women themselves. The purpose of this study is to provide the municipality of Durrës with practical recommendations that affect the whole population of the municipality and that consequently lead to the improvement of women' living conditions in the municipality. It is important to mention that in Albania and in those specific municipalities analyzed, the situation of the value chains is often so difficult (and poverty is so high) that any overall general changes and sustainable development in value chains would lead to higher incomes for the family, which would automatically mean better conditions for women and other actors in it. It's also necessary to remain attentive to the local context, including the diverse notions of masculinity.

Meeting sessions of the groups of interest, as well as the interviews conducted represent the size of the study sample, which can be considered as very small (duration of the study - about 1 month). However, the use of municipal strategic plans, as well as field research, supported the hypotheses that the observed trends can be considered as representative of the groups of people, the results of which will be generalized or further transferred.

## 2. PROFILE OF DURRËS MUNICIPALITY

Based on Law No. 139/2015 on Territorial Division in the Republic of Albania, for Statistical Purposes NUTSII Durrës Municipality is part of the Northern Region. It is bordered on the west by the Adriatic Sea, on the north by the municipality of Kurbin, on the east by the municipalities of Kruja, Vora and Shijak and on the south by the municipality of Kavaja.

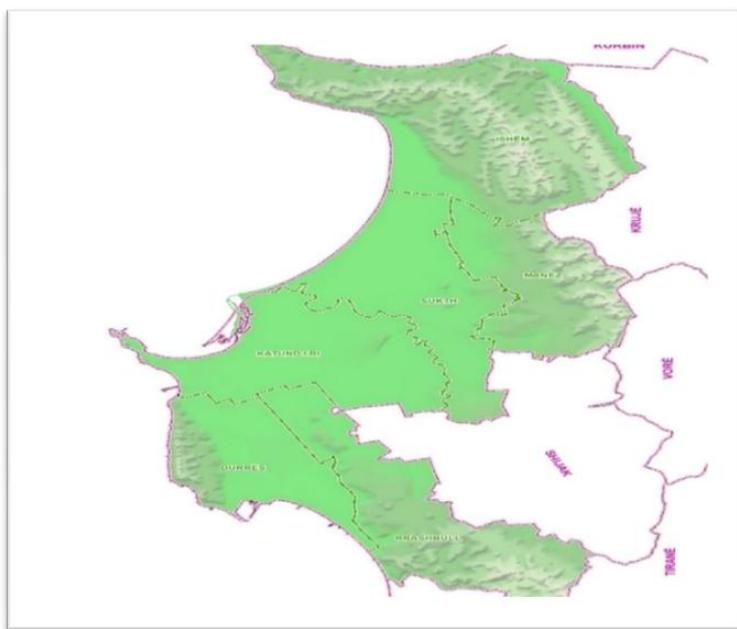


Figure 2: Administrative Map of the Municipality of Durrës



Figure 3: Location of Durrës Municipality

Data	Value	National Ranking	Ratio to national values	Average national value
Region according to NUTSII	Northern	-	-	-
Surface	331 km <sup>2</sup>	39	1.17%	464.72 km <sup>2</sup>
Population by Civil Status	324,036	2	7.19%	73,876
Population according to the 2011 Census	175,110	2	6.25%	45,908.64
Density by Civil Status	977	3	-	159
Density according to the 2011	529	2	3.	19
Number of AUs (including Neighborhoods)	11	8	-	7.67
Number of Cities	3	-	-	-
Number of Villages	39	-	-	-

Table 1: Main Administrative-Demographic Data of Durrës Municipality.

The municipality consists of six administrative units, which are: Durrës, Sukth, Ishëm, Katundi Ri, Rrashbull and Manëz. In the territory of the municipality there are three cities, Durrës, Sukth and Manëz as well as 39 villages.

The city of Durrës is positioned in the northern part of the bay with the same name. It is located on the shores of the Adriatic Sea, south of the city, and in the northern part of the Bay of Durrës. This sea bay is about 18 km long from north to south. The bay of Durrës is well protected from the cape of Durrës from the north-west winds, and from the cape of Lalzë from the south-east winds. After the administrative and territorial reform, the Municipality of Durrës extends along the coastline, from the estuary of the Ishëm River in the north to the border with Kavaja in the south. The long coastline that is added to the city of Durrës accentuates the characteristic of this municipality as a touristic area, because in addition to the beach of Durrës, the bay of Lalzë and Cape Rodoni were added to it, which until now have been part of the municipalities of Ishëm, Sukth, Katundi Ri and Rrashbull.

Durrës has a 3,000-year history and the life of the city for centuries has been closely related to the port built near it. Despite the invasions, wars and earthquakes that have hit it, Durrës and its seaport have been rebuilt in the same place. Durrës, or as it is locally referred to "Second Constantinople", was conquered by the Turks in 1501. Only in the 15th century, the city started to recover, becoming the center of transit trade and the main seaport of Central Albania. On 26 November 1912, the flag of Independence was raised in Durrës by a group of patriots led by Ismail Qemali. After the declaration of independence, the port of Durrës gradually regained its economic power and importance, thanks to the settlement in the city of Ulcinj sailors, who moved from Ulcinj to the ports of Albania. During the years of the Albanian monarchy (1924-1939), Durrës went through the second stage of development and the novelty of Durrës citizens transformed the city into a model of capitalist economic development. After the 1950s the seaport underwent a rapid development. Even today, Durrës is having major transformations as a city, while the port has become a gateway, which aims to connect the Balkan countries with the countries of the European Union. Currently, the Port of Durrës processes over 90% of the entire port loading and unloading volume of the country, which makes it the most important trading hub in the country.

Curative sandy beaches and an attractive view, with a total length of 62 km from the Agait Stream in the south to Rodon Cape in the north, make Durrës one of the most frequented touristic cities in the country. The traditional beach in the south of the city, also the beach of Currila or Lalzë, as well as the large number of hotels and tourist services make Durrës one of the most attractive areas of the country for domestic and foreign visitors alike. In recent years, the arrival of cruises and yachts of various types and sizes, anchoring in the port of Durrës almost all year round, has diversified the tourist traffic.

Durrës is also an important archaeological city, as beneath the actual city, exist several layers of ancient civilizations. Archaeological discoveries are numerous, while the constructions of the last decades have damaged a part of this heritage.

The Ancient Amphitheater, Medieval Towers and Byzantine Walls, the Circular Forum and Baths of the Roman Period, the Archaeological and Ethnographic Museum, together with the Alexander Moisiu Museum, there are some of the most historically significant objects of the city, most visited by local and foreign tourists.

## 2.1 VISION AND STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES OF DURRËS MUNICIPALITY

The vision of the Municipality of Durrës, for the next 15 years, is as follows:

*"The Municipality of Durrës aims to become: (i) A Complete exchange platform with logistic support for national and international flows of commodities, energy and people, (ii) center of an attractive economic development for foreign investments, and (iii) center of a partial polycentric urban that provides quality services to its citizens, and visitors."*

The realization of the vision of the Municipality of Durrës 2030 will be carried out through the implementation of three strategic development policies as follows: For achieving the Municipality of Durrës 2030 vision, the city has formulated and is implementing the following three strategic development goals.

**Strategic Policy 1:** Durrës will be restored as an important connecting junction in the region and an exchange platform providing logistics services of European level.

**Strategic Policy 2:** Durrës will be attractive for strategic investors & engine of economic development in Albania.

**Strategic Policy 3:** Durrës Municipality will provide efficient, quality and all-inclusive services focused on residents.

## 2.2 DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE

According to the 2011 census, in the territory of the new Municipality of Durrës live 175,110 citizens, while according to the civil registry the resident population is 324,036 citizens, which is approximately 66.64% of the total population of Durrës Region or 6.25% of the population of the Republic of Albania. With an area of 338.30 km<sup>2</sup>, the population density according to the 2011 Census data is 517 inhabitants per km<sup>2</sup> while according to the Civil Registry is 957 people per km<sup>2</sup>.

Administrative Unit	Total	Age Group		
		0-14	15-64	+65
Durrës	113,249	21,799	78,528	12,922
Manëz	6,652	1,502	4,400	750
Sukth	15,966	4,085	10,502	1,379
Ishëm	5,001	1,174	3,229	598
Katundi Ri	10,161	2,453	6,715	993
Rashbull	24,081	5,700	16,092	2,289
<b>Total Durrës Municipality</b>	<b>175,110</b>	<b>36,713</b>	<b>119,466</b>	<b>18,931</b>

Table 2: Population data for the Municipality of Durrës divided by group age. (Source CENSUS 2011)

Based on the data of Durrës Civil Registry Office, in the Municipality of Durrës live 98,096 families with an average composition of 3.31 members, while according to CENSUS 2011, 62,627 families live in Durrës with an average composition of 2.79 members. The data show

large demographic movements have occurred throughout the municipality, marking a population decline of 45.96%.

Based on the 2011 Census data, approximately 50% of the population or 56,738 of the inhabitants are female. The cohort 15-64 years constitutes the largest number of the population, almost 68% both female and male. Table 2 provides the general population data divided by each Administrative Unit by age group, while Table 3 provides these data broken down by gender.

Administrative Unit	No. of Villages	No. Of Families	Total Population	Gender	
				Male	Female
Durrës	0	35,338	113,249	56,511	56,738
Manëz	9	1,965	5,001	3,351	3,301
Sukth	9	4,608	10,161	7,999	7,967
Ishëm	7	1,535	6,652	2,487	2,514
Katundi Ri	6	2,937	15,966	5,071	5,090
Rashbull	8	7,206	24,081	12,194	11,887
<b>Total Durrës Municipality</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>53,589</b>	<b>175,110</b>	<b>87,613</b>	<b>87,497</b>

Table 3: Population data for the Municipality of Durrës disaggregated by gender. (Source CENSUS 2011)

Figures 4 and 5 reveal the composition of the population segregated by gender and age group for the Municipality of Durrës in total and divided by gender for each Administrative Unit.

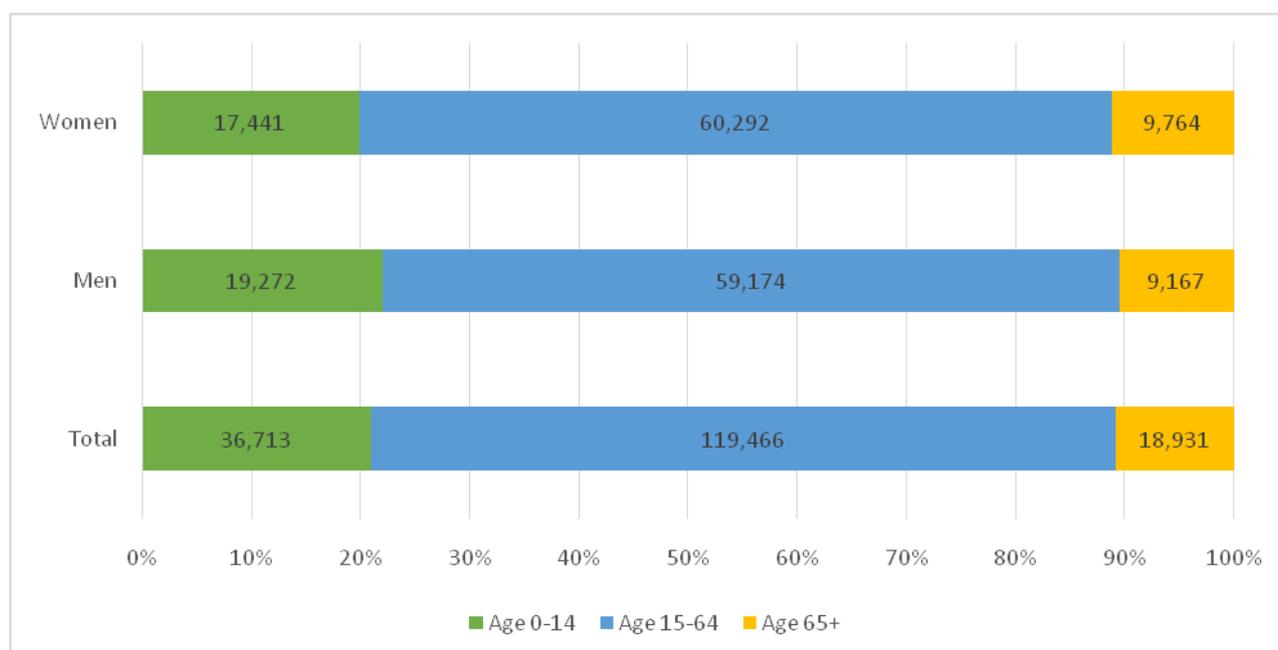


Figure 4: Population in% of Durrës Municipality divided by gender and age group. (Source CENSUS 2011)

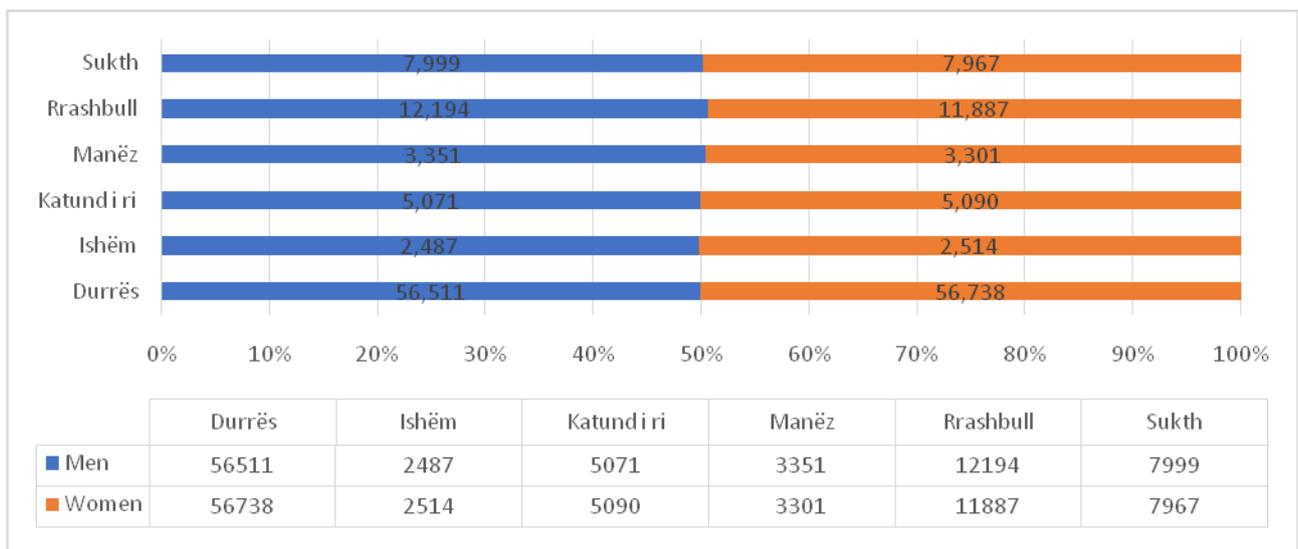


Figure 5: Population of the Municipality of Durrës for each AU in% divided by gender. (Source INSTAT CENSUS 2011)

The table 4 shows the data on the Civil Status of the population in the Municipality of Durrës:

	Marital Status				
	Total	Single	Married	Divorced	Widow
Durrës	113,249	47,102	59,161	1,229	5,757
Ishëm	5,001	2,144	2,620	12	225
Katundiri	10,161	4,646	5,089	34	392
Kodër thumanë	12,335	5,552	6,171	41	571
Manëz	6,652	2,969	3,392	22	269
Rrashbull	24,081	10,485	12,609	86	901
Sukth	15,966	7,316	7,968	58	624
Xhafzotaj	12,381	5,128	6,704	29	520
<b>Total Municipality</b>	<b>199,826</b>	<b>85,342</b>	<b>103,714</b>	<b>1,511</b>	<b>9,259</b>

Table 4: Civil Status data of the population for the Municipality of Durrës per AU (Source INSTAT CENSUS 2011)

## 2.3 ECONOMIC PROFILE

With over 5600 economic activities and 15% of foreign investments, Durrës is ranked as the second strongest economy of the country, after Tirana. Based on the official data obtained from the statistical database of INSTAT, in the Municipality of Durrës operate 9627 active enterprises<sup>5</sup>, 2811 businesses or 29% of them are administrated by women. The number of active businesses over the last 5 years, as indicated in Figure 6, has stayed at almost constant level with a variation of 3.4%.

5 <http://www.instat.gov.al/al/temat/industria-tregtia-dhe-shërbimet/regjistri-statistikor-i-ndërmarrjeve/publikimet/2021>

Based on the legal form they can be classified into: i) Farms: 431 enterprises; ii) Legal Persons: 6648 enterprises; iii) Legal entities: 2548 enterprises. Based on the type of the activity, they can be classified into: i) Farms: 431 businesses; ii) Legal Persons: 6648 businesses; iii) Legal entities: 2548 businesses.

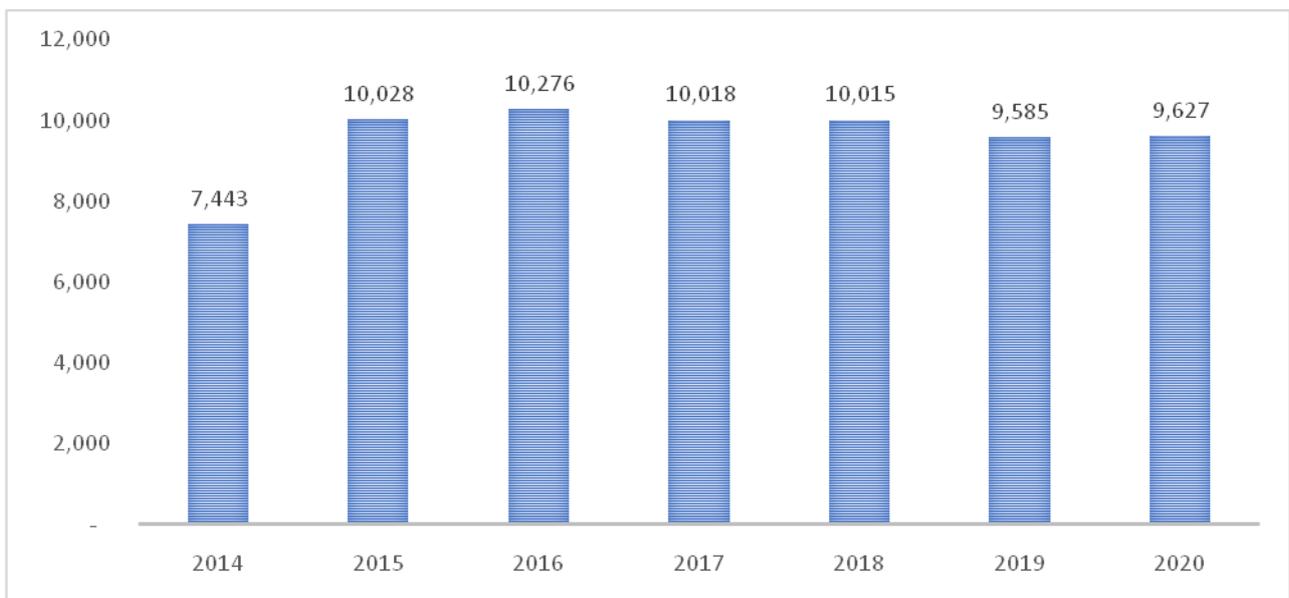


Figure 6: Number of Active Enterprises by Legal Form. (Source INSTAT)

As can be seen from Figure 7, agricultural enterprises have seen an upward trend by about 2.5 times, an insignificant upward trend when it comes to Legal Entities and a gradual downward trend of about 13% of Legal Persons. As revealed in Figure 7, during 2014-2020, the agricultural enterprises have seen an upward trend, their number increasing with about 2.5 times. Legal Entities have experienced an insignificant upward trend and the number of Legal Persons has gradually decreased with about 13%.

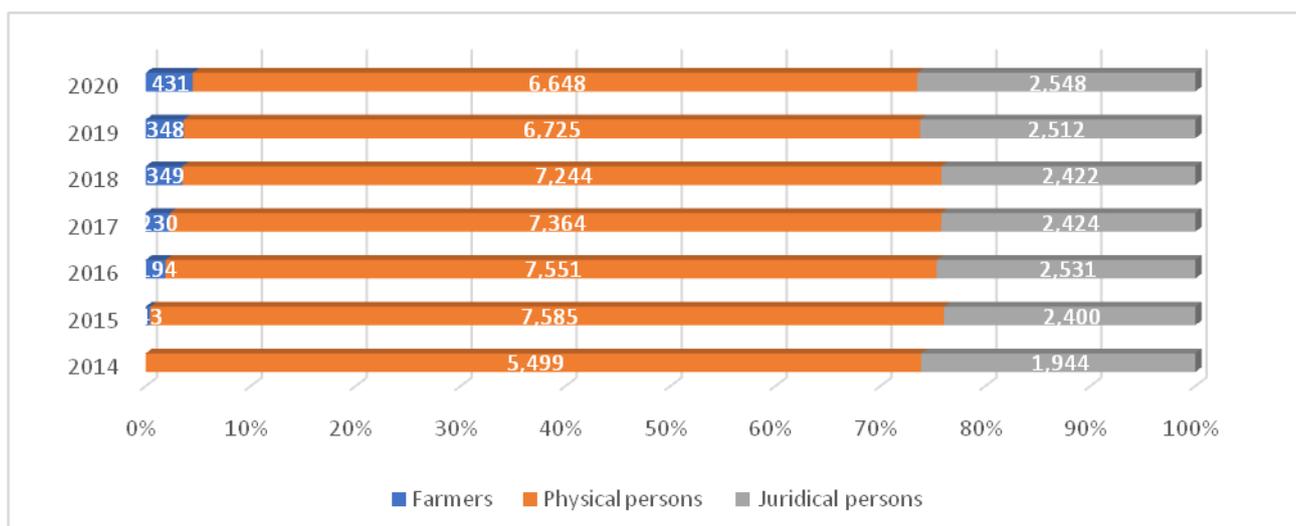


Figure 7: Percentage ratio of Businesses by legal form over the years. (Source INSTAT)

Legal Person businesses and Agriculture Farmer are predominant; together they constitute over 85% of all businesses. This trend is also reflected in the small number of employees in the private sector in this Municipality. Looking at the business structure from this point of view only 735 businesses or about 7.63% of them have over 10 employees, while about 659 businesses or 6.85% have less than 5-9 employees.

According to the unofficial information obtained from the Municipality of Durrës, there are about 40,000 citizens of working age or over 18,000 families who live in the villages of this municipality. Therefore, the average number of agricultural farms should have been about 10 times higher. A very small number of registered agricultural farms, only 431, is another indicator of the informality that exists in this municipality.

Currently, about 29.2% of businesses registered in the Municipality of Durrës are managed by women. Even in this regard there has been no significant change in the number of businesses run by women; the variation in the last 5 years is in the values +/- 4.731%, as shown in the figures below:

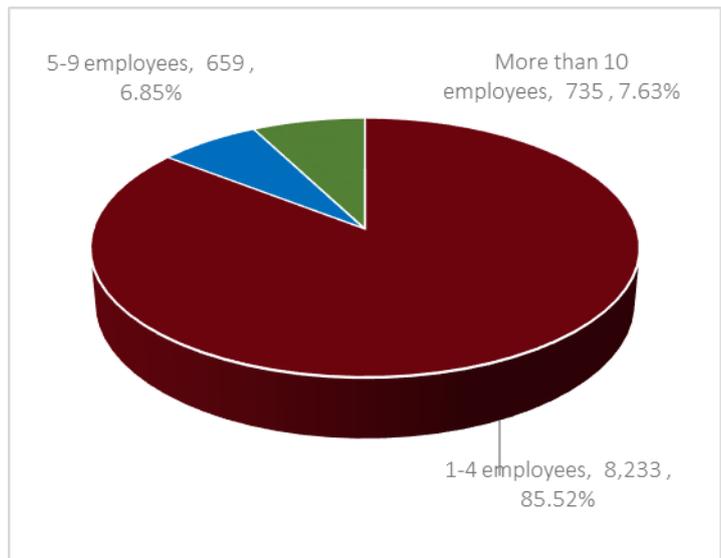


Figure 8: Number of Businesses grouped by number of employees. (Source INSTAT)

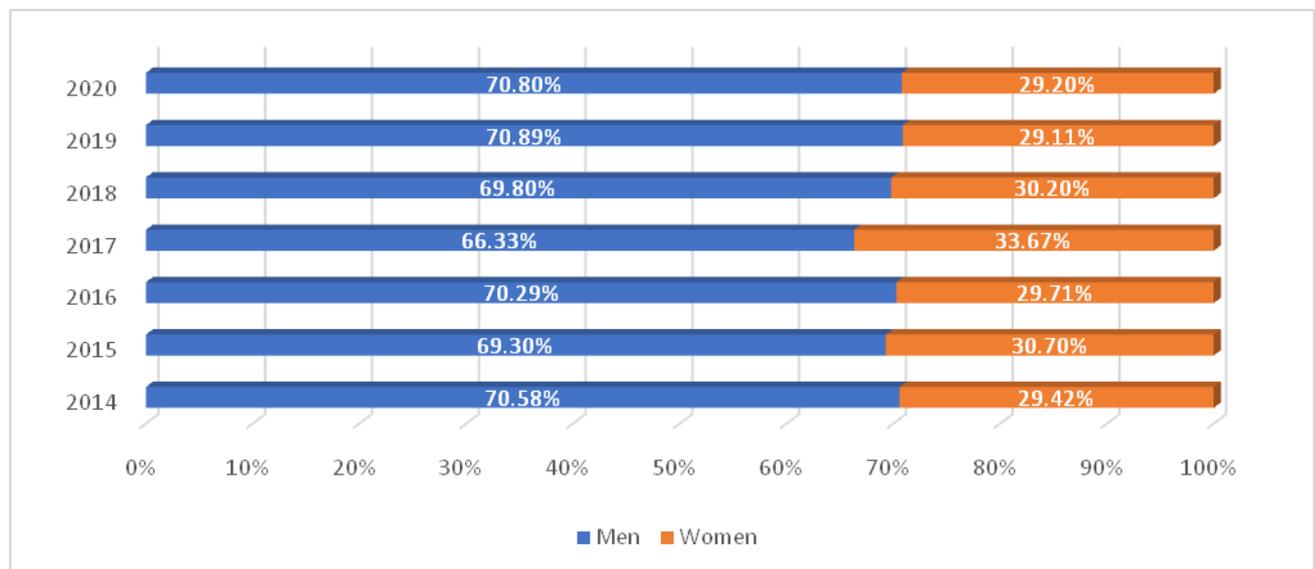


Figure 9: Percentage of Businesses by gender of administration / ownership. (Source INSTAT)

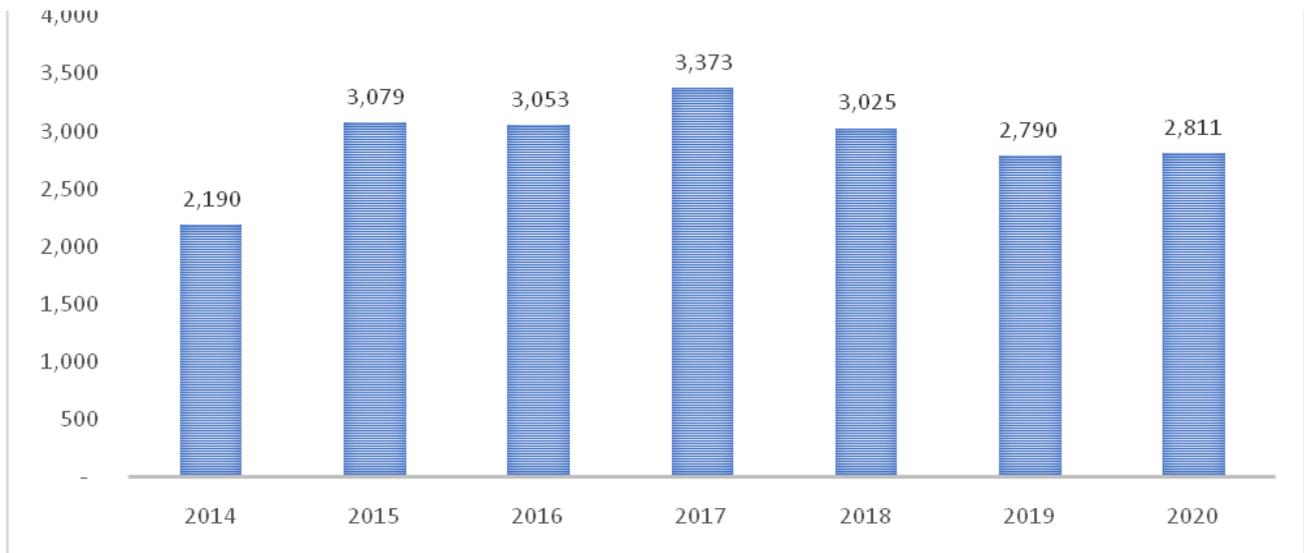


Figure 10: Changing the Number of Businesses Managed by Women Over the Years. (Source INSTAT)

According to the data from the local revenue office, in the Municipality of Durrës, 9627 active enterprises at the end of 2020 are divided by main sectors as shown in Figure 11, in: i) 431 Agricultural Farms; ii) 1519 Goods Manufacturing Enterprises; and iii) 7677 Service Providers. This signified that about 3/4 of the enterprises are functioning as service providers.

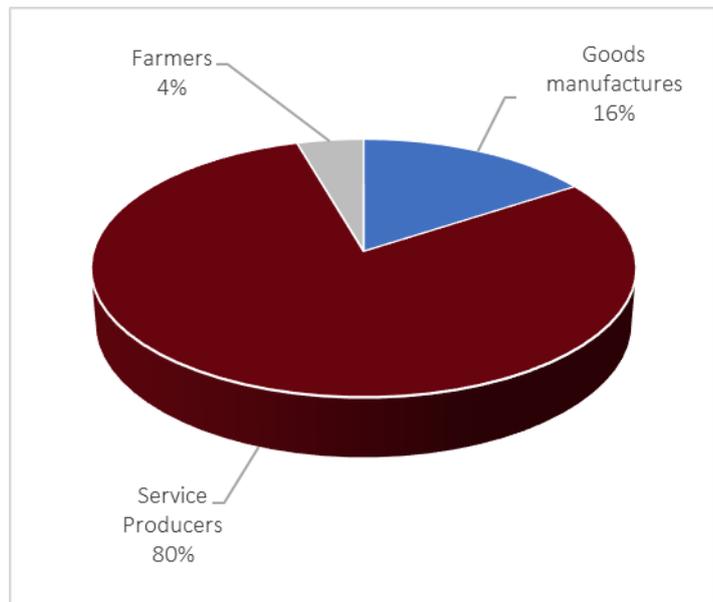


Figure 11: Ratio to the number of Businesses by main sectors. (Source INSTAT and Durrës Municipality)

**Agriculture.** Agricultural land in Durrës occupies approximately 70% of the territory of the municipality. The agricultural system is vital for Sukth, Katund i Ri and Manza. In addition to contributing to the income for the rural population, the agricultural system has special value in terms of employment and control of the territory.

The agricultural system consists of agricultural land planted with arable crops, orchards, vineyards and olive groves as well as livestock. The agricultural system of the municipality of Durrës is made up by the combination of lands that fall under the basic category of land use "for agricultural purposes". This system is the result of proper cultivation and inclusion of agriculturally important developments, such as water canals & reservoirs.

The agricultural land fund in Durrës has been shrinking. Unplanned urban development has reduced the available area and fragmented it. Moreover, in recent decades no investment has been made in for the maintenance of irrigation and drainage systems.

However, although the "Agriculture, Forestry, Fisheries" businesses make up only 1.3% of all businesses in Durrës, yet, they are very important for the income of residents in the areas of Katund i Ri, Manza and Sukth. If we remove the sector of "services" (which includes the administration of Durrës Municipality, in the Municipality of Durrës, the agricultural sector offers the majority of jobs for Sukth (26.3%), Ishëm (31.6%), Katundi i Ri (23.4% or 0.6% less than industry) and Manëz (53.5%). Although in absolute value these figures may not matter, agricultural activity remains vital for the employment and the household economy of these areas, mainly as reflected in the self-employed and family contributors' figures.

Cultivated land area (planted) in 2020 is 14,117.58 Ha or 47% of the total area planted in Durrës Region. Nationwide, the surface of the cultivated land in the Municipality of Durrës constitutes only 3.35% of the total planted area p. This low percentage, apart from the fact of property ownership issues, also comes as a result of the lack irrigation opportunities due to damage to the irrigation and drainage system, the difficulty of farmers in securing key inputs and adequate mechanization. It should be noted that do not exist the all function the production chain for different agricultural products exist.

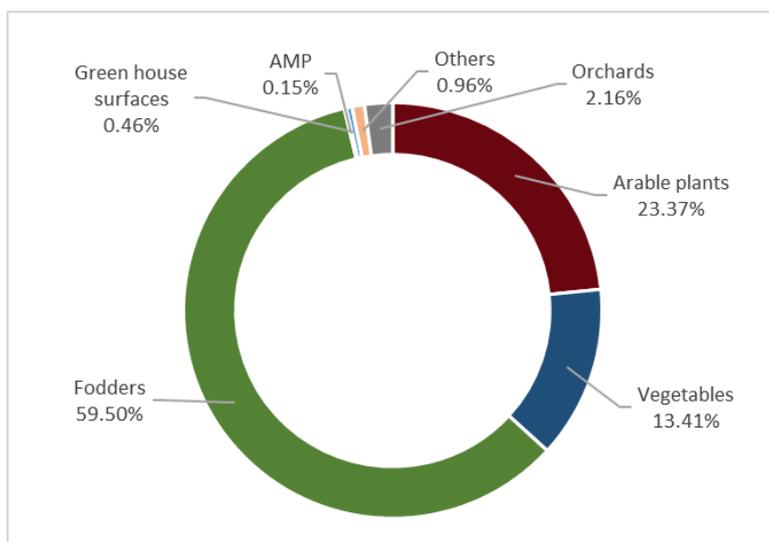


Figure 12 Structure of Agricultural Crop Groups (Source: Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development and Durrës Municipality)

The agricultural sector, despite having an essential importance in this Municipality, has low contribution of 3% to the overall economy of the Municipality.

**Industry.** In the Municipality of Durrës the manufacturing industry during the last 5 years has seen shrinkage at the level of 10.8% up until 2019. This represented a significant change and reflects the difficulties that this municipality went through in terms of growth and empowerment. This shrinkage is observed since 2017 and becoming sharper during 2018 and 2019. During 2020, the number of manufacturing enterprises in the Municipality of Durrës increased with more than 10%. This indicator shows that the industrial sector has not been affected by the two major factors such as the earthquake of November 26, 2019 and the C-19 pandemic during 2020. The sector with the largest decline is the manufacturing industry by 13% (during the period 2019-2020), compared to construction sector, which is increased by 17%, indicating that the reconstruction process had a positive impact on this sector. Recently, the fishing sector has returned to the level of 2016. The specific weight of each class during 2020 is presented in Figure 14.

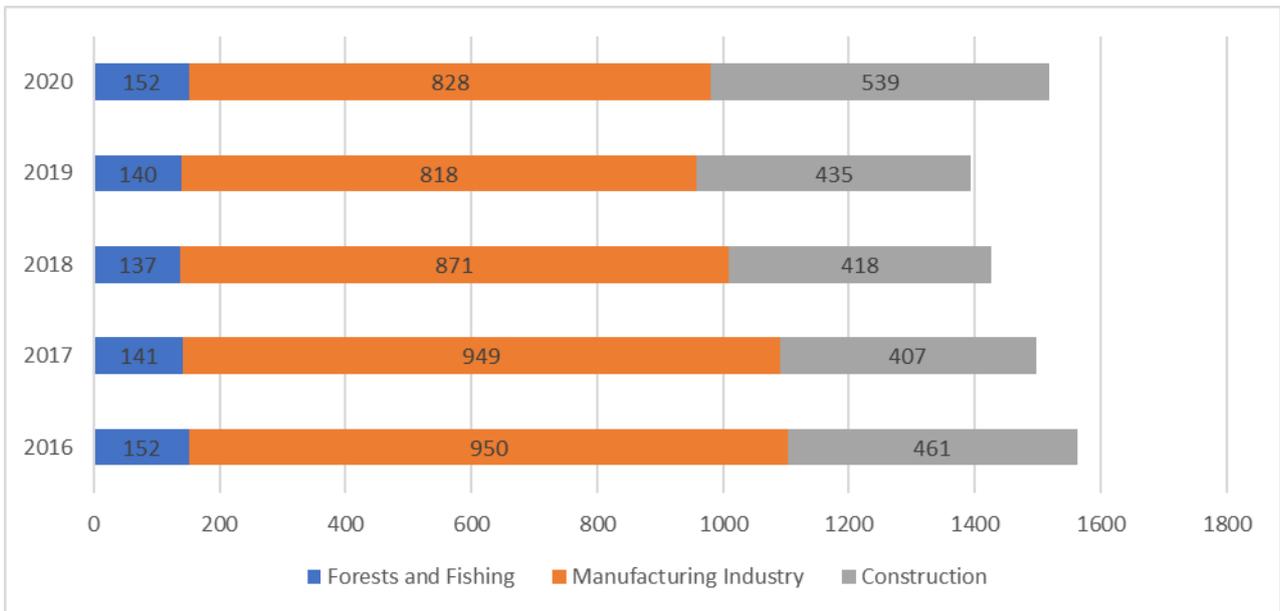


Figure 13: Manufacturing Industry Structure by 3 classifications for the last 5 years. (Source: INSTAT and Durrës Municipality)

**Services.** The services sector is also the sector with the largest weight and constitutes 80% of the local economic structure in terms of the number of economic operators. This sector also has seen a decrease of 9.8% over the last 5 years.

In contrast with the manufacturing sector, the shrinkage of the services sector is almost proportionally divided into all 5 of its sub-sectors. This trend makes us think that the main factor is the reduction of the services market due to the emigration of the population of this municipality to the most economically developed areas within the country as well as emigration abroad.

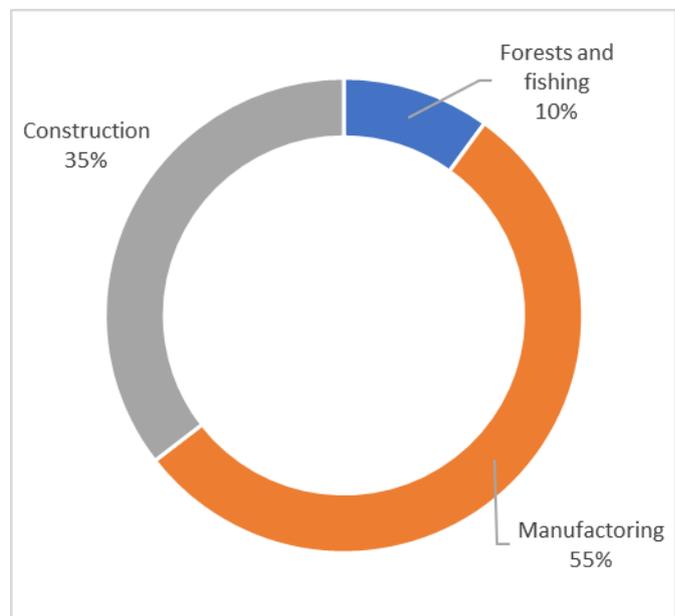


Figure 14: Ratio of the main classes of the Manufacturing Industry for 2020. (Source: INSTAT Durrës Municipality)

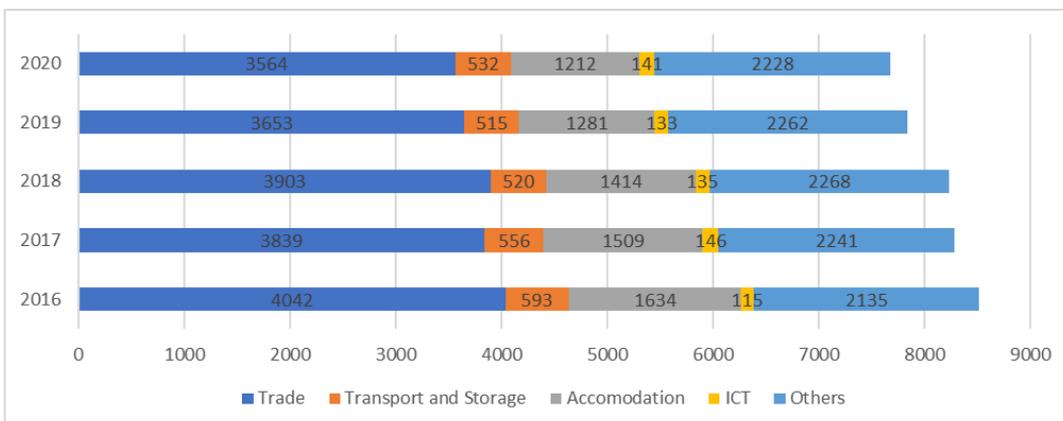


Figure 15: Structure of the Services Industry according to 5 classifications in last 5 years. (Source: INSTAT and Durrës Municipality)

Making a more detailed classification of this sector for 2020, the results show that in the Municipality of Durrës out of 7677 registered businesses 3564 or 46% operate in the trade sector; 532 or 7% operate in the transport and storage sector; 1212 or 16% in accommodation and food service and 2228 or 29% operate in other services sector.

The private sector in the Durrës Region is the engine of the economy. This is considered as the second region in terms of the number of operating businesses, with about 12 thousand businesses, about 12.1% of the total of Albania. The structure of Small and Medium Enterprises is adapted for entering the global market. It is also worth mentioning that in the Municipality of Durrës operate over 300 foreign companies, of which more than 70% are Italian.

As shown in Figure 17, even in the SME sector, trade and services account for approximately 70% of the entire sector.

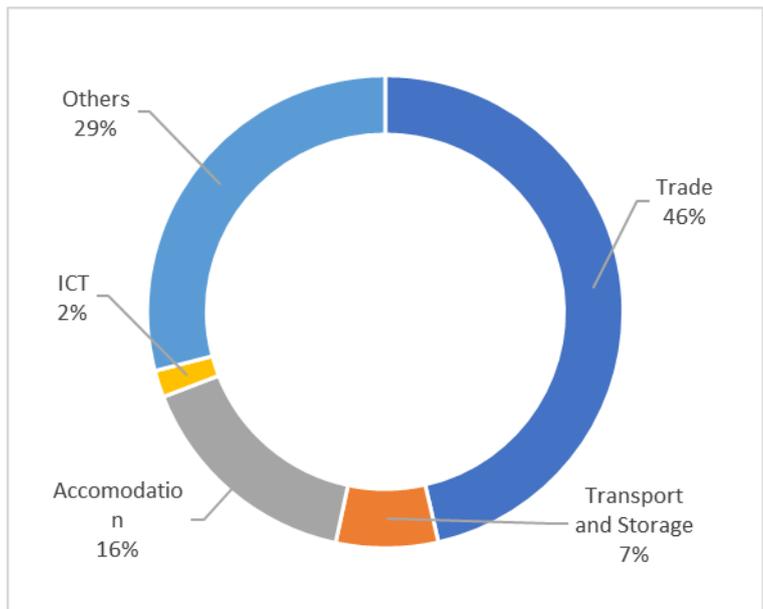


Figure 16: Ratio of the main productive industry classes for 2020 (Source: INSTAT and the Municipality of Durrës)

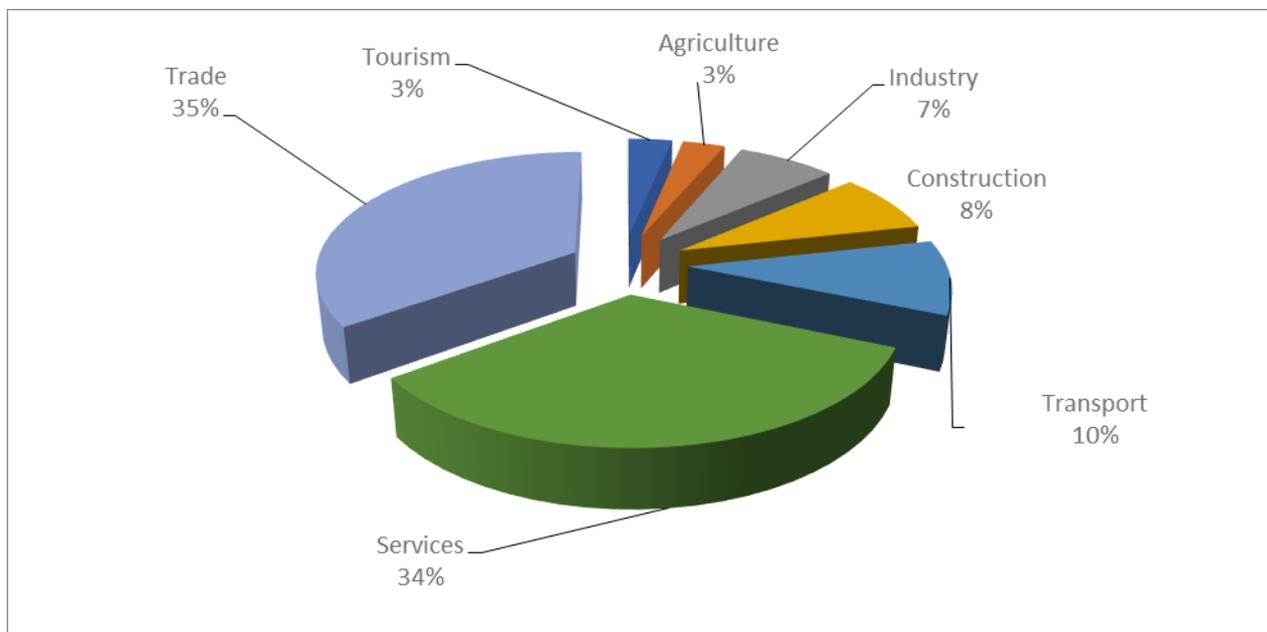


Figure 17: Structure in the SME economic sector in Durrës region. (Source: INSTAT and Durrës Municipality)

## 2.4 SOCIAL PROFILE

**Employment.** In the Municipality of Durrës, the average age of active workforce is 38 years old, and as a result there is a dynamic and qualified workforce. This population is among the most able to speak foreign languages, especially Italian, which is widely spoken. Also, English and French languages are included in the education system.

Group age 14-65 years in the Municipality of Durrës according to INSTAT data constitutes approximately 120,000 citizens. According to the Durrës Regional Labor Office, the active workforce is 82,000 people. The unemployment rate for the Municipality of Durrës goes up to about 10.38%, where unemployment is more prevalent among women, which account for 56.85% of all job seekers (Figure 18). About 31.3% are employed within the private sector, followed by the private agricultural sector with 36.7%, and the public sector with 21.3%.

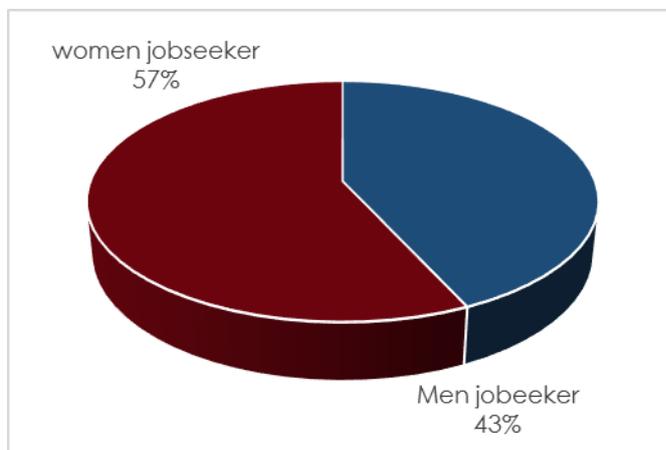


Figure 18: Ratio between male and female jobseekers. (Source Durrës Municipality)

**Individuals in need.** For at least one form of social care service provided, identified at the end of 2020 in the territory of the Municipality of Durrës, we were able to obtain the following data:

Administrative Unit	Total	Individuals in Need for Social Care
Durrës	35,338	17808
Manëz	1,965	672
Sukth	4,608	2195
Ishëm	1,535	470
Katundi Ri	2,937	986
Rashbull	7,206	2621
<b>Total Durrës Municipality</b>	<b>53,589</b>	<b>24,752</b>

Table 5: Data on the number of individuals in need of social care services in the Municipality of Durrës divided by Administrative Units. (Source Durrës Municipality)

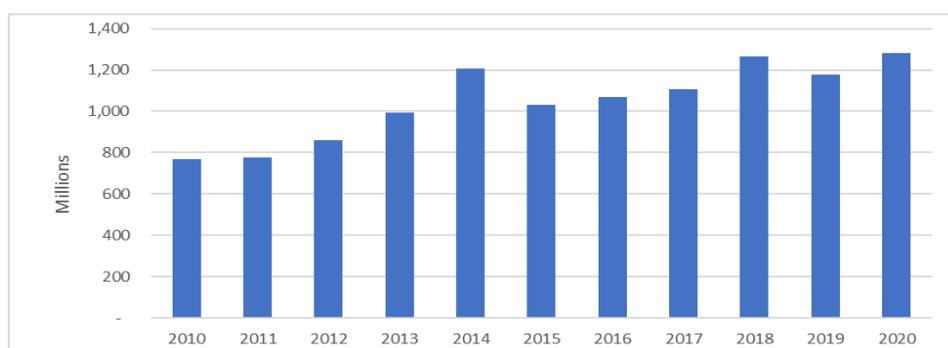


Figure 19: Budget used by the Municipality of Durrës in the last 10 years. (Source Durrës Municipality)

The figure 19 shows the budget used by the Municipality of Durrës in the last 10 years for the payments of Individuals in Need. 94% of this budget is covered by the conditional transfer (fund) and 6% by the municipality's revenues. The municipality fund is mainly used to support poor families who did not benefit from the national program.

Administrative Unit	Nr. Families according to Census 2011	Families with EA	% of household EA / total household
Durrës	35,338	3180	9.00%
Manëz	1,965	120	6.11%
Sukth	4,608	392	8.51%
Ishëm	1,535	84	5.47%
Katundi Ri	2,937	176	5.99%
Rashbull	7,206	468	6.49%
<b>Total Durrës Municipality</b>	<b>53,589</b>	<b>4420</b>	<b>8.25%</b>

Table 6: Data of the number of families benefiting from Economic Assistance in the Municipality of Durrës divided by Administrative Units. (Source Durrës Municipality)

As can be seen from Table 6, about 8.25% of households are part of the Economic Assistance scheme, which shows once again the high level of poverty in this municipality.

**Number of victims of domestic violence.** The data of the DSHS/SSD of the Municipality show that the number of cases of domestic violence for 2020 is 1840, among which 816 cases have been provided with restraining order by the court.

**Social care services.** The social care services in the Municipality of Durrës are mainly concentrated in the urban area of the Municipality and are provided to the most in-need categories of citizens, such as residential and day care services for children, the elderly and people with disabilities. Such services are provided by both public institutions and NGOs. There are 3 residential public services for children, 5 are community centers, of which 2 are public and 3 non-public. There are only three services for the elderly; of which, one is nonpublic residential and the other two are community (1 public and 1 nonpublic).

### 3. EARTHQUAKE IMPACT

On November 26, 2019, at 03:54, Albania was hit by an earthquake, which was considered by national authorities to be the strongest to hit the country in the last 30 years. According to the Albanian Institute of Geophysics, Water and Energy, based on the Post-Disaster Needs Assessment Report in Albania (PDNA)<sup>6</sup>, the magnitude of the earthquake was 6.3 on the Richter scale at a depth of 38 kilometers. Its epicenter was 22 kilometers from Durrës and 30 kilometers from Tirana, and the biggest damages occurred in 11 municipalities of Albania, where Tirana and Durrës were the most affected municipalities, followed by the municipalities of Shijak, Mirdita, Lezha, Kurbin, Kamza, Vora, Kavaja and Rrogozhina. The tremors were felt nearly 370 kilometers from the quake's epicenter. Between November 26 and 29, 17 more earthquakes with magnitudes above 4 on the Richter scale were recorded.

Based on the PDNA report, after the assessment, it is estimated that the total effect of the disaster in all affected municipalities amounts to 985.1 million Euros, of which, 843.9 million Euros represent the value of destroyed physical assets and 141.2 million Euros the value of losses. These data are summarized in Table 7 and Figure 20 below:

Sector	Damages	Losses	Total
Education	63.59	8.76	72.35
Health	8.02	1.91	9.93
Housing	662.30	34.00	696.30
Infrastructure	30.41	3.01	33.42
Production	70.82	79.66	150.48
Social protection	0.00	0.62	0.62
Civil protection	8.75	13.22	21.97
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>843.89</b>	<b>141.18</b>	<b>985.07</b>

Table 7: Damages and Losses, in Million Euros, by sectors at country level. Source PDNA

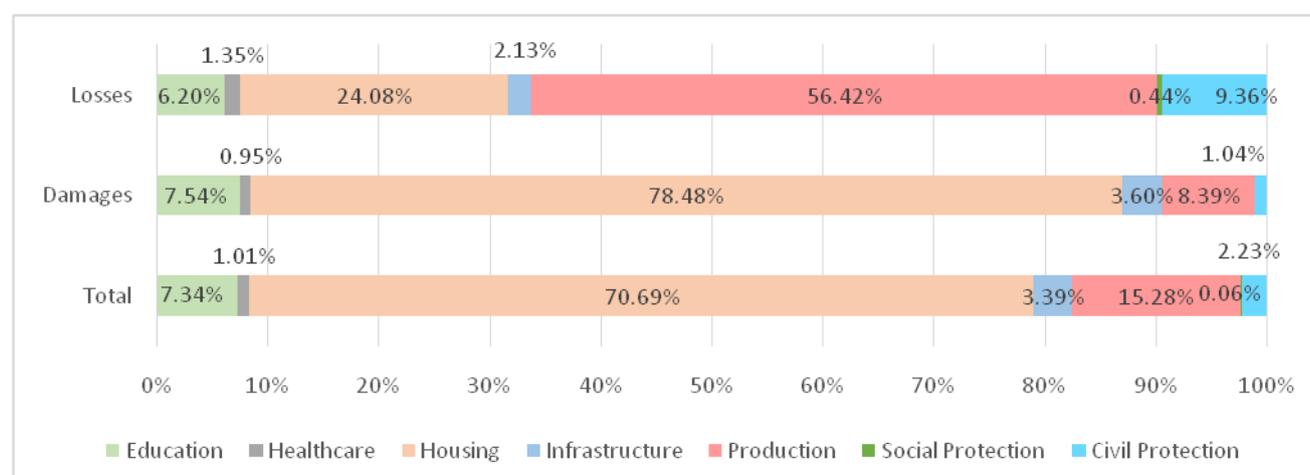


Figure 20: Specific Weight of Injuries and Losses by sectors at Republic level. Source PDNA

6 [https://albania.un.org/sites/default/files/2020-05/no.4-Albania Post-Disaster Needs Assessment \(PDNA\) Volume A Report 20 February 2020.pdf](https://albania.un.org/sites/default/files/2020-05/no.4-Albania Post-Disaster Needs Assessment (PDNA) Volume A Report 20 February 2020.pdf)

As can be seen from the data presented above, the **Housing Sector** accounts for the majority of claims, with 78.5%, followed by the **Manufacturing Sector** with 8.4% and the **Education Sector** with 7.5%. Meanwhile, in terms of losses, the Manufacturing sector has the largest part of the amount (56.4%), followed by the Housing sector (24.1%) and the Civil Protection Sector and the Disaster Risk Reduction sector (9.4%). Referring to the same report, "Damage is defined as the cost of repairing or rebuilding infrastructure or physical assets partially or completely destroyed. Losses are changes in economic flows, expressed as the value of output of goods and services (income or losses in kind), as well as changes in production costs (such as output decline and higher than normal cost of production)) as well as unexpected additional costs."

Based on the sectoral assessments, reflected in the PDNA report and with their accuracy from the information provided by the municipalities, two economic sectors most affected, after the houses which make up 70% of the earthquake damages, are those of the infrastructure and of production including buildings which occupy 70% of the earthquake damages, the most damaged are that of the infrastructure and that of production including buildings. Practically in figures are presented in % the losses and damages in these two sectors, divided by subsectors.



Figure 21: Specific Weight of Injuries and Losses by production subsector. Source PDNA

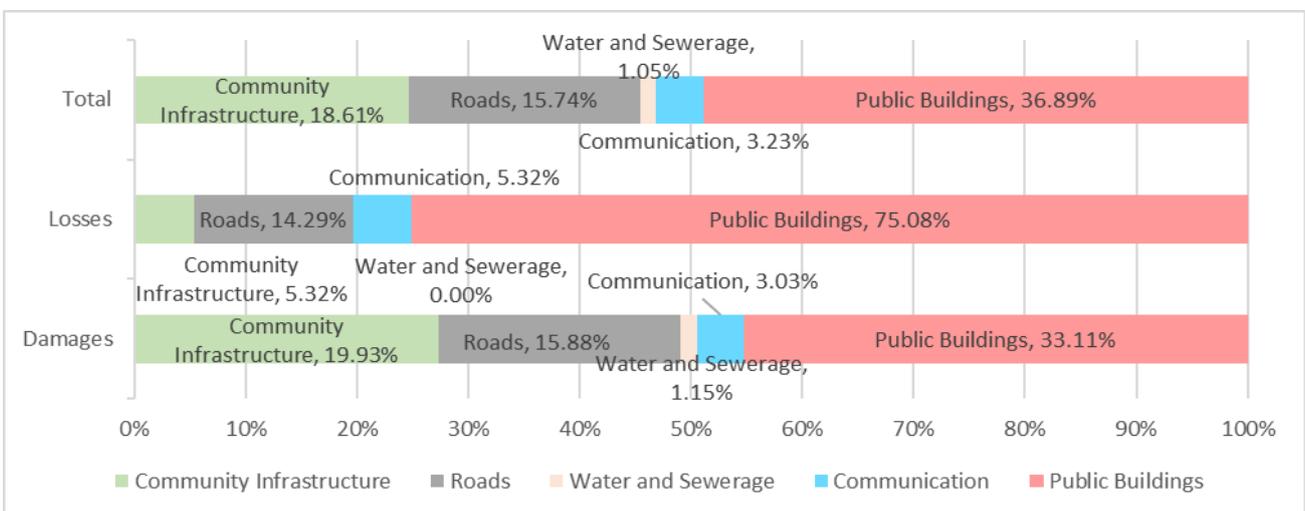


Figure 22: Specific Weight of Damages and Losses by Infrastructure subsector. Source PDNA

Finally, the total number of people who lost or had their houses severely damaged is estimated to be around 204,000 people in all eleven municipalities. The chart below shows the distribution of the affected population by municipalities:

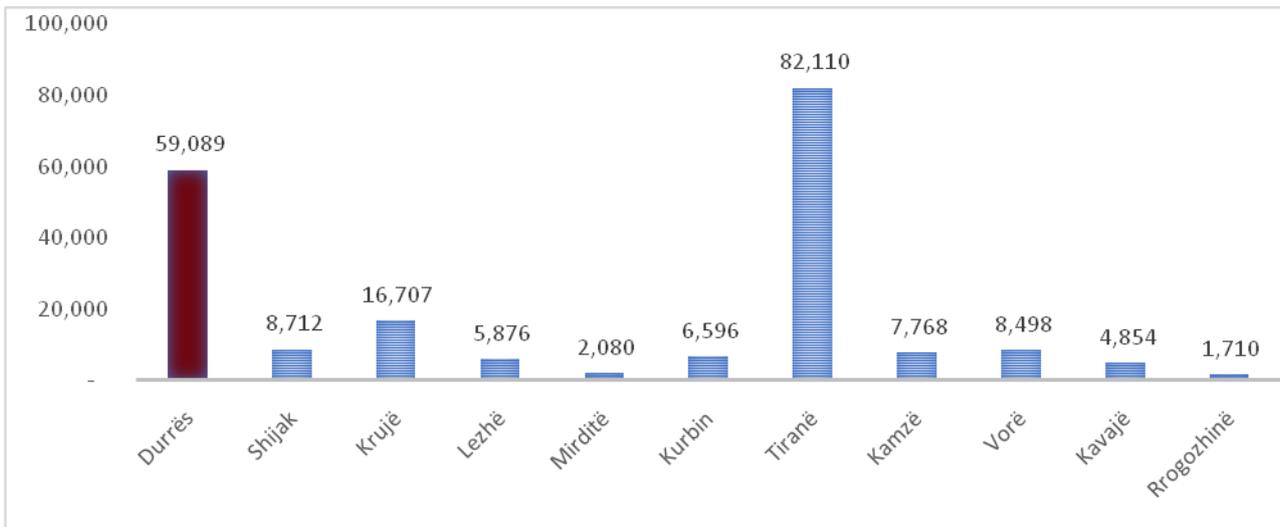


Figure 23: Number of populations whose houses have been damaged or destroyed by Municipalities. Source PDNA and Municipalities

In the Municipality of Durrës we have a high absolute number as compared to the total population of Albania, affected by the earthquake, approximately 28%. In relation to the resident population the number of affected persons is about 18%, which is significant for this municipality and ranks it as the second most affected municipality among the 11 affected municipalities.

As mentioned above, the financial losses in damages and losses are estimated at 985.07 million Euros. From this point of view, the Municipality of Durrës with 310.19 million losses and damages is classified as the 1st damaged municipality. Figure 24 presents the values of losses and damages for each municipality in absolute values.

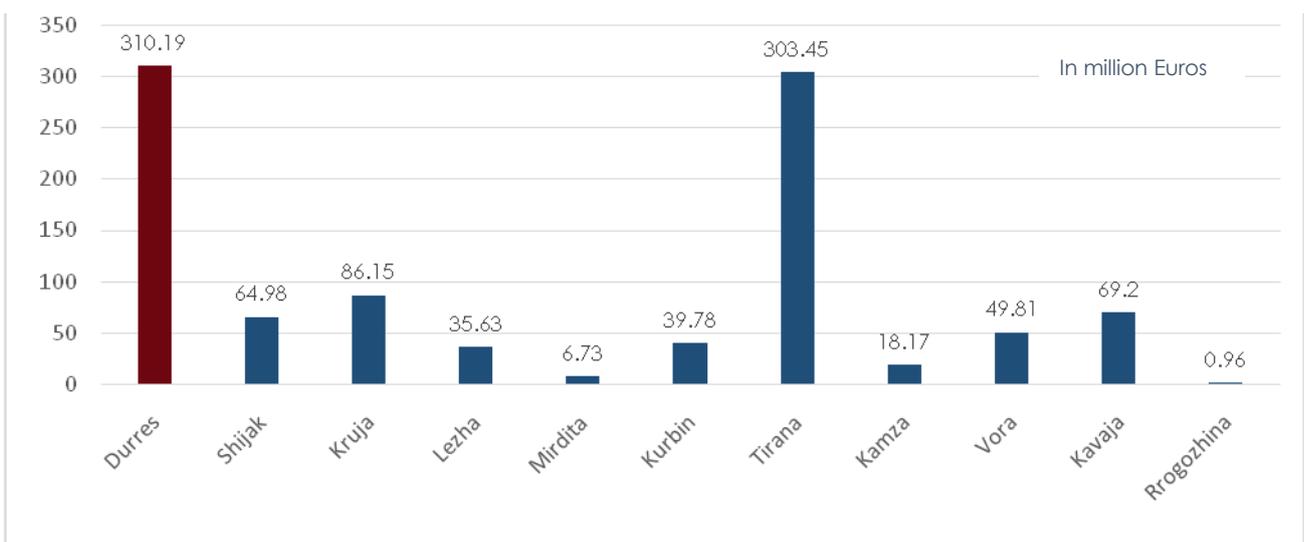


Figure 24: Financial losses in damages and losses by Municipalities. Source PDNA and Municipalities

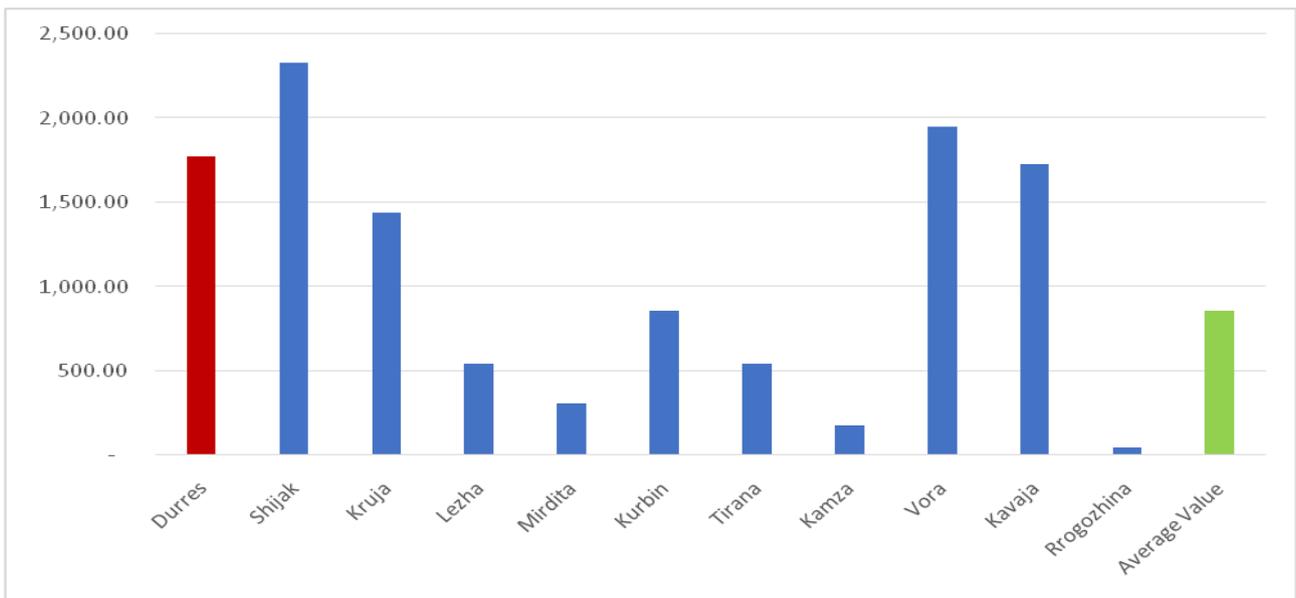


Figure 25: Financial damages in damages and losses per person by Municipalities. Source PDNA and Municipalities

While calculating the losses per person of the resident population, Durrës ranks 3rd, much higher than the national average. Graph 24 presents the values of losses and damages for each municipality as well as the national average per capita of the resident population.

In the Municipality of Durrës from the total effect of damages and losses of 310.19 million euros, the housing sector is the most affected with 220.78 million Euros or 71%, followed by the production sector with approximately 65.15 Euros or 21% and then by infrastructure with 8.95 million Euros or 3%. The Education Sector in this municipality had losses or damages in the amount of 9.75 million Euros. The Civil Protection sectors suffered losses or damages in the amount of 0.06 million Euros and Civil Protection and GDR in the amount of 4 million Euros or 1%.

Regarding the Housing sector, damages include damaged buildings as well as losses in home appliances. The total earthquake damage in Albania in this sector goes up to 662.3 million Euros, while for the Municipality of Durrës these damages are estimated at 220.78 million Euros, almost 33% of the losses of this sector. Figures show the distribution by type of damage.

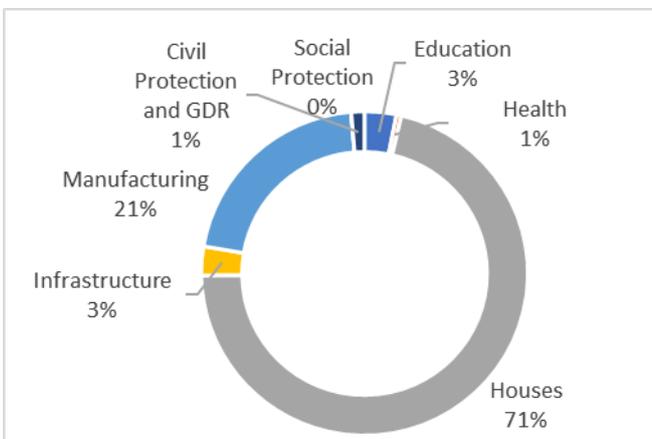


Figure 26: Financial losses by sectors in the Municipality of Durrës. Source PDNA and Durrës municipality

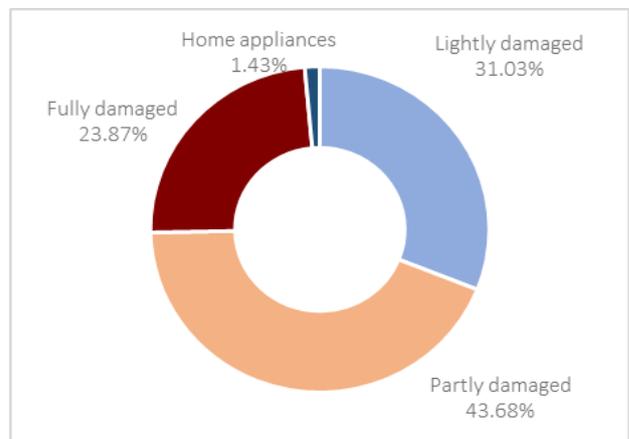


Figure 27: Financial losses by sectors in the Municipality of Durrës. Source: DNA and Durrës municipality

## Earthquake damage analysis and accommodation needs.

The tremors of the earthquake of November 26, 2019 caused damages to residential, service and administrative buildings. Once the damages were ascertained and assessed, the Municipality of Durrës proceeded with the reconstruction process. For this purpose, were implemented five Compulsory Local Plans (CLP), approved by the National Territorial Council, respectively, for Durrës on 12.03.2020 and 02.06.2020 with decision no.1 and on dated 11.05.2020; - for the AU Manëz with decision no.621 dated 09.11.2020; and for the AU Ishëm with decision no.9 dated 29.01.2021. These CLPs enable:

- a) Development and / or re-development of a damaged area by a natural disaster
- b) Development of a new area for housing needs of families affected by the disaster:
- c) Construction of public infrastructures.

Work has begun on the construction of apartments, parking spaces, administrative institutions as follows:

- Collective housing for 1888 families, or 3621 people
- Parking spaces 815
- Administrative, educational, or health institutions 1
- Service Area 9675 m<sup>2</sup>
- Individual Residence 44

Divided by size / structure, the apartments are grouped as follows:

No.	Apartment Structure	Number
1	Apartment suitable for 1-2 members	546
2	Apartment suitable for 2-3 members	734
3	Apartment suitable for 4+ members	419

## 4. VALUE CHAINS ANALYSIS IN DURRËS MUNICIPALITY

Economic growth and the markets that enable it, are one of the best-proven drivers in reducing poverty. Markets are the main means through which women and men participate in economic activities. However, the assumption that markets and economic growth work in everyone's favor does not mean that all types of economic growth lead to equal results. Gender discrimination may mean that the benefits of economic growth are concentrated in the hands of experienced participants in the market systems, rather than in the hands of those who need them the most.

Where markets operate inclusively, they serve both women and men by providing them the means - jobs, opportunities, skills, financial resources, and services - to increase their income. The roles of women in value chains are essential for the development of market systems, especially for rural and agricultural value chains, but that are also increasing in the manufacturing sector, in which women occupy the highest number in "production base". Women and men can be involved in different stages of a value chain. In general, women's roles are less visible in the development process, although they often serve as the key in which change and improvement must take place in order for it to lead to development.

**Value Chain Development and Market System.** The gender-sensitive value chain and market system development can be used as effective frameworks to improve the productivity and competitiveness of the sector, and at the same time, to reduce gender-based barriers that hinder women's full economic participation. Initiatives for the development of the market system should take into account the multiple roles of women and the systematic disadvantage, as well as utilize the possibilities of using remedial measures which actively promote the transformation of gender norms and equal opportunities for women.

Developing the value chain and the market system means to take actions that improve the productivity and include value chains, as well as change the way how the market support functions and rules operate to support the development of the value chain in the future. Approaches to market system development, such as value chain development, have been used to improve sector productivity and competitiveness, and to promote economic development. Markets serve as the main means by which women and men participate in the economic activity. The analysis and development of the value chain and the market system are increasingly being used as a way to identify effective strategies to support the poor. They aim to identify:

- *Appropriate intervention points to improve industries, so that they compete in domestic, regional and international markets;*
- *Opportunities to improve the situation of disadvantaged persons in the value chain*

Despite the role that women have together with men in the achievement of economic development, they are often excluded from the development, direction, decision-making of value chains, as well as the benefits that come as a result of the development of market systems. This is partly due to the socio-economic status of women in their families and the community, but also due to the direct (and sometimes even indirect) discrimination encountered in institutions that regulate and develop markets, such as governing units and sector representation organizations.

The gender-sensitive value chain analysis is an approach that helps achieve gender equality and broader goals in Albania, through the identification of value chains solutions that improve productivity. They reduce gender-related barriers, to achieve women's full participation and inclusion, and to promote equality between women and men. Table 9 highlights some of the benefits that come as a result of analyzing and developing the value chain according to gender sensitivity and the market system.

BENEFITS OF INTERVENTION WITH GENDER BASIS IN THE VALUE CHAIN			
ECONOMY	SOCIETY	FAMILY	WOMEN
More competition: all human resources of society are used.	Long-term development: investment in the education and health sectors of future generations.	Improving living conditions in the family, reducing vulnerability and increasing resilience.	Family contribution and household chores.
Higher productivity: manufacturers, mainly women in rural areas, can improve the quantity and product quality.	Economically secure and healthier society. More balanced roles and responsibilities of women and men resulting in lower gender discrimination.	Reducing the economic burden of men in their role as "single feeders". More investment in children's education and health.	Self-realization, more trust, improved social capital. Increasing women's skills. Economic independence of women.
Highest demand: increasing spending power, stimulating domestic demand.	Strengthening the roles of women in sub-represented areas of society, such as political representation and decision-making.	Improving the common understanding between men and women about roles and responsibilities.	Higher productivity and income through access to investment and training.
The most powerful market ecosystem by offering enterprises higher support, productivity and competitiveness.	Strengthening legal and supportive functions for market systems, improving governance and stability.	Reducing vulnerability and increasing resilience, increasing social and health insurance coverage and pension benefits.	More formalized businesses and more equitable and equal access to business development support services.

Table: 8 Benefits of gender-based interventions in the value chain

All the main economic sectors in the municipality of Durrës were initially assessed using the criteria of GSVCA, among the most important of which we mention:

- 1) *Is there a growing demand for the product?*
- 2) *Are women involved in the chain steps?*
- 3) *Do most of the chain steps happen in the municipality?*
- 4) *Are there any existing or recent initiatives to get involved in the value chain?*
- 5) *Are there development opportunities for the value chain?*
- 6) *Is there a connection between what women do and prospects for growth / diversification in the value chain?*

The main sectors that turned out to be most likely to be analyzed during the research work in the municipality of Durrës turned out to be as follows:

- Agriculture: Fruits and Vegetables
- Agriculture: Vineyards and Wine Production
- Fishing
- Tourism: Agritourism
- Cultural and Coastal Tourism

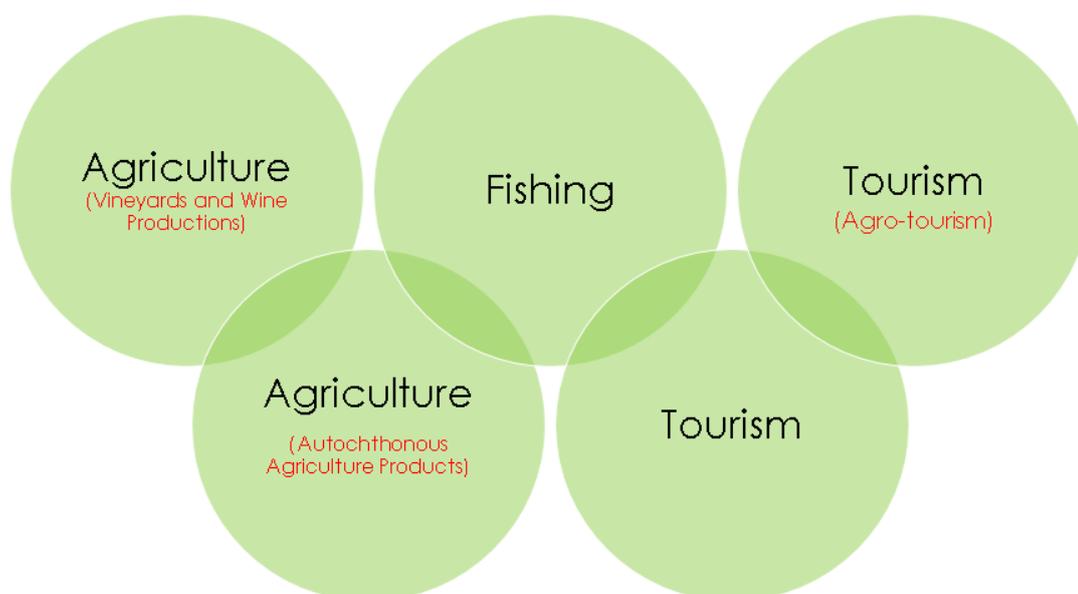


Figure 28. Identified Value Chains

Further, in cooperation with the Municipality and stakeholders, a detailed assessment was conducted based on the six basic pre-defined criteria for the five subsectors described above. It must be noted that Coastal Tourism, as well as Fishing have not been analyzed because they are in a consolidated development phase that requires major infrastructural interventions. After identifying the value chains or sub-chains, in the main sectors, discussions and suggestions led to the further presentation of problems, constraints, possible solutions, etc., which in a macro analysis are summarized in the table below:

Criteria	Agritourism	Agriculture (Autochthonous)	Vineyard and Wine Production
Is there a link between what women do and prospects for growth / diversification in the value chain?	Not exactly. Despite the natural attractions in the Municipality of Durrës, the growth prospects are not high due to more interest shown to coastal tourism.	Women are involved in family businesses and formal employment in this sector would be a good opportunity for them.	Women are involved in 50% of the activities, even though informally.
Do women (or can they) acquire the skills needed to add value through product processing or diversification?	Women can gain the necessary skills, but this sector is perceived as attractive.	They can still acquire and improve their skills, especially skills related to the use of new technologies.	They possess some skills, mainly transmitted from other family members, but there is an opportunity to increase their skills, which is very necessary
Does this value chain offer new opportunities for women?	Yes, because in addition to the cooking and cleaning they can do, they can also manage the reception or possible tours on the farm.	If steps are taken to modernize and increase interest in the sector, opportunities for women will also increase significantly.	If they were to acquire other skills, the value of in this sector would increase significantly.

Can this value chain improve living conditions for women / families?	Agritourism is very well recognized as an important diversification strategy for inclusive tourism. Agritourism development can increase farm sales and add value to agricultural products.	Yes, if the sector is formalized and the inclusion of women would be higher.	Considering profitability, women and families can improve their conditions if more involved.
Is there an organization in the value chain committed to supporting / representing value chain actors so that they can develop further?	Association of Hotel and Tourism, supports the marketing sector to turn it into a potential alternative tourism sector	Various donor-funded projects such as USAID, ADA, GIZ, etc., have repeatedly supported this sector.	Albanian Sommelier Association offers technical support to Albanian producers and other actors in this market.
Are there opportunities to make changes with small investments?	There are opportunities, especially in the transformation of wineries or even certain farms into real Agritourism models.	There are various opportunities, especially in making the sector more attractive, changing people's mentality and investing in technology.	There are several possibilities, especially if relevant institutions and organizations contribute to the development of the sector.

Table 9: Ranking and Selection of Evaluation Chains, using the Gender Sensitivity Criterion

Besides industrial development of the City of Durrës, Agriculture, including the entire territory of the municipality, is the engine and the main economic sector in the Municipality of Durrës. We have conducted a more detailed analysis of these three main subsectors of agriculture for this municipality, that of production of Autochthonous Agricultural Products, Viticulture and Wine Production and Agritourism.

## 4.1 AUTOCHTHONOUS AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTS VALUE CHAIN

### 4.1.1 DESCRIPTION OF THE SITUATION IN THE SECTOR

The territorial area of Municipality of Durrës is characterized by a very rich biodiversity, which requires a plan of measures to enable conservation by implementing some key principles such as sustainable development and the principle of environmental protection. The existence of natural areas and especially the hilly ones of this territory have a positive impact on the preservation of diversified biodiversity in these areas. The Ministry of Environment includes the area of Municipality of Durrës on the border with those of Shijak Municipality (mainly Administrative Units Rrashbull, Xhafzotaj, Manëz and Sukth) in the General Local Plan and Strategic Environmental Assessment, in which environmental problems have been identified that have an impact on biodiversity of these Municipalities.

Regarding the types of autochthonous resources of this area, it is noticed that in this territory farmers have autochthonous varieties of many plants, which are evaluated and cartelized by the Genetic Bank of Albania. The values of these autochthonous resources are known and are in demand by the consumers of Tirana and Durrës who know the value of these products. Thus, there are many visitors, driving from the South of the country

toward Tirana, who take the Ndroq road along which the farmers of the Administrative Unit of Rrashbull sell their products.

In addition to the products that can be considered as typical for the area of the Municipality of Durrës, farmers in this zone grow many other vegetables and fruits, which makes the region even more agro-biodiverse.

**Vegetables** in general are important cultures for this Municipality. They are planted both in the open field and in protected areas. In 2020 in the Municipality of Durrës were planted 1,935 ha and a total production of 55,814 tons was collected. These products are significant for the local market of this municipality.

Such large area is dedicated to growing vegetables can be explained by the very favorable conditions that these crops find in this area, both agro-climatically and traditionally for the farmers in this district.

Regarding the period of planting specific vegetables, the farmers in the Municipality of Durrës plant more of the first/early vegetable crops and a smaller amount of second/late vegetable crops. Specifically, last year were planted 1,424 ha or about 45 ha more than the previous year and the total production collected was 42,421 tons or 3,479 tons more than the previous year. The area planted with second vegetable crops in the district of Durrës last year was only 510 ha, an amount which hasn't changed much in recent years and the total production collected reached 13,339 tons. It should be noted that the conditions for growing late vegetables are quite good in the Municipality of Durrës.

- **Fresh Vegetables.** In 2020, in the Municipality of Durrës, 1,451 ha were planted with vegetable crops, which a total production of 39,864 tons of raw vegetables in total:
  - ✓ *Tomatoes*, with which 18,189 ha were planted and a total production of 7,839 tons was realized. The average yields this year was 41.53 tons/ha, which is a high yield and is above the national average.
  - ✓ *Cucumber* is the second crop in terms of planted area, where last year 107 ha were planted and a production of 3,997 tons was obtained with an average yield of 37.41 tons/ha.
  - ✓ *Pepper* is a very important vegetable crop for Durrës farmers, who planted 110 ha last year and made a total production of 3,697 tons of peppers. The average yield was 33.55 tons/ha, which is really an optimal yield referring to the concrete conditions offered by this area for the development of vegetable crops.
- **Dried Vegetables.** The Municipality of Durrës has relatively good conditions for the production of dried vegetables, although in this district there is no consolidated tradition for their production. Specifically, the planted area with dried vegetables for the last year was only 153 ha, and a total production of 3,715 tons was realized, a production which fluctuates in these figures for several years.
- **Watermelons.** Watermelons are not very popular plants for farmers in this area. Last year, only 331 ha were planted with watermelon plants, and a total production of 12,353 tons was produced.
- **Greenhouses.** The Municipality of Durrës has very good conditions for the construction of greenhouses, both in terms of soil, agro-climatic conditions but also proximity to the main markets of the country. This made many farmers and various investors to step in to invest in greenhouses in this municipality. Although there is increasing the area of greenhouses and the farmers are aware of the value, but the problem remains always finding sources of funding.

In 2020 in the Municipality of Durrës the cultivated area with vegetables in greenhouses was 66 ha, this area has remained unchanged in recent years. The surface in greenhouses is planted with both first and second crop vegetables, but it should be noted that most farmers prefer to plant the first crops (last year 46 ha were planted with the first vegetable crops and 19 ha planted with second vegetable crops).

- **Potatoes.** In the Municipality of Durrës, the cultivation of potatoes, as everywhere in these surrounding areas, is well established. Last year, 269 ha of potatoes were planted in this Municipality, which is almost the same area that has been planted in recent years, and a total production of 8,257 tons of potatoes was realized. The average yield in the whole surface was in the value of 307.0 kv / ha, which is a relatively satisfactory result based on the concrete conditions of these areas.
- **Beans.** The cultivation of beans by the farmers of this district is a tradition that dates back to early days, as everywhere in our country. In the current conditions the farmers cultivate beans to meet their family needs but also for the market, as through it they provide a good part of the income for their families. Last year, 442 ha of beans were planted and a total production of 950 tons of beans was made. The yield of only 22.0 kv / ha indicates an optimal productivity.
- **Strawberries.** In the Municipality of Durrës there is no extensive cultivation of strawberries. This plant is planted only for the needs of some farming families, but in relatively limited areas. It should be noted that the climatic conditions and especially the qualities of the soil are quite favorable for the cultivation of strawberries and above all, the demands of the local market are great for these products.

**Orchards.** Fruticulture, as everywhere in our country is well developed and, in this municipality too; and the farmers have begun to apply intensive agriculture of fruit production.

- **Fruit trees.** In the Municipality of Durrës, last year the fruit trees numbered 388 thousand trees, of which only 358 thousand are fruit-bearing. As can be seen, there are 30 thousand trees in the process of growth and this shows that planting of new tree is in the attention of the farmers of this municipality who are showing increased interest in planting fruit trees. These fruit trees are spread throughout the territory of the municipality. However, the largest orchards are located in the hilly area of the municipality and recent years have seen investments being made into the establishment of intensive orchards in this district.

Growing of fruits in Durrës is relatively satisfactory; last year there was a total production of 8,261 tons, and last year was recorded a relatively low yield with only 23.1 kg / tree.

- **Olives.** Olive is one of the oldest crops in this area, especially in the hills that start from the area of Ishmi and up to Golem. In this area the olive is used for oil production as well as for preserving, mainly to meet own needs of the farming families.

In the Municipality of Durrës there are a total of 174 thousand olive trees, of which 142 thousand are fruit-bearing, an indicator that planting of olive trees by farmers in recent years has continued. The total production is 3,360 tons. In addition to this production, a total of 193 tons of olives have been preserved in this municipality. The yield of olives is relatively low and is likely to increase if farmers apply the technological steps correctly. Last year, an average yield of 23.7 kg/tree was achieved, which is much lower than the national average.

## 4.1.2 GENERAL EVALUATION BASED ON BASIC CRITERIA

The assessment of women's empowerment and gender equality in the production chain of Autochthonous Agricultural Products, based on expert analysis, group of interest discussions and interviews with key actors is presented below.

Question	Points*	Weight	Total	Description
Is the participation of employed women in the value chain relatively high?	4	2	8	Yes, women are more involved than men, even though they are not formally registered.
Are there many female entrepreneurs in the value chain?	3	2	6	Women are involved in the processes, but the decision-making authority and business owners are the men. This is rather a matter of mentality, as based on tradition, men are considered as the head of the family, who make decisions, are landowners and represent the family in relations with third parties. Nevertheless, there are some businesses in the area that are well-known for having women managing them (e.g., agritourism units, new farms), which consequently influences the agricultural sector as a whole when it comes to the role that women play and can play in it.
Do women control / own equipment and assets?	2	2	4	The need for technology is low, except for a tractor for tillage, which is controlled by men.
Do women (or can they) acquire the skills needed to add value through product processing or diversification?	4	1	4	Employees, and especially women, are usually trained in the processes, but there is still a need for training in support services, as well as storage and preparation of seedlings for the coming year. Having women expertly take care of seedlings part specifically would be an activity within the value chain that would empower the women in the area as they could get organized in a cluster that works specifically on seedlings and preservation of seedlings to ensure the sustainable development of the sector and women empowerment at the same time.
Do women have control over sales and enterprise revenue?	1	2	2	Men usually control the business, although women are involved in all processes. Revenues are controlled and managed by consensus among family members. Women are involved in budget planning for the family, specifically when it comes to essentials like food and children's needs.
Can work be located near home?	4	1	4	The work is located near the house, as the house is positioned close to the farmland.
Is this a value chain with	3	1	3	Low access to financial resources due to

small barriers to entry for poor entrepreneurs (small scale of production, low initial cost, not requiring large capital investment, using low technology)?				informality, lack of information and low level of absorption of funds, create entry barriers for this VC. Entering this sector in the role of a producer would require land ownership, cultivation skills, and an amount of money to secure inputs. Obstacles classified as relatively low.
Is this a value chain with low barriers to women's involvement (time and movement, access to technology and assets, cultural constraints)?	3	2	6	It is more difficult for women to succeed as entrepreneurs in this business, given the obstacles mentioned. Poor or non-existent horizontal cooperation can be considered as one of the common obstacles. Among the gender specific barriers can be mentioned: <b>Limited time, low access to property, low access to skills and training.</b> As a positive factor we can mention: <b>High participation and knowledge that women have in the agricultural sector, their desire and commitment, as well as the workplace being in the vicinity of the house</b>
Does this value chain offer new opportunities for women?	4	4	16	Women are involved in almost every activity, but agriculture as a sector is not getting the attention it deserves. With the increase in production and processing, especially of traditional autochthonous products, a high potential for women's work is created.
Is the activity in the value chain in line with living conditions (year-round income, use of domestic work, quick returns, keeping the environment intact)?	3	2	6	Overall, yes, but the actors are not satisfied with the level of performance of their business, and this is mainly attributed to the lack of financial incentives and support from various stakeholders in the sector.
Is there a connection between what women do and prospects for growth / diversification in the value chain?	4	1	4	Women are already involved in the sector and participate in almost all activities, but their involvement is not formalized. There are financing schemes for women owning small business in this sector.
Are there gender norms (for example "women's work") that prevent women from taking full advantage of value chain opportunities?	4	2	8	Women may not perform specific activities that require special physical skills, such as driving tractors and plowing. Also, not being registered as an employee of the business, prevents them from benefiting from all the opportunities.
<b>Total for gender potential</b>		<b>71/102</b>		

\* Points: 0 (very little, no, not at all) to 5 (very high, yes, very important).

Table 10: Assessment of women's empowerment and gender equality in Autochthonous Agricultural Products VC.

### 4.1.3 SWOT ANALYSIS OF AUTOCHTHONOUS AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTS VC

Based on this assessment, we present a summary of the SWOT analysis for this sector.

SWOT ANALYSIS OF AUTOCHTHONOUS AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTS VALUE CHAIN	
STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Willingness to participate in trainings;</li> <li>▪ Willingness of key VC actors to increase product quality;</li> <li>▪ Involvement of women in the whole process and awareness of its contribution;</li> <li>▪ Existence of these varieties in these areas as well as very good knowledge for cultivation</li> <li>▪ Their adaptation to the terrain conditions of this area and the stability of their production without the use of agricultural inputs, such as chemical fertilizers or pesticides to protect plants against their diseases and parasites.</li> <li>▪ Consumer demand for these products is quite promising</li> <li>▪ Existence of a series of agritourist resorts in this territory</li> <li>▪ Agritourism of this area has extraordinary demands for these types of products, as this activity relies heavily on local products.</li> <li>▪ Their cultivation is annual and creates opportunities for employment of farming families in this area and protects the land from the phenomenon of erosion.</li> <li>▪ Self-employment of women and youth will have more chances through the cultivation of these species</li> <li>▪ They supply the market with quality products and without waste harmful to human health, do not harm and pollute the environment while contribute to its sustainability.</li> <li>▪ Proximity to large urban areas of Tirana and Durrës (1 hour), there are a series of shops in Tirana and Durrës that are ready to sell these types of products</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Lack of financial resources and consequently lack of proper investments in technology and processing activities;</li> <li>▪ Lack of certification for safety and quality standards;</li> <li>▪ Informal operation in the market (unregistered businesses).</li> <li>▪ They are species that do not have very high productivity compared to various hybrids and are therefore competitive with conventional products that rely on the use of chemicals and fertilizers.</li> <li>▪ These products have slightly lower stamina compared to conventional varieties in terms of post-harvest period. Consequently, these species have to be marketed relatively quickly compared to different hybrids.</li> <li>▪ The final outputs are not uniform like all the others, while in hybrids all their grains are uniform and have the same weight.</li> <li>▪ They have a shorter consumption time compared to hybrid, i.e. from the moment of harvest until consumption.</li> <li>▪ Even the period of their production has a narrower periodicity compared to hybrids. At the end of the year, hybrids can be planted for wider periods during the year compared to the autochthonous varieties.</li> <li>▪ Their agro-processing values are lower compared to hybrid or conventional types.</li> </ul>

OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Opportunity to benefit from the IPARD financing scheme;</li> <li>▪ Increased demand for fruits and vegetables in the domestic and foreign markets.</li> <li>▪ Increasing demand as a result of population awareness of their values.</li> <li>▪ Support provided for autochthonous farm resources by the Ministry of Agriculture such as the development of sustainable agriculture.</li> <li>▪ Development of Agritourism in the area of Durrës and Tirana, which requires these products for consumption compared to other types.</li> <li>▪ Existence of basic knowledge of farmers for the cultivation of these species and the desire of the younger generation to start agricultural businesses in terms of typical productivity of the area.</li> <li>▪ In the context of climate change, autochthonous plant resources are the most sustainable and guarantee a secure future compared to other species.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Lack of promotion and marketing strategies (regional brands);</li> <li>▪ Lack of information from main institutions regarding the plans and benefits of the sector;</li> <li>▪ Lack of attention from institutions towards the needs of the sector.</li> </ul>

Table 11: SWOT Analysis of Autochthonous Agricultural Products Value Chain.

## 4.2 VINEYARDS AND WINE PRODUCTION SECTOR VALUE CHAIN

### 4.2.1 DESCRIPTION OF THE SITUATION IN THE SECTOR

In the Municipality of Durrës the production of grapes has an old tradition, dating back to the time of the Illyrians. This is confirmed by the archaeological data concerning this area. Also, this area has been one of the most productive areas of high-quality wine even in the time of Skanderbeg (always based on historical data). The wine produced in this area has always been exported to Italy and had a safe market due to its high quality. Even during the communist period, has been one of the most productive and traditional areas in our country. Sukth vineyards (including Katundi i Ri) have been one of the most popular areas of the country in terms of grape production, as well as wine. This area has been designed and planted since the time of Italians and further developed in the first decades of communism by Albanian agricultural specialists.

Even during the period of democracy, except for the trauma that suffered during the first years of the change of property ownership, the area of vineyards in this region has increased significantly. Currently in this municipality, with its small area of agricultural land

fund compared to other municipalities, are planted a total of 510 ha of vineyards, of which 502 ha are in full possession and the trend is seeing a growth.

In this region, a total production of about 9,715 tons of grapes is realized, which for the most part comes from plots of relatively considerable size. This makes this region distinct compared to many other areas of the country, where for grapes cultivation are used smaller surfaces of family vineyards. This product generally goes for processing, as the variety of grapes grown in this district makes is not suitable for the table. The realized yield of the vineyard is in optimal values and last year an average yield of 15,55 tons/ha was realized. Moreover, in the Municipality of Durrës in recent years some farmers have invested in the production of table grapes.

There are about 160 thousand grapevines that are grown in the form of pergolas in this municipality (a very small number compared to other municipalities in the country), of which only 137 thousand are fruit-bearing and realize a total production of 1,915 tons of grapes. Their productivity is low, as they do not receive proper care, but nevertheless it should be noted that thanks to the climatic conditions that this municipality has is quite above the national average and is full 13.9 kg /grapevine.

**Vineyards and wine production industry.** Grape processing is a well-known and traditional industry in Albania. In the current market, in addition to local food and wine products produced in factories and wineries in Albania, there are also various brands of imported wine, mainly Italian, French, or from the region, such as those of Montenegro, Macedonia and Kosovo, etc. Seen in this context, the development of this industry in the country requires a special attention and is quite complex, especially considering grape varieties produced in the Albanian vineyards and the varieties supplied in the market under different brand names. Therefore, the development of viticulture in the Municipality of Durrës should always be seen in the context of the development of the country and never separated from it, for the specifics of this sector, which acts as a global sector and never as a regional sector.

However, it should be noted that in the Municipality of Durrës operate some of the largest grapes processing canteens in the country. Among the main ones we can mention:

**"Gjergj Kastrioti Skenderbeu" beverage canteen** was founded in 1933 in the Sukth area. The company is involved in the production and marketing of alcoholic beverages, wine, non-alcoholic beverages; import-export of its products etc. After privatization, investments started in the direction of improving the processing technology of red and white grapes as well as in the introduction of new automatic lines for bottling, packaging, labeling different sized bottles, as well as wine in Bag Box 3 and 5 liters. "Gjergj Kastrioti Skenderbeu" beverage Canteen is also involved in the cultivation of grapes. In the Arapaj area of Durrës district there are about 40 ha of land where different grape varieties are cultivated, such as: Sangiovese, Cabernet Sauvignon, Primitivo, Chardonnay, etc. We emphasize that this is the largest area found today in Albania planted with grapes.



Figure 29: Vineyards in the Arapaj village (the largest area of vineyards in Albania).

*Duka Canteen* was founded in 2007 and operates as a closed production cycle activity. It offers for visitors "WineTour", wine tasting, restaurant, kayaks and fishing. The main products of the farm are the wines and traditional dishes of the area. Tourist attractions near our farm are: Rodon Cape, Ishm Castle, Lalzi Bay, etc.



Figure 30: Vineyards of Duka Canteen, located nearby Katundi i Ri.

*Bardha wine canteen*, which is also one of the best canteens in our country, is located in Marikaj in the municipality of Vora on the border with the municipality of Durrës.

*"Kokomani Vineyard" canteen* is located in the hilly area of Central Albania in the village of Eminasi Vogël on the border with the village of Shesh of Tirana (also on the border with the municipality of Durrës). It is one of the canteens using the latest technology for the production of quality wines.

This specific area in the Municipality of Durrës, as described above, is part of the areas with the best reputation for quality wines in all of Albania.

Right next to Durrës municipality is the village of Sheshi of Tirana region, after which is named the well-known variety of autochthonous grapes Sheshi Zi and Shesh i Bardhë, which is cultivated with great success in many areas of the municipality of Durrës and all over Albania. The hills of this municipality are planted with vineyards and olives. Also, in the fields there is a large number of vineyards. This is also characteristic of this district. We encounter this phenomenon in some other areas of the country, but in Durrës, it is generally more intense and farmers see the cultivation of grapes as a profitable crop, which they can ensure their family income.

This is due to the fact that the farmers have a safe market for their production, as the largest grape processing factories in the country are located nearby.

**Vineyards Cultivation.** In the municipality of Durrës, there is a variety of cultivars, which should not always be seen as a positive trend. Among the main cultivars in this region are:

- *Sheshi i bardhë and Sheshi i zi* are the most important local varieties for wine production. The name comes from the hilly village Shesh which is located 15 km away from Tirana and from where it was spread out in many coastal regions of Albania, and it makes up about 35% of the grapes processed for wine production.
- *Pulesi* is the most important variety of white grapes of the regions of Permet, Berat, Skrapar and Mallakstra. Gives wines with high alcohol content.
- *Kabernet* is a foreign cultivar that has started to be cultivated mainly after the 90s. It is black grapes and gives quality wines.
- *San Giovese* is a variety of Italian origin that has recently arrived and is being cultivated by Durrës farmers, as it has a ruby red color and gives wines with a high percentage of alcohol.

- *Chardonnay, Riesling, Petit Verdon, Shiraz (in test), etc.* They are varieties that have the smallest presence in the territory of this municipality.

**Grape producers and processors.** The main actors in the production and processing of grapes in this district, unlike almost all other districts of our country, are the industrial wine processors. After them there are the farmers who cultivate grapes and who process grapes to make wine and brandy for their family needs as well as for sale.

**Farmers.** Most agricultural farms in the municipality of Durrës, as everywhere in Albania, are mixed farms, farms that produce for self-consumption and sale. Most farms cultivate grapes. The number of market-oriented farmers (farmers with vineyards larger than 0.5 ha) although small, it is larger compared to many other municipalities in our country. These farms are always market-oriented. It should be noted that the number of farms that cover all their needs only from the activity of cultivating vineyards is still low. The main assets of a typical market-oriented farmer are vineyards, irrigation systems (well irrigation and drip irrigation system which has recently started to be applied almost everywhere in all administrative units of Durrës municipality) and sometimes agricultural machinery (tractors and sprinkler pumps).

**Processing farmers.** Farmers in this district process significant quantities of grapes to produce brandy and / or wine. Almost 2/3 of farmers use more than half of the grapes production for making brandy. More than half of the farmers process more than 60% of grapes for brandy and 31% of farmers process for brandy more than 2/3 of grapes (more than 70%). This is because of the tradition as well as of the fact that brandy is much easier to produce and store, and it is the dominant grapes byproduct compared to wine.

Meanwhile, on-farm (artisan) wine production is low and declining. This significant reduction of the on-farm wine production confirms the tendency of consumers to buy higher quality imported wine (as shown by import statistics) and domestic wine produced from local wineries.

The technology of the on-farm wine production is usually primitive and basic; often the wine produced is stored in plastic containers and marketed in plastic bottles.

#### 4.2.2 GENERAL EVALUATION BASED ON BASIC CRITERIA

The evaluation of women's empowerment and gender equality in the Viticulture and Grape Processing value chain, based on expert analysis and group of interest discussions and interviews with key actors is presented below:

Question	Points*	Weight	Total	Description
Is the participation of employed women in the value chain relatively high?	2	2	4	In viticulture and grape processing women are involved in many processes, mainly harvesting and pre-processing. They are not formally registered (by law).
Are there many female entrepreneurs in the value chain?	2	2	4	Entrepreneurship is still considered a men's field due to cultural constraints and mentality. Men are also landowners and represent the family in relations with third parties. However, the situation is changing, also grant programs give a greater priority to women, which is soon expected to lead to the establishment of new women-led businesses.
Do women control / own equipment and assets?	2	2	4	Equipment and assets are owned by men; however, women have access to and control over them. The need for technology is low.

Do women (or can they) acquire the skills needed to add value through product processing or diversification?	3	1	3	Employees, and especially women, need training in support services, as well as the implementation of new wine processing technologies.
Do women have control over sales and enterprise revenue?	2	2	4	Men usually control the business, although women are involved in all processes. Revenues are controlled and managed by consensus among family members. Women are involved in budget planning for the family, specifically when it comes to essentials like food and children's needs
Can work be located near home?	4	1	4	The work is located near the house, as the house is positioned close to the farmland.
Is this a value chain with small barriers to entry for poor entrepreneurs (small scale of production, low initial cost, not requiring large capital investment, using low technology)?	2	1	2	Low access to financial resources due to informality, lack of information and low level of absorption of funds, create entry barriers for this VC. Entering this sector in the role of a producer would require land ownership, cultivation skills, and an amount of money to secure inputs. Obstacles that are classified into relatively medium.
Is this a value chain with low barriers to women's involvement (time and movement, access to technology and assets, cultural constraints)?	3	2	6	It is more difficult for women to succeed as entrepreneurs in the production of Wine, given the mentality that exists for the production of alcoholic beverages. Gender-specific barriers include: <b>Limited time, low access to property, low access to skills and training.</b> As a positive factor we can mention: <b>High participation of women in the agricultural sector, their willingness and commitment, and the workplace being nearby</b>
Does this value chain offer new opportunities for women?	3	4	12	Women are involved in almost every agricultural activity, but this sector is still not getting the attention it deserves. The sector offers great opportunities for women and girls to be fully integrated into it.
Is the activity in the value chain in line with living conditions (year-round income, use of domestic work, quick returns, keeping the environment intact)?	2	2	4	Overall, yes, but the actors are not satisfied with the level of performance of their business, and this is mainly attributed to the lack of financial incentives and support from various stakeholders in the sector.
Is there a connection between what women do and prospects for growth / diversification in the value chain?	4	1	4	Women are involved and can be involved in various processes. By improving skills and knowledge, women can drive sector growth.
Are there gender norms (for example "women's work") that prevent women from taking full advantage of value chain opportunities?	2	2	4	Women may not perform specific activities that require special physical skills, such as driving tractors or transporting, plowing. Also, not registering as an employee in the business, prevents them from taking advantage of all the opportunities.
Total gender potential		55/102		

\* Points: 0 (very little, no, not at all) to 5 (very high, yes, very important).

Table 12. Assessment of women's empowerment and gender equality for Viticulture and Wine Production VC.

### 4.2.3 SWOT ANALYSIS OF VITICULTURE AND WINE VALUE CHAIN

Given the current situation of viticulture, grape production and wine described above, the evaluation of this VC presents a summary of SWOT analysis for this sector.

ANALYSIS OF VITICULTURE AND WINE PRODUCTION VALUE CHAIN	
STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Suitable climatic conditions for the cultivation of viticulture</li> <li>▪ Rich historical tradition in grape cultivation and wine production dating back to the Illyrian period</li> <li>▪ Cultivation of prominent varieties of viticulture used in quality wine products, such as Kallmet, Sheshi i Zi, Shesh i Bardhe, etc.</li> <li>▪ Employment and income in the viticulture and wine production sector are higher and more stable than in some other agricultural sectors.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The division of agricultural land into small and fragmented plots hinders the investments needed to increase the competitiveness of production.</li> <li>▪ Lack of technological infrastructure for wine production.</li> <li>▪ The reluctance of local farmers to join in the production of a standard joint product.</li> <li>▪ Lack of financial funds and real difficulties in securing loans with favorable conditions for viticulture.</li> <li>▪ Lack of state subsidies for the viticulture sector and wine production, and moreover high excise.</li> <li>▪ Production is quantity oriented (poor quality - low price).</li> <li>▪ From the interviews with the consumers, it appears that the cheaper wine packages turn out to be of a poor quality, and as a result, the overall product does not stimulate the consumption of wine by the general population.</li> <li>▪ Lack of qualified managerial staff and genuine specialists in the wine production sector</li> <li>▪ Lack of proper scientific studies for the viticulture and wine market.</li> </ul>
OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Despite the fact that currently the area of land planted with vineyards is 510 ha, the unused area is a potential motivating factor for increasing the productivity of vineyards and wine in this municipality.</li> <li>▪ The initial investment in viticulture does not represent a high cost, compared to the initial investment in other agricultural crops.</li> <li>▪ The timely return coefficient of the initial investment is low, so the investment returns very quickly.</li> <li>▪ The increase of areas with viticulture will create new opportunities for entering the market with the production of industrialized wine.</li> <li>▪ The commitment of the government through concrete legal and fiscal</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Excessive supply coming from the global wine market.</li> <li>▪ Change in the culture of wine consumption.</li> <li>▪ The pressure exerted in the market by importing companies on domestic production.</li> <li>▪ Competition from the countries of the region is high, which offer wines where quality is combined in a profitable balance with the price of wine.</li> <li>▪ Existence of a large number of informal producers who not only harm the fair competition in the market, but offer fake wines.</li> <li>▪ Lack of loans with favorable conditions for viticulture and wine production.</li> </ul>

measures to formalize the market as a whole as well as to classify wine as a common food product excluding it from excise.

- The designation of the agricultural development economy as a priority in the current government program represents an important factor that will affect the increase of support with financial funds.

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Table13. SWOT Analysis of Viticulture and Wine Production Value Chain.

## 4.3 AGRITOURISM SECTOR VALUE CHAIN

### 4.3.1 DESCRIPTION OF THE SITUATION IN THE SECTOR

Summer and cultural tourism is an industry with a significant impact on the economy of Durrës. With over 750,000 visitors a year, this is the most important area of the country in terms of mass tourism. The abundant sand makes the beach of Durrës not only very useful from the health point of view, but also a suitable beach for families who can relax peacefully with their children. Durrës beach is the most populated beach in Albania, due to the large concentration of hotels and residential compounds. Recently, watchtowers have been placed in different parts of the beach, which take care of vacationers who may have problems at sea. The most attractive part of the entire coastline of Durrës is the beach of Currila, with rugged sandy and rocky terrain, which offers to vacationers' beautiful nature, the aroma of sea pines and intimate spots, away from the noise of populated beaches. Other popular areas to mention are Porto-Romano and Cape of Rodoni. These areas can serve not only as recreational facilities but also as destinations for excursions and long walks, which enrich vacations with adventure. Other very interesting sections of the city of Durrës are the Ishmi area and Lalezi Bay, which are located north of Durrës and extend to the Cape of Rodon. Ishmi is an Ancient Illyrian settlement and still preserves traces of its early origin. It is ideal for family tourism, which offers the peace and comfort.

**Agritourism.** In the Municipality of Durrës, mainly over the last 10 years, Agritourism has started successfully. The landscape of Durrës with many hills and vineyards, has enabled the construction of a series of Agritourism establishments, which either started as recreational places that provided absolute tranquility and diverse activities for all age groups, or were built near wineries initially as tasting facilities and today have become fully-functioning agritourism destination. Among the most important resorts we can mention:

- **Agro-Tourism Huqi.** It is located in Rada, one of the rural villages that take you to Cape Rodoni. It all started as an agriculture farm with olive groves and vineyards. Over time it became a resort, and in recent years is becoming one of the most favorite of the agritourism sector. The initial goal of this complex was to create a business, which operates with a closed cycle activity. The farm grows Albanian organic products, which are served to customers visiting the complex and in the company's restaurant. Presently, the potentials of the regional market are used to cover the additional needs not only of the complex but also of the clients for organic products.
- **Argo-tourism Vine** is a farm built by the "Skënderbeu Durrës" beverage canteen based on the concept of diversification of services. This venture was born and further stimulated by the Slow Food movement to join Skanderbeg's canteen products. The

farm is surrounded by low range hills with a crown of vineyards of 45 ha; their production is processed in the farm's canteen, bringing to the restaurant table a high-quality wine, served only to guests. Every product offered in the restaurant is growing the farm, the rest is provided by local farmers thanks to fruitful collaborations.

- **Horses Hill**, given its name, it is clear what is the main attraction of the Horse Hill. The restaurant and resort are surrounded by a large enclosure, around which are arranged the hotel, the restaurant on the ground floor, the horse stables and the outdoor seating areas of the restaurant. Horses Hill is not a typical farm, yet, it still has a strong connection to agritourism, and not just because of its horses. The restaurant has a close cooperation with the local farmers from Dedej, and all their locally grown products such as meat, milk, cheese and eggs, as well as vegetables, honey and fruits are served to the customers.
- **Duka Canteen** was established in 2007 and operates as a closed production cycle activity. It offers for visitors "Wine Tour", wine tasting, restaurant, kayak and fishing. The main products of the farm are the wines and traditional dishes of the area. Tourist attractions near our farm are: Rodon Cape, Ishm Castle, Lalzi Bay, etc.
- **Agrotourism "Popi Restaurant"**, Originally it was a developed piece of land between the hills in the middle of the woods. Everything on the farm, starting from the lake, the space dedicated to livestock and agriculture, were created by the hand of man who made it possible to create such a miracle, he knew how to add value to nature without damaging it. Every product served is organic and processed to be in the right nutritional settings. The food served is traditional of our country. Vegetables and fruits are mostly grown on the farm; however, they also cooperate with the locals, buying more products from them and, at the same time, helping them financially.
- **"Tree of Life" Farm** is a family business that was born out of the desire to get rid of the stresses and smog of the city, towards the unspoiled nature. Only 2 km from the national road Plepa-Ndroq is very easily accessible from Tirana and Durrës and at the crossroads of the highway that connects the North with the South of Albania. All kinds of Mediterranean fruit trees, vineyards, olives and vegetables are cultivated there. Also, in the farm are bred cattle, small ruminants, pigs, geese, ducks, chickens, and pigeons. Every agricultural and livestock product that is processed on the farm such as: meat, vegetables, fruits, dairy, pastry products are prepared fresh every day and served directly in the restaurant.

#### 4.3.2 GENERAL EVALUATION BASED ON BASIC CRITERIA

The evaluation of women's empowerment and gender equality in the Agritourism value chain, based on expert analysis and group of interest discussions and interviews with key actors is presented below:

Question	Points*	Weight	Total	Description
Is the participation of employed women in the value chain relatively high?	3	2	6	In agritourism, women are involved in many processes (cooking, service, hospitality, etc.). As for the typology of Agro-Tourism in Durrës, they are qualitative and women are mainly employed.
Are there many female entrepreneurs in the value chain?	1	2	2	No. Entrepreneurship is still considered a men's field due to cultural constraints and mentality. Men are also landowners and represent the family in relations with third parties.
Do women control / own equipment and assets?	2	2	4	The equipment and assets are owned by the agritourism executives. Women are employed.

Do women (or can they) acquire the skills needed to add value through product processing or diversification?	3	1	3	Women are becoming more and more aware of the importance of farm diversification by adding the agritourism component. There is a high willingness to learn about agritourism management, proper hospitality, English language skills, on-farm tours, off-farm tours in attractive surrounding areas, etc.
Do women have control over sales and enterprise revenue?	1	2	2	Men usually control the business, although women are involved in all processes. Women are involved in budget planning for the family, specifically when it comes to essentials like food and children's needs.
Can work be located near home?	3	1	3	The work is located near the house, as the house is positioned close to the ground.
Is this a value chain with small barriers to entry for poor entrepreneurs (small scale of production, low initial cost, not requiring large capital investment, using low technology)?	2	1	2	No, there are some legal barriers to entering this value chain. Initial costs are high. Based on various studies and estimates, about 50 thousand EUR would be needed to transform the assets and the old apartment into a building with traditional renovated architecture. Given the opportunities available for grants, this investment would be unaffordable for many families in the Municipality of Durrës.
Does this value chain offer new opportunities for women?	3	2	6	There are no mandatory restrictions that prevent women from entering the VC. Women are involved in daily farming activities, traditional cooking for family and tourists, and other activities.
Is the activity in the value chain in line with living conditions (year-round income, use of domestic work, quick returns, keeping the environment intact)?	3	4	12	Agritourism activity is considered as a diversification activity for farms; thus, in the period of low sales in agriculture, farms can compensate for this effect by providing accommodation services and cooking for tourists. Agritourism can provide sufficient income for families during most of the year, especially in the winter season, where coastal tourism does not work.
Is there a connection between what women do and prospects for growth / diversification in the value chain?	2	2	4	Overall, yes, but the actors are not satisfied with the level of performance of their business, and this is mainly attributed to the lack of financial incentives and support from various stakeholders in the sector.
Are there gender norms (for example "women's work") that prevent women from taking full advantage of value chain opportunities?	3	1	3	Women are involved and can be involved in various processes. By improving skills and knowledge, women can drive sector growth.
Does this value chain offer new opportunities for women?	2	2	4	Housework and childcare take up considerable time and often deprives women of taking full advantage of value chain opportunities. However, the short distance from home offers opportunities for women to play an important role in this sector.
Total for gender potential		51/102		

\* Points: 0 (very little, no, not at all) to 5 (very high, yes, very important).

Table14. Assessment of women's empowerment and gender equality of Agritourism VC.

### 4.3.3 SWOT ANALYSIS OF THE AGRITOURISM VALUE CHAIN

SWOT ANALYSIS OF THE AGRITOURISM VALUE CHAIN	
STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Area based on agriculture and livestock;</li> <li>Good geographical location, which brings high opportunities for environmental tourism</li> <li>Tradition of hospitality and cooking;</li> <li>Realized investments in agricultural farms and their marketing low-cost services.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lack of experience and business management skills in agritourism;</li> <li>Lack of specific training programs for agritourism management.</li> <li>Poor road infrastructure and poor public transport in rural areas;</li> <li>Poor access to financial resources.</li> </ul>
OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>High priority in the Government Agenda (100 villages program);</li> <li>Investment funds provided by various grant programs (ARDA, IPARD, other)</li> <li>Increasing demand for agritourism experience from both domestic and foreign tourists;</li> <li>Employment opportunities for women and youth.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Property rights issues can hamper investment;</li> <li>Mismanagement of waste in rural areas;</li> <li>Growing trend of young people leaving rural areas for a better life in big cities.</li> </ul>

Table 15. SWOT Analysis of the Agritourism Value Chain.

## 4.4 CONCLUSIONS

Based on the analysis of three sectors, using the criteria of gender sensitive value chain analysis (GSVCA) we have the following evaluation of situation:

ANALYZED SECTOR	POINTS	NOTES
Viticulture and wine production Value Chain	55	Requires significant funding for required investments in technology and mainly in processing activity. It is therefore a long-term intervention and not with high guarantees of success.
Autochthonous Agriculture Productions Value Chain	71	Climatic conditions and very good tradition. The developed Agritourism sector demands more and more autochthonous products. Rising consumer demand and proximity to the two largest markets, Tirana and Durrës. The investments are not very big.
Agritourism Value Chain	51	The elite agritourism that has been built in this area requires substantial funding to invest, property rights problems and poor public transport in rural areas may hinder investment.

Table 16. Evaluation situation of Value Chains.

In the following chapter we will analyze in detail the Value Chain in the Sector of Autochthonous Agricultural Products.

## 5. DETAILED ANALYSIS OF AUTOCHTHONOUS AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTS VC

### 5.1 OVERVIEW

The sustainable and multifunctional functional development of autochthonous resources, especially those of the agricultural sector, ensure the preservation of these plant resources with great value both for agricultural production but above all that natural wealth created over many years, which has been used by many ancestral generations. The use of biodiversity of the autochthonous agricultural resources of this area for economic and profitable purposes is one of the aspects of the development of local and national economies. The utilization must be both profitable and balanced, because the consumer society and the desire to make huge profits in a very short time brought forth the degradation of ecosystems in these areas and has led to the cultivation of conventional international varieties. The conservation of the biodiversity of these autochthonous resources at the global and regional level is supported from the legislative point of view by a series of international conventions in which our country is a party.

The Rio Summit (1992) supported and established the pillars for the Global Biodiversity Strategy, based on which the Pan-European Strategy was elaborated.

The philosophy of the strategy was: Biological diversity and variety of flora and fauna, ecosystems and landscapes is one of our greatest assets. We must pass this natural heritage to future generations as a sustainable system. At the national level, Albania has drafted the National Strategy and Action Plan for Biodiversity Conservation

Based on this biodiversity strategy, the use of autochthonous natural resources around the world has been evaluated. Exactly their use and preservation in accordance with the procedures of conservation "on farm" will make it possible for these areas to enter the path of sustainable development in the rural ecosystem of their territory. It aims to prevent further land degradation, protect biodiversity and ensure the maximum potential to fulfill the ecological, economic and social functions of this ecosystem at local, national and global level without affecting other ecosystems.

The general analysis of the situation of Autochthonous resources in the territory of the Municipality of Durrës is based on the physical-climatic features of the territory, of which we can mention:

- **The terrain:** This territory is located in a field and hilly relief at a low altitude above sea level. Most of this territory is dominated by hilly relief, which should be noted that they are low-slope hills and almost all of their territory is usable for agricultural purposes. The field area is mainly in the Erzeni river valley and all these lands are very fertile due to their alluvial properties.
- **Climate:** characterized by typical Mediterranean climate, with hot and dry summers and relatively mild and wet rainy winters. Climatic conditions are formed under the action of a number of factors. In this respect we can list:
  - ✓ Low plain terrain, which affects temperatures, precipitation, winds, etc.;
  - ✓ High mountainous terrain in the east, from where cold winds come;
  - ✓ Maritime influence from the west and southwest, but also the influence of the hilly relief;

- **Solar radiation:** Solar radiation provides light which is very important for the blooming process of plants. Based on the official data of INEUM, this area gets over 2500 hours of sunshine per year, while the highest monthly value of sunshine is recorded in July.
- **Air:** Air quality in this area is generally considered within EU standards, as indicated in the Environment 2020 National Report. The monitoring data reveals that the air quality is within the allowed EU standards and consequently the potentials of vegetation growth in this region are considerable.
- **Winds:** The wind regimen is closely related to the season, the direction they come from as well as the influence of the Adriatic Sea. The direction of the winds varies depending on the closeness to the sea, the direction of the Erzen river valleys as well as the characteristics of the terrain.
- **Air temperature and precipitation:** Plant growth and development are related to temperature and other physiological processes (respiration, evaporation, photosynthesis, etc.). In general, the optimal temperature of the region is more suitable for plants' development. As mentioned above, in addition to the optimum temperature, plants can also withstand low (minimum) or high (maximum) temperatures. Outside these boundaries, plants are immediately damaged. The average temperature is around 14.8°C. The Adriatic Sea exerts a calming effect, both on the cold winter climate and the hot summer. This area gets an average of 1250 mm of rainfall/year, which is almost all in the form of rain and rarely small amounts of snowfall during the winter period.

In this area are cultivated a number of autochthonous products, among which we can mention:

- **Cow Heart Tomato-** which is large tomato and with a pink to red color, which is characterized by its distinct aroma. This tomato, grown by the farmers of this area, is in high demand in the markets of Tirana and Durrës, but it is difficult to meet the demands of the market.
- **Pepper-** which also has a typical aroma and although it is not very large its characteristic aroma remains even after being fried. This is exactly why there is such a great demand for it.
- **Cucumber-** is another vegetable with special values, not very large in size but firm and higher content of juice compare to other varieties. It is also characterized by actually longer storage time compared to other types.
- **Eggplant-** is a vegetable which has a relatively small body and no pulp, but is quite slim. It has a dark red color and has a characteristic aroma. It is in high demand by consumers who know its values.
- **Okra-** It is also one of the most widely grown vegetables in the area. Its characteristic is the really small and long-tailed bean. But the positive feature of this type, which makes it special compared to other types, is that they almost do not form thick fibrous fibers inside them.

A very important factor at this point is the existence of the Vegetation Database of Albania. The conservation of Plant Genetic Resources (PGR), supported by the advantages in computer technology, has become very important in recent years and this has resulted in an increase in the attention of PGR computing. The PGR information system increases the efficiency of PGR management by researchers, funding agencies, etc. The way the information system is organized is a fair and accessible opportunity for everyone. Information of this nature is necessary for the planning and implementation of activities; sustainable use and fair sharing of the benefits. This type of information is important for planning and carrying out activities. The PGR information system manages and analyzes various sources of information. This database includes all PGR from Albania. The contribution of plant genetic resources to food safety and sustainable agriculture affects:

- **Contribution to food safety.** Plant genetic improvements have a significant contribution to food safety. Thus, cultivars and hybrids bred through plant genetic improvement programs, as they are bred, have adapted quite well to often harsh environmental conditions compared to foreign cultivars that have not been competitive in this regard. This phenomenon is observed in wheat, corn, vegetables, etc.
- **Contribution of genetic resources to a sustainable agriculture.** Albanian agriculture, although during these years has not received support from institutions, thanks to the experiences of the farmer is developing in a sustainable way. Meanwhile, there have been changes in the structure of agricultural production. It is important to note that the genetic resources of plants and their use have contributed to a sustainable agriculture. Although there are no institutional estimates for such a contribution, these conclusions are based on the fact that despite the current conditions in Albania, the cultivars used by farmers have consistently ensured a sustainable agricultural production.

In some of the remote mountainous areas, where farmers produce for their own consumption and not for trade, most of the agricultural production is dominated by local types of vegetables, cereals and fruit trees. Despite the low yields compared to new cultivars, this production system based on traditional varieties is more stable and creates suitable conditions for a sustainable development in such remote areas.

- **Introduction of new cultivars, seed supply systems and problems with autochthonous plant varieties.** Seed production and distribution in Albania is carried out through two sectors: public and private sector. The public sector, which is represented by ATTCs, produces high-yield seed categories, ranging from breeding seeds to parabolic seeds. Exceptions are vegetables, because their seeds are produced by the private sector, including those of the basic category. This is due to the demand for small quantities of seeds per unit area, because the production of such seeds needs special technology and attention. As a rule, certified seeds are produced by the private sector mainly through farmers' associations.

Although there is a system of seed production, in fact it is not an institutionalized system in relation to the organic relations of the two sectors and the proper contractual relations. This has created problems with the proper functioning of this system. Consequently, not all parabolic or basic seeds are used by farmers' associations to produce the relevant basic and certified seeds, but they are used for extensive production, thus reducing the chances of covering a larger area with certified seed. Nowadays in Albania the introduction of new varieties in agricultural production is a normal and legal requirement. This is especially true for open field crops.

## AUTOCHTHONOUS AGRICULTURE PRODUCTS VALUE CHAIN

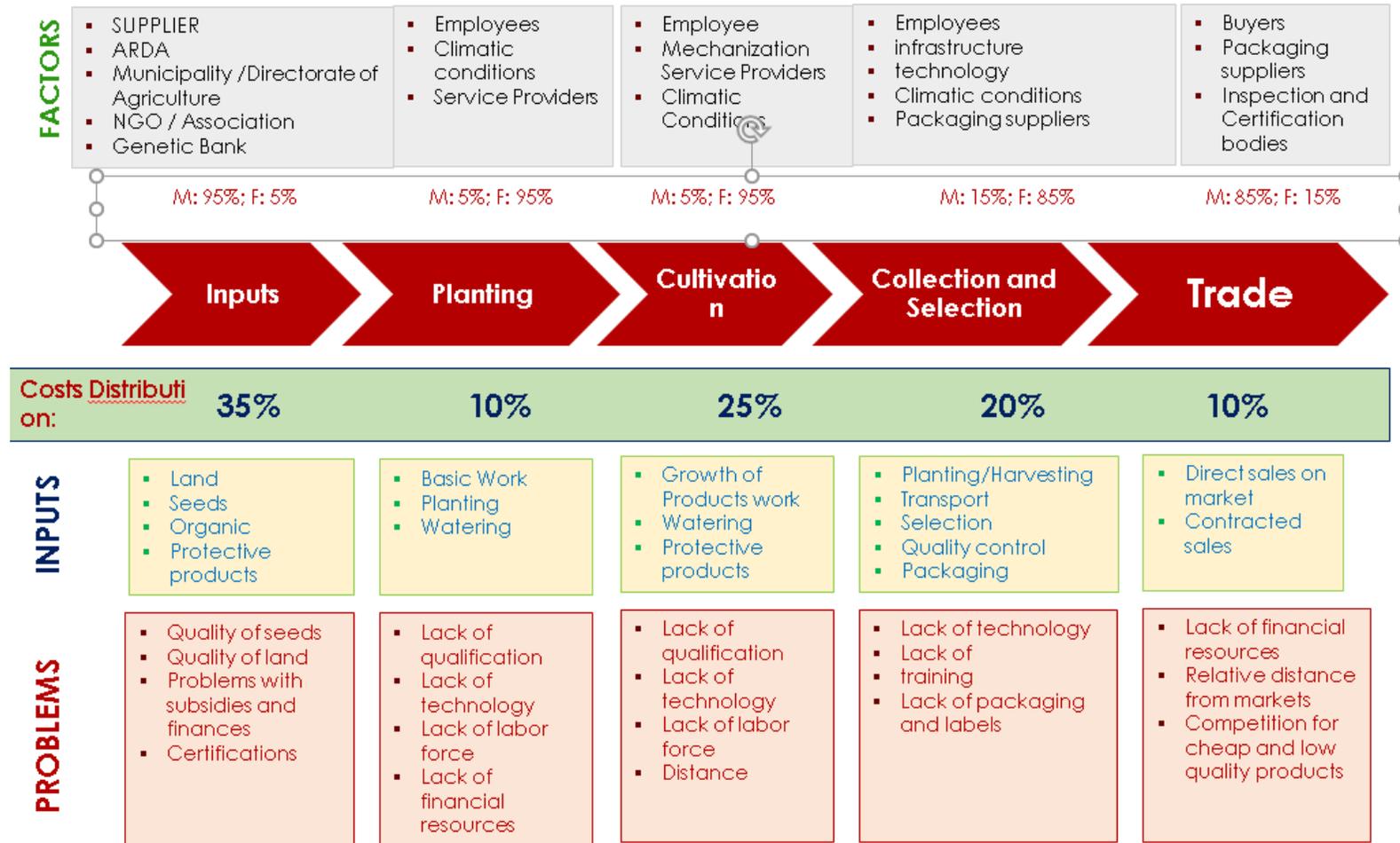


Figure 31: Outline of Autochthonous Agricultural Products Value Chain in the Municipality of Durrës.

## 5.2 VALUE CHAIN ACTORS

The agricultural products sector, and consequently the sub-sector of Autochthonous Agricultural Products is organized in three main levels:

1. *Individual Producers of Autochthonous Agricultural Products. In this group are all producers of these products, who either sale them themselves in small quantities in the nearby markets or in the Agritourism establishments in the area;*
2. *Individual Producers and Consumers of Autochthonous Agricultural Products; which are mainly Agritourism establishments who use such products in their premises, or villagers who plant small quantities in their gardens for family consumption;*
3. *Collectors and Whole sellers who collect locally grown products in the villages and sell them in bulk in the big markets.*

In the Municipality of Durrës are present all three groups, but we in the following analysis will focus on the first category. The analysis of these actors will be realized during the detailed analysis of the main links of the value chain.

It should be noted that as in any VC, even in the VC of Autochthonous Agricultural Products there are several key actors who indirectly influence the improvement of the chain. Given that these actors are present in almost every link, we are presenting an analysis in the context of their impact on the entire VC.

### 5.2.1 CENTRAL AND LOCAL SUPPORT STRUCTURES

A very important role in the sector is played by other groups of interest, including central and local structures that support the agricultural sector in general, as well as certification structures. Below is a brief description of each of the chain actors of the value Autochthonous Agricultural Products of the sector.

**Support services** provide free technical assistance to farmers. This includes three levels: central, regional and local, which include a total of 285 employees nationwide (ISARD 2014-2020). At the regional level, each of the 12 Directorates of Agriculture has additional services provided by 5-6 specialists in charge of vegetable, fruit and plant protection as well as livestock specialists and agricultural economists. At the local level, for more than 4 years the municipalities are responsible for the field of agriculture, rural development, forests and public pastures, nature and biodiversity. Municipalities are responsible for performing specific functions in these areas, according to applicable law.

Currently in the Municipality of Durrës the services for performing the functions are carried out by the Forest Service and Agriculture Agency, which is mainly oriented towards the administration of the public forest and pasture fund of this municipality. It does not have sufficient structures for the creation and administration of the rural information local system and agricultural counseling as well as for the establishment and administration of local grant schemes for agriculture and rural development, financed from the local budget and / or co-financed by third parties, guaranteeing gender balanced access.

**Agricultural Technology Transfer Centers (ATTC)** have begun to play an active role in terms of technology transfer aiming to improve competitiveness in the Albanian agricultural sector. There are five ATTCs in Albania, located in Korça, Lushnjë, Vlova, Shkodër and Fushë-Krujë. ATTCs are involved in the preparation and implementation of several programs related to olive plantation schemes, irrigation and drainage, agricultural support schemes, food safety, land consolidation, etc.

ATTC currently runs plant improvement programs in Albania under the authority of the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MARD). Despite changes in the statute of

former research institutes, their transformation into agricultural technology transfer centers and the transfer of plant genetic improvement at the Agricultural University of Tirana (UBT), plant genetic improvement programs will continue to be part of ATTC. This is related to several reasons, such as:

- ✓ *The Genetic Bank located at ATTC, due to its experience and relationship with agricultural production, staff training and adaptation to agricultural production requirements, are practically able to bear this responsibility.*
- ✓ *Unlike the Genetic Bank, the educational institutions are not currently closely linked to the problems concerning agricultural production or the practices and procedures of genetic improvement programs. University-improved plant species are not widespread in production and have not been competitive with those of research institutes.*
- ✓ *ATTCs, due to their research activities in general and genetic improvement activity in particular, have developed and have rich work collections and possess suitable facilities for long-term storage.*
- ✓ *ATTC staff has good knowledge of collections; they have characterized, evaluated and protected them unlikely the University which has failed to preserve such collections due to their lack of interest in this regard.*
- ✓ *The current economic and financial situation of the country does not provide sufficient funds to support the implementation of plant genetic improvement programs. The need for support will be especially important for those local cultivars of open field crops. This is especially important due to the unpredictable weather conditions, which have made foreign cultivars not always resistant.*

In general, genetic improvement of plants has met the expectations for production in agriculture, however, better staff qualifications and training courses are needed, both for new methods and advanced technologies that have not yet been introduced in Albania, and the provision of conditions and appropriate equipment for the application of new techniques and technologies.

Plant genetic improvement programs are funded by the state budget on the basis of short-term projects approved by specialized structures. Through these projects, plants such as wheat, corn and vegetables have been treated as part of plant genetic improvement programs.

**National Food Authority (NFA)** is a government agency under the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development and is the authority in charge for the inspection of the management of national consumer safety and protection and plant and animal protection. The NFA performs its functions based on Law no. 10 433, dated 16.6.2011 on "Inspection in the Republic of Albania", article 7 "Principles of inspection program". The time of inspection is determined in the annual inspection program; however random inspections occur in cases when provided by law. Article 4, of the same law, which stipulates the purpose of the inspection, namely: (i) assessment of compliance with legal requirements; (ii) documenting good practices in compliance with legal requirements; (iii) advising the inspected entity regarding the correct implementation of legal requirements; (iv) ordering the correction of violations of legal requirements and the elimination of the consequences arising therefore; and (v) giving penalties and taking other administrative measures to avoid risks that may be opposed to public interest.

Based on Article 26 "Annual inspection time", the maximum allowed inspection period varies from 5 to 15 days and there is no inspection fee. The inspected business / farm must provide the necessary evidence and information required by the inspection authority. Inspections usually follow a predetermined schedule based on the Annual Inspection Schedule, but there may be occasional inspections. The nearest inspector is the Regional

Office of the National Food Authority in Durrës, which conducts inspections based on the Annual Inspection Program, provided by the NFA office in Tirana.

## 5.2.2 CERTIFICATION BODIES

Regarding Certification Institutions, the basic standards are HACCP (Standard of Risk Analysis and Critical Control Point) and 'Organic' Certification. HACCP is mandatory by law in Albania for any farmer, business or other entity that produces food products. 'Organic' certification is being sought by markets in urban areas and adds value to the product.

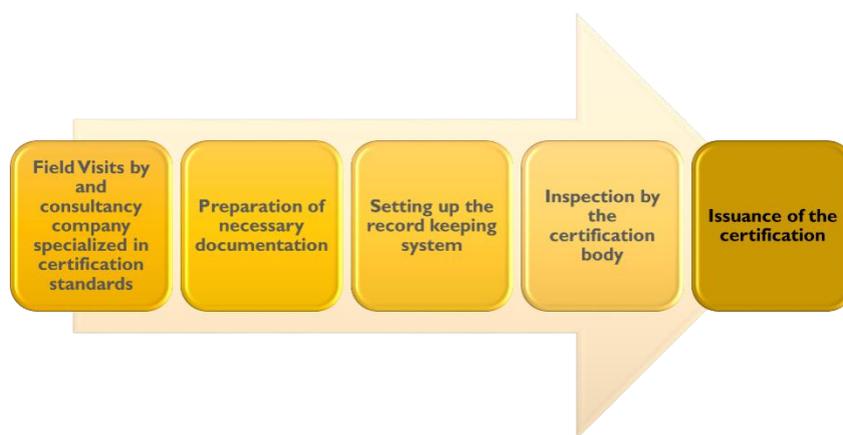


Figure 32: Steps for HACCP Certification.

The average time for HACCP certification is 14-30 days and its process include the following steps:

- *Field visit by a consulting company specializing in certification standards which provides recommendations for improvements and adaptations;*
- *Preparation of necessary documentation;*
- *Setting up the recordkeeping system;*
- *Inspection by the certification body;*
- *Issuance of certification.*

**Organic** certification is a more complex standard which can last 2-3 years. During this period, businesses receive an "**Organic certification process**" statement, until the final certificate is issued. The main certification body for the Organic Standard is AlbInspekt based in Tirana. There are several certification bodies for HACCP certification. HACCP and Organic are provided by private companies and NGOs, while the phytosanitary certificate, which is required for export, is issued by the national phytosanitary service, part of the Regional Directorate of Agriculture, Durrës.

## 5.2.3 PRIVATE SUPPORTING STRUCTURES

**Raw material and technology suppliers** play an important role in the value chain of Autochthonous Agricultural Products. They provide ready-made seedlings for planting and organic fertilizers, as well as help the local villagers with knowledge of plant cultivation. Usually, these suppliers also provide the necessary technology for the mechanization of various processes, but the fragmentation of the land and the relatively small areas planted with these products, as well as the fact that planting is done with seedlings; mechanization is almost nonexistent throughout the Autochthonous Agriculture Products VC.

**Agronomists and Suppliers of Protective Products.** The existence of many agronomists in the market, plays a very important role in consulting on the varieties that can be planted and their cultivation techniques. They also offer plant protection products, such as pesticides or other protection mechanisms. They also make a great contribution by helping the villagers of the area with knowledge on how to prevent various plant diseases.

**Collectors of Autochthonous Agricultural Products.** In the Municipality of Durrës for the small quantities of production of Autochthonous Agricultural Products, there is no collector dedicated to such products. Durrës farmers sell their products directly in the market or in Agritourism establishments and restaurants in the area. Only a small number of them have contacted directly the collectors or wholesalers of agricultural products. It should be noted that recently, due to the specifics of these products (the relatively higher price and limited amounts), the collectors are not very interested in Autochthonous Agricultural Products.

Practically, the lack of these collectors directly affects the amount of production of these products, because farmers, not having a guaranteed market, are reluctant to increase production. In order to make the products more attractive to the collectors, it is necessary to create and consolidate the production lines (groups of farmers) of these products, as well as ensure their certification. These products cultivated under the "organic" brand, have a great demand in the market today, but the lack of certification and small quantities produced make it difficult to find new markets in the cities of Tirana and Durrës and beyond.

### 5.3 VC STAGES

It should be kept in mind that Durrës farmers cultivate a relatively wide range of these products which require almost the same amount of work and care for cultivation. Most typical autochthonous vegetables, which are traditionally grown in this area, are tomatoes, peppers, cucumbers, eggplants, okra, etc. The Value Chain (VC) for Autochthonous Agricultural Products is composed of five main links. The following paragraphs analyze these elements based on:

- ✓ The main inputs needed in each link.
- ✓ Influencing factors and their weight.
- ✓ The role of women in each link and the factors or opportunities for improving this role
- ✓ Problems identified, and opportunities and recommendations for their minimization

Based on the field work, observations and interviews conducted with the main actors of the value chain in the Municipality of Durrës, the respective situations were identified and the following conclusions and recommendations were drawn.

#### 5.3.1 PROVIDING BASIC VALUE CHAIN INPUTS

**Activities.** This link of chain includes activities related to the main elements to develop an activity in the VCs of Autochthonous Agricultural Products and summarizes:

- ✓ **Land**, normally it is owned or used by farming families, but in some cases in order to increase production or even the usage of agricultural mechanics, farmers rent the land from their neighbors.
- ✓ **Provision of Seedlings**, which are used for the cultivation of Autochthonous Agricultural Products. Normally seedlings need to be purchased every year. During our analysis, the possibility was identified for farmers to produce their own seedlings for the following

year. This is an important element to reduce the cost of production of these plants, in order to make the sector even more interesting from the financial standpoint.

- ✓ **Provision of Organic fertilizers**, which are used periodically to improve the soil planted with these crops. It is recommended to use organic fertilizers to guarantee BIO certification of these products.
- ✓ **Protective products**, plants of Autochthonous products, as well as all other plants can be affected by both diseases and rodents. For this reason, farmers need pesticides, the use of which is recommended only in extreme cases, as well as protection mechanisms that do not affect the quality of production.

**Women's Participation.** This activity in most cases is dominated by men (they make up 95% of the total workforce), because it is related to activities that take place away from the place of residence. Men are mostly the ones who go out to the markets and also carry out the transportation of inputs. In some cases, women accompany men mainly to ensure the quality of the products purchased in the market. In this link, there are few opportunities to increase the role of women and their empowerment. But as we pointed out above, farmers themselves can start production of seedlings if provided some training and assistance, using simple tools that enable the production of seedlings. This will be a process that can be carried out mainly by women, like all other links in the process. It is worth noting that the construction of the seedling production mechanism by the farmers themselves will significantly increase both the participation of women and the income of families. In our calculations, this process will enable the reduction of the cost of this link by over 30%.

**Cost of this link.** This phase in the total cost constitutes about **35%** of the cost of production and processing of Autochthonous Agricultural Products.

### 5.3.2 PRODUCTS PLANTING

**Activities.** In this link are carried out all activities related to the necessary work for planting, which are annual activities or even carried out twice a year, in cases of cultivation of second crops. The main activities in this process are:

- ✓ **Preparing the soil for planting.** Agricultural mechanics are used at this stage. In these cases, the participation of men in this activity is considerable. But as we have pointed out above, the small quantities of planted plots and their fragmentation often make it difficult to use mechanics.
- ✓ **Planting Seedlings.** This is a process that is performed entirely by hand, because the use of agricultural mechanics is almost impossible for the specifics of the process itself. At this stage of the process, the work of women who are "hand planting specialists" for all agricultural products prevails.
- ✓ **Irrigation after planting.** In general, this process is semi-mechanized, so the participation of men in it is present, but again it is women who dominate this activity.

**Women's Participation.** In the Municipality of Durrës, due to the specifics of planting with seedlings and the very small use of agricultural mechanics, this phase is dominated by the work of women to an extent of about 95%. When planting larger areas, the agricultural mechanics is used more often but it never devalues the work of women in the Autochthonous Agricultural Products VC, it only gives them more time to perform other tasks.

**Cost of this link.** Cultivation of Autochthonous Agricultural products is generally carried out once or twice per year and it makes up a relatively small part of the total cost of production and processing, estimated at about 10% of the total cost.

### 5.3.3 CULTIVATION OF AUTOCHTHONOUS AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTS

**Activities.** In this link are carried out all activities related to the work necessary for the growth of Autochthonous Agricultural Products and includes almost daily activities related to:

- ✓ **Hoeing and eliminating weeds and other unwanted herbs or plants.** This is a process that is done entirely by hand. At this stage of the process, women's work predominates.
- ✓ **Irrigation.** Generally, this process is semi-mechanized, so the participation of men is the same of the women. Irrigation is often carried out with drip irrigation systems.
- ✓ **Fertilization.** The soil is generally fertilized during the preparation activities for planting, but sometimes farmers also add it during the cultivation process. It is usually very rare activity and hardly affects the cost.
- ✓ **Plant Protection.** It's one of the main activities during cultivation. As we have pointed out, farmers use both pesticides to fight plant diseases and alternative forms to protect them mainly from rodents. The use of the latter is very important because it directly affects the quality of the product, while maintaining their "organic" quality.

**Women's Participation.** In the Municipality of Durrës, even this link of the VC is dominated by the work of women, who contribute with approximately 95% of their work. Men are only sometimes involved during the irrigation process when this is mechanical irrigation or even sometimes in the physical preparation of the defense mechanisms.

**Cost of this link.** The activities of this link, although they are an almost daily work, due to the low cost of labor do not substantially affect the total cost of production and processing. It accounts for a relatively average weight estimated at about **25% of the cost of production.**

### 5.3.4 COLLECTION AND PROCESSING

**Activities.** In this link are realized the necessary work processes for the collection or harvesting of the production, its selection based on the quality criteria, as well as the packaging and preparation for the market. Even this process for the limited quantity of production itself is a manual and mechanized process. In this link are realized activities related to:

- ✓ **Harvesting or collecting in field.** This is a process that is done all by hand. This activity is carried out by women and children who help after school hours.
- ✓ **Transportation of the product to the processing facilities.** Generally, this activity is performed by the men who are responsible for the transportation activities throughout the VC.
- ✓ **Selection.** During this activity, a selection and classification of products is made, in order to increase the value of a part of the production. This too is a process that is done entirely by hand. At this stage of the process, women's work predominates.
- ✓ **Packaging.** Finally, the process of packaging or placing the products in boxes or other packaging is carried out, making them ready for the market. It is an activity that is done entirely by hand, where the work of women and children predominates, but men also contribute to the process.

It should be noted that during the above-mentioned activities, especially during the selection and packaging activities, there is a risk of contamination of the product, reducing the quality and therefore its price in the market.

**Women's Participation.** This process is dominated by the work of women to the extent of 85%, but sometimes men also help them. Since there are no suitable conditions for product storage, this is a daily task throughout the production period.

**Cost of this link.** As we said the activities in this link are daily tasks and consume human power and relatively long time. So, from the cost point of view there should have been a considerable weight, but based on the very low levels of payments and given the fact that such activities are performed for the family, this process costs about **20% of the production cost** of Autochthonous Agricultural Products

### 5.3.5 TRADE

**Activities.** There are generally two ways to trade Autochthonous Agricultural Products: a) Sales contract, or b) Sales directly in the market. This link in the chain includes activities related to:

- ✓ **Contracts for selling the production.** Currently, the practice of signing contracts for selling agricultural products, as everywhere in the agricultural sector in our country, in the Municipality of Durrës generally does not exist. Even in those cases that there are some types of contracts (more of verbal agreements), this is always achieved by men.
- ✓ **Transportation of the product to the collector or to the market.** Generally, this process is performed by the men who are responsible for the transport activities throughout the VC.
- ✓ **The process of selling in the market.** Even in this activity, the participation of men is almost exclusive, but women participate actively during the absence of men and or if the markets are close to their homes.
- ✓ **Promotion,** this process includes the display of products in the dedicated space and offline or online promotion on social media, as well as the process of selling products to customers and the impact on buyers.

**Women's Participation.** These activities, also due to the mentality, in most cases are performed by men (they constitute 85% of the total workforce), because these activities take place far away from the place of residence. Men are mostly those who go out to the markets and also carry out the transportation of inputs. In some cases, women accompany men mainly in cases of direct sales in the market.

**Cost of this link.** In terms of cost in the value chain this link makes up about **10% of the cost** of the whole chain.

## 5.4 FINDINGS AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR WOMEN EMPOWERMENT

Based on the fieldwork, observations and interviews conducted with key value chain actors in the Municipality of Durrës, the following data were identified regarding the **opportunities** that the production value chain of Autochthonous Agricultural Products offers, the respondents mentioned / described as follows:



**Increased demand** for Autochthonous Agricultural Products throughout the area. This is directly related to the variety of products. Some of the chain actors cultivate a product, others cultivate other types, which come as a specific request coming from the buyers (seed suppliers/sellers). For this reason, signing a contract with farmers is recommended for this sector. The increased demand also leads to the increased demand for skilled workers, most of them women. Therefore, establishing formal employment relations would lead to women gaining access to economic benefits.

Figure 33. Opportunities in the Value Chain of Autochthonous Agricultural Products.

**Existence of deep knowledge for the sector of Autochthonous Agricultural Products in the Municipality of Durrës.** As in some other areas of the country, in the region of Durrës, there is a long tradition in the cultivation of Autochthonous Agricultural Products

Currently, the sector of Autochthonous Agricultural Products is becoming an important sector for the agricultural economy of this municipality, while in the country the vegetable production sector has become the main leader, and has started to export to neighboring countries. Autochthonous Agricultural Products, which before the 1990s, were widely cultivated in Albania, constitute an important natural economic resource and especially the development potential, not yet fully exploited and sustainable. Farmers together with agricultural experts possess deep knowledge of this sector. According to the farmers, all the products produced from these areas have entered the market and there is no case that this product has not been accepted by the market.

**Favorable agro-ecological conditions for the cultivation of Autochthonous Agricultural Products.** The agro-ecological conditions of the area of the Administrative Units Rashbull, Xhafzotaj, Manëz and Sukth, are very favorable for the cultivation of Autochthonous Agricultural Products. The climate is suitable for their requirements. This climate is characterized by longer summers and more sunshine - two of the main elements favoring the cultivation of these plants. Soils are generally alluvial and with a low percentage of organic matter - another very favorable requirement for the "organic" production of Autochthonous Agricultural Products.

**Existence of guaranteed market.** The market for selling Autochthonous Agricultural Products is guaranteed and is the safest market compared to all other agricultural products. This market is consolidated and its demands have been growing. The market has the ability to attract any kind of Autochthonous Agricultural Products without any restrictions. Also, the growth and strengthening of Agritourism services has created a significant market for these products. All Agritourism actors, who were contacted, stated that although they have their own production of Autochthonous Agricultural Products, they cannot meet all the daily demand, so they have started to contract the farms nearby their premises.

**Investments made in some of the links of the Value Chain of Autochthonous Agricultural Products in the Municipality of Durrës.** In this municipality, essential investments have been made by various investors in terms of some elements of the value chain of Autochthonous Agricultural Products. The largest guaranteed markets for these products are seasonal markets built near the coastal areas (Like the one in Lalzi Bay, or in Hamallaj) for the summer period, where many vacationers are consumers of fruits and vegetables, always leaning towards Autochthonous Agricultural Products.

Large investments have also been made in Shkozë in terms of setting up the infrastructure for the collection and storage of Fruits and Vegetables, here collectors also collect limited quantities of Autochthonous Agricultural Products.

A number of donors have supported this agricultural sector throughout the transition period through investments or upgrades. Here we can mention USAID, GIZ, UNDP, FAO, Cooperazione Italiana, SIDA, SNV, etc. There are already pre-conditions to establish closer cooperation of women with each other in clusters. Clustering programs for women to strengthen their representation and enhance knowledge exchange, building capacity in advocacy and facilitation dialogue between women producers and municipality as well as to improve and make production processes easier, to take the product jointly to the consolidator to negotiate on price (especially led by female entrepreneurs possibly coming from other areas) – Associations related to Seedlings Collection, Associations of Fruit and Vegetable Producers.

**Other General Factors.** Among these factors we can mention:

- High number of families engaged in the cultivation of Autochthonous Agricultural Products
- Significant percentage of income from this sector in the structure of total income coming to Durrës farming families.
- Tendency to classify Autochthonous Agricultural Products as pure natural products and certified as organic.
- Significant unemployment.
- Growing demand for Autochthonous Agricultural Products in the market, where with some support for increasing the quality and standards of production, could increase competitiveness, as for these products there is the possibility of a natural cultivation without any impact from chemicals or urbanization.
- Preferred interest rate on Autochthonous Agricultural Products.
- Knowledge of some existing market links to be exploited.
- Existence of many unemployed agronomist specialists, who can be easily integrated as technical leaders or entrepreneurs in the business of production of Autochthonous Agricultural Products.

**Agricultural development strategy.** 10 years ago, the Albanian Government has defined the Autochthonous Agricultural Product, as one of the strategic resources for the development of agriculture. They are also included in the support schemes of the agricultural sector.

**The condition of farming families and their desire to get involved with the cultivation of the Autochthonous Agricultural Products.** The economic situation of many farming families

leaves much to be desired, especially in this municipality. There are many farmers who see these products as opportunities to provide enough income to support their living conditions and not emigration. Everywhere there are farming families who are ready to immediately start cultivating Autochthonous Agricultural Products in this municipality.

Generally, the work with the cultivation of Autochthonous Agricultural Products, both for cultivation and harvesting, is done on family basis. Generally, the cultivators or field workers are women and young girls and a very small percentage are men. Women everywhere in this municipality desire to get engaged in the cultivation of Autochthonous Agricultural Products.

### 5.4.1 VC CONSTRAINS

Regarding the Limitations that the value chain of Autochthonous Agricultural Products faces, they can be summarized as follows:

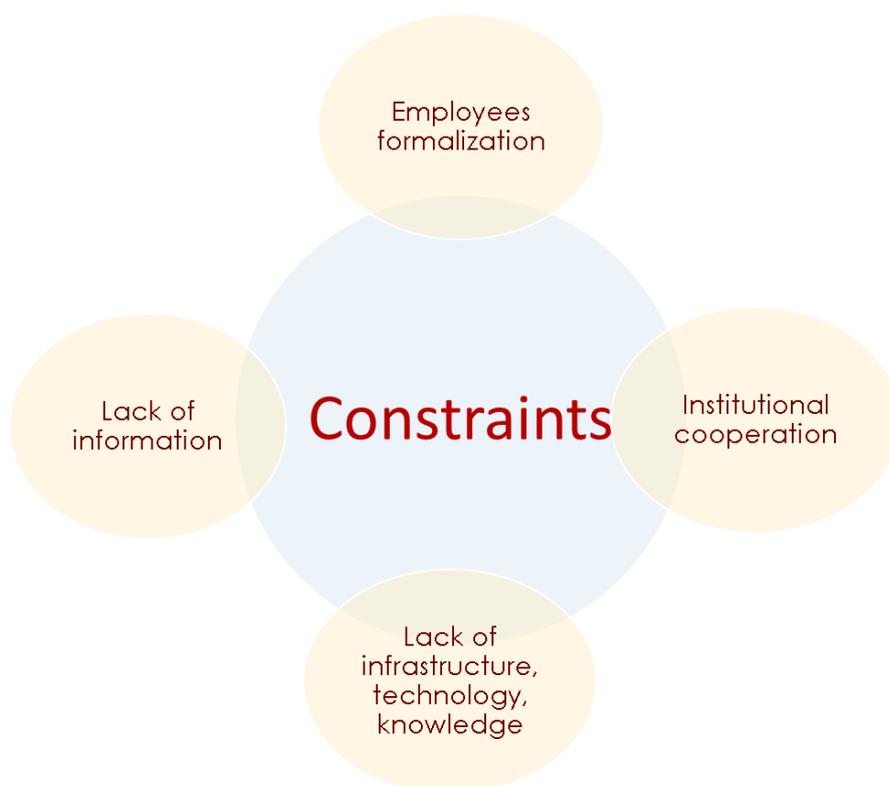


Figure 34: Constrains on the Value Chain of Autochthonous Agricultural Products.

**Formalization.** Most businesses operating in this sector are not officially registered. They are registered as farmers, having no specific field of operation. Most workers are not officially registered and employed in accordance with Albanian law, and therefore cannot benefit from subsidy schemes or other benefits.

**Institutional cooperation.** There is almost no form of cooperation among the relevant stakeholders in the sector; namely, the municipality, ARDA and farmers (cultivators of Autochthonous Agricultural Products). Some of the criteria set by ARDA cannot be easily met and not all categories of the population are included in national financing schemes.

There is also a lack of access to financial services through agricultural schemes with strong local contracts.

The session of the Working Group highlighted the existence of a significant lack of information provided by various relevant institutions for stakeholders in this sector. On the one hand, the municipality did not have complete information about initiatives and funding schemes (such as IPARD<sup>7</sup>) from which farmers can benefit and facilitate the way they operate; on the other hand, stakeholders did not have information on the conditions and criteria that must be met to participate in various trainings. All these restrictions reduce the level of attractiveness of the sector, as perceived mainly by young people in the Municipality of Durrës.

**Lack of infrastructure, technology and knowledge.** There is not suitable infrastructure for the collection, storage and selection Farmer groups and mostly individuals have known little about post-harvest operations (selection, packaging and storage). Post-harvest treatments have a major impact on the final quality and can be sources of contamination. In the Municipality of Durrës there are limited processing units (harvesting, separation, cleaning, sorting, packaging and storage) and often there is no proper environment for storage. Lack of infrastructure and post-harvest knowledge causes significant losses in the Municipality of Durrës.

**Lack of information mainly for individual farmers or small owners.** A good portion of Autochthonous Agricultural Products collectors have minimal or even outdated information about the smallholder's potential benefits: improved market access, improved technology, better risk management, increased trading competences, etc.

Other constraints identified during the analysis include: **climatic conditions, unresolved property issues, and lack of financial resources.**

Regarding the **Problems of Gender Inequality and the Inclusion of Women** in the value chain, the information obtained from the focus groups and interviews indicate that women are involved in most of the activities, especially in the processes of collection, cultivation, harvesting, selection and packaging, while also contribute to household chores. They possess the necessary basic skills, which have been acquired between generations (from one generation to the next, or by qualified family members), but need more specific skills, related to the processes of Autochthonous Agricultural Products or the use of modern technology, which would increase efficiency and coordination for women. Usually, the women involved are family members and are not formally employed in the business.

Regarding **Financing Opportunities**, the interviewees mentioned that the generated incomes from engaging in the cultivation of Autochthonous Agricultural Products is their only source of income. They perceive this business as a profitable business, especially if agreements are made with buyers, who can also secure the supply of inputs. However, the interviewees mentioned the fact that the income generated from this activity does not meet all their needs. They do not have access to financial resources, but they recognize the growing demand for organically grown Autochthonous Agricultural Products and have therefore held meetings in the past with large consolidators interested in investing in the

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7 The IPARD II funding scheme (Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance for Rural Development) started at the end of October 2019, includes Autochthonous Agricultural Products in its Measure 7 for "Farm Diversification and Business Development".

sector, particularly in this municipality, because the climate and soil are suitable for the cultivation of Autochthonous Agricultural Products.

#### 5.4.2 RATIONALE FOR SUPPORTING THE VC DEVELOPMENT

To a large extent, this sector relies on the family as a basis for cultivating Autochthonous Agricultural Products, without having the opportunity to turn into a productive industry. Among the main reasons why this sector is thought should be supported we can mention:

- The cultivation sector of Autochthonous Agricultural Products in the Municipality of Durrës is on the verge of extinction. Genetically modified plant crops with high productivity are dominating, also this sector. There is an excellent tradition of cultivating Autochthonous Agricultural Products which is fading. Young people and women are seeking to leave rural areas as a result of the lack of support for their alternatives.
- The culture of seedling production by the farmers themselves is diminishing every day due to the low cost of mass seedlings with high productivity, but which do not provide typical products with which the Albanian consumer is accustomed.
- The profit rate for these products, due to their high selling price, is significant.
- With a greater support from the state, foreign projects, donors or various organizations, farmers express interest in cultivating Autochthonous Agricultural Products, because this is a way, they could improve their living conditions.
- With a little marketing and the provision of "organic" certification, there are opportunities to find a market for their sale in both the city of Durrës and Tirana, which are the two largest and quality markets.
- The full support program starting from the provision of seedlings for the first year, the support for further production of seedlings, and ending with the provision of markets such as the local ones near Agritourism or providing the farmers access to the markets of the city of Durrës and Tirana is a necessity.

In terms of gender, through the interventions proposed in Chapter 6, the value of women's work in the Value Chain of the cultivation of Autochthonous Agricultural Products would be increased through

- ✓ *Training to improve skills for the cultivation of the Autochthonous Agricultural Products will reduce costs, increase product quality, and increase women's inclusion.*
- ✓ *Trainings in seedling processing technology increase food quality and safety, production capacity and sustainability, the importance of women in this chain, as well as reduce the risks of failure. With that said, mechanization and having women form clusters or associations may lead to lighter workload, as the production processes will become more efficient. Some of the women that can potentially get involved in this, are currently working far away from home in Durrës and Tirana, therefore bringing them closer to home will make their life easier and more convenient.*
- ✓ *Providing support with inputs strengthens the role of women in this chain and all VCs, increases their role in farm administration and representation, strengthens their role as important actors in the community, increases horizontal participation in VCs, etc.*

### 5.4.3 POTENTIAL GROUPS TO BE SUPPORTED

Currently, in the process of cultivation of Autochthonous Agricultural Products are identified as involved 40-45 families in the Municipality of Durrës. Each business (family) employs 2 to 5 workers. There is a possibility to increase the number of growers of Autochthonous Agricultural Products up to 100 families involved in this process. The locals also stated the intention to increase the variety of Autochthonous Agricultural Products to more than one type, thus diversifying their product.<sup>8</sup>

As per the requests of the local farmers, the goal is to have at least 50 farms establishing stable connections with local consumers or trade points in Tirana and Durrës. We have contacted a good part of them who have expressed their willingness to participate in a project for the cultivation of Autochthonous Agricultural Products in their territory. The groups of farmers that will open activities for the cultivation of Autochthonous Agricultural Products are in the Administrative Units of Rrashbull, Xhafzotaj, Manëz and Sukth of the Municipality of Durrës, which represent the areas with older tradition on cultivating quality Autochthonous Agricultural Products. The identified groups are respectively:

In the **Administrative Unit Xhafzotaj** 5 groups of farmers who can make available about 15 ha of land ready for the immediate cultivation of Autochthonous Agricultural Products.

In the **Administrative Unit Sukth** 8 groups of farmers who can make available about 23 ha of land ready for the immediate cultivation of Autochthonous Agricultural Products.

In the **Administrative Unit Manëz** 7 groups of farmers who can make available about 12 ha of land ready for the immediate cultivation of Autochthonous Agricultural Products.

In the **Administrative Unit Rrashbull** 3 groups of farmers who can make available about 7 ha of land ready for the immediate cultivation of Autochthonous Agricultural Products.

Areas they plant / will plant and with what products? There are different requirements for the types of Autochthonous Agricultural Products that farmers are looking to plant. Their request is based on:

- *lands that the group owns*
- *providing water for irrigation especially for some of the crops*
- *domestic market prices*
- *easy service to plants and plants resistance to diseases and parasites.*

From the interview of the three women, it results that the preferences are more for the cultivation of traditional vegetables.

From the contacts made, we anticipate that in the management of the activities for Autochthonous Agricultural Products, the participation of farmers in the representation level will be about 80% women and 20% men, while in terms of time they will be engaged in the process will be around these percentages:

- ✓ *Men will be about 30% of their time*
- ✓ *Women will be about 75% of their time*
- ✓ *Children in school will be about 10% of their time*

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8 Note: The IPARD II funding scheme (Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance for Rural Development) includes Autochthonous Agricultural Products in its Measure 7 for "Farm Diversification and Business Development".

In terms of guaranteeing the success of these women, they need support in their work and in particular, in early stages of their consolidation as they are now.

Based on the assessment of their situation and the SWOT analysis of the cultivation of Autochthonous Agricultural Products in the Municipality of Durrës, we propose that these groups of farmers be supported with:

**Increasing of their professional level.** In this regard it is required:

- **Ongoing technical assistance**, especially in the first year in terms of:
  - ✓ *Drafting the development plan*
  - ✓ *Drafting the development plan of each cultivation and harvesting link that will have to be followed throughout the year*
  - ✓ *Follow-up and advice on the processes of guaranteeing the "organic" production as well as the selection of the final product for the market*
  - ✓ *Consulting on the elements of cultivation of seedlings as a basis for the continuity of work in the coming years, in order to ensure the sustainability of authentic production.*
  - ✓ *Following up the marketing process until the product is delivered*
- **Trainings** for increasing the level of knowledge for the cultivation of Autochthonous Agricultural Products
  - ✓ *About the values of organic products and the methods of their cultivation*
  - ✓ *For know-how for practical elements of seedling cultivation*
  - ✓ *For the way of selection and storage of the product and avoidance of its losses*
  - ✓ *On the importance of "organic" certification and how practically all the elements related to it are carried out*
  - ✓ *For practical elements of marketing at the farm level*
- **Clustering programs** for women to strengthen their representation and enhance knowledge exchange, building capacity in advocacy and facilitation dialogue between women producers and municipality as well as to improve production processes jointly (especially led by the female entrepreneurs famous in the area) – Associations related to Seedlings Collection, of Fruit and Vegetables collectors, etc.

## 5.5 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR INTERVENTION

As we have analyzed above, based on their potential and the involvement and empowerment of women, the VC for the Autochthonous Agricultural Products was rated as the most important, with highest opportunities for women and as one that needs some intervention. With this in mind, the following recommendations are presented:

- **Implementation of contracts with farmers**, which can help farmers overcome market failures by establishing links between them and markets for the production of high value food products and thus guaranteeing a market for their products. Currently, the practice of contracts, as everywhere in the agricultural sector in our country, does not exist in the Municipality of Durrës. Today, in order to consolidate the production progress of Autochthonous Agricultural Products from on-farm cultivation to the final collector or seller, the latter use agreements on the type of product, the quantity it will produce, the implementation of a controlled protocol of agro-technical services to be performed to the products, including chemical fertilizer, parasite protection and product

consolidation and standardization. However, the contracts with farmers alone may be insufficient to improve the income of small households if contractors do not provide inputs, technical advice, and access to technology and input markets. Producers of Autochthonous Agricultural Products have expressed interest in learning more about cultivation and starting the cultivation of organic vegetables, especially if they receive seedlings from buyers, who have expressed willingness to do so as part of contracts with farmers.

- **Focus on agriculture**, which in the current situation faces some difficulties. Relevant institutions, especially the municipality, are providing training in sectors that are not attractive to the population, or that are not related to their activities. Consequently, they prove unsuccessful or the level of participants is very low. The municipality is mainly focused on the tourism sector (where there are not many promises, as resulted from the seminar and interviews), forgetting the focus on agriculture. Furthermore, there is a lack of knowledge on the existence of IPARD schemes and national financing schemes, which directly contribute to improving the conditions of the sector.
- **Marketing of Autochthonous Agricultural Products**. In recent years, there has been a trend of improving the marketing of Autochthonous Agricultural Products both everywhere in our country and in the Municipality of Durrës where there is a positive pressure from all actors due to increasing demand in the market for more and more quality products. The cultivation of Autochthonous Agricultural Products in the Municipality of Durrës is being viewed by farmers as an important natural economic resource and especially the development potential, not yet fully exploited and sustainable.
- **Development axes of the Municipality of Durrës**. The Municipality of Durrës should increase its attention in the following development directions:
  - ✓ **Preservation of agricultural land fund**: should be one of the priorities of the municipality. Informal and illegal constructions have not only reduced the area of agricultural land, but also endangered the rural and urban area mainly through the blockage of the Erzeni bed. Blocking construction permits and repertoire of land and the legal situation of land ownership is the first step to be taken in this area;
  - ✓ **Increasing the efficiency of agricultural production activities** with the aim of employing the rural population and controlling the territory. Currently, most of the agricultural production goes for own use in rural areas. Increasing yields would increase rural / per capita income. The municipality can influence through agricultural policies in terms of crop orientation, counseling, encouraging cooperation between villagers to increase the area of arable land i.e. cooperatives, and co-administration of the mechanical base;
  - ✓ **Establishment of markets & connecting roads** to encourage and support the value chain of agricultural products towards high value-added activities: construction of supporting infrastructure (rural roads, local & regional markets, etc.) and liaison with markets in large cities (Tirana & Durrës) and abroad contributes directly to the value chain of agricultural products.

The following section presents some general recommendations for the value chain of cultivation of Autochthonous Agricultural Products for the Municipality of Durrës and categorization according to their impact on the sector (short / medium / long term) and budget requirements (low / medium / high):

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE AUTOCHTHONOUS AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTS VALUE CHAIN							
NO.	RECOMMENDATIONS - AUTOCHTHONOUS AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTS VC	IMPACT			BUDGET		
		Short-term	Medium-term	Long-term	Low	Average	High
<b>1</b>	<b>PROFESSIONAL GROWTH OF CULTIVATOR LEVEL</b>						
	Ongoing technical assistance, especially in the first year, in terms of:						
1.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Technical assistance in negotiating with others</li> <li>✓ Drafting of agro-technology process that should be followed during the whole cultivation process. Follow-up and advice on agro-technological processes of cultivation</li> <li>✓ Consulting for post-harvest items</li> </ul>	X			X		
	Trainings for raising the level of knowledge for cultivation Autochthonous Agricultural Products:						
1.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ For the values of the products they cultivate and know-how and the cultivation technique</li> <li>✓ For the method of harvesting and avoiding losses of Autochthonous Agricultural Products</li> <li>✓ For post-harvest treatment elements</li> <li>✓ On the importance of the final hygiene of the product and how it is practically achieved.</li> </ul>	X			X		
1.3	Clustering programs for women to strengthen their representation and enhance knowledge exchange, improve production processes			X	X		
<b>2</b>	<b>SMALL GRANTS FOR TECHNOLOGY IMPROVEMENT</b>						
	Support with basic and technological elements						
2.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Supporting elements used for planting Autochthonous Agricultural Products in the field such as pickets, measuring tape, twine, planting elements, etc.</li> <li>✓ Saplings according to the development plan drafted in cooperation with the technical consultancy</li> <li>✓ Protective products according to the development plan drafted with</li> </ul>		X		X		

## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE AUTOCHTHONOUS AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTS VALUE CHAIN

NO.	RECOMMENDATIONS - AUTOCHTHONOUS AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTS VC	IMPACT			BUDGET		
		Short-term	Medium-term	Long-term	Low	Average	High
	<p>technical consultancy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Packaging elements for the final product in order to preserve the product values of Autochthonous Agricultural Products</li> <li>✓ Drip irrigation systems to demonstrate to farmers the values and advantages of innovative technologies</li> </ul>						
2.2	<p>Support for the production of seedlings for the following years.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Trainings on know-how and seedling cultivation technique.</li> <li>✓ Supporting elements used for planting seedlings in mini greenhouses such as pickets, measuring tape, twine, etc.</li> <li>✓ Auxiliary elements for the construction of mines, plasmas, iron rods, connecting elements, etc.</li> <li>✓ Organic fertilizers and protective products according to the seedling development plan drafted with the technical consultancy</li> </ul>	X				X	
3	<b>CERTIFICATION OF QUALITY AND SAFETY STANDARDS</b>						
3.1	Awareness session on the importance of certification in reaching high value markets and the steps needed to be certified.			X	X		
3.2	Manufacturer support in certification with HACCP and Organic, as the most basic requirements from consumers.			X	X		
4	<b>AWARENESS FOR OPPORTUNITIES IN THE AGRICULTURE SECTOR FOCUSING ON AUTOCHTHONOUS AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTS</b>						
4.1	Information and awareness sessions about opportunities in the agricultural sector. Raising awareness of the economic importance of the Autochthonous Agricultural Products sector and consumer demand in order to stimulate their cultivation.			X	X		
4.2	Information and awareness sessions on IPARD funding schemes and other national schemes.			X	X		

Table17. Recommendations for the Value Chain of Autochthonous Agricultural Products

## 6. REFERENCES

- "General Local Plan of the Municipality of Durrës (GLP) - Territorial Development Plan (TDP)" Draft.
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# EMPOWER WOMEN EARTHQUAKE RECOVERY

Gender Sensitive Value Chain Analysis (GSVCA)  
in the Municipality of Durrës

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