



# GENDER SENSITIVE POST-EARTHQUAKE RECOVERY AND RECONSTRUCTION PROJECT

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

DECEMBER 2021



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

December 2021

The Gender Sensitive Value Chain Analysis (GSVCA) in the Municipality of Kurbin 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 Lezhë, in both 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, psychological assistance and other services to girls and women in the affected areas

The GSVCA in the Municipality of Kurbin 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>.

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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.

The focus of this study is the practical analysis of the main value chains in the Municipality of Kurbin, from the perspective of the gender attribute. The main purpose of the gender-sensitive value chain analysis is to provide the municipality of Kurbin with practical recommendations that affect the population of the municipality as a whole (with a special focus on women in rural areas), that will create employment or self-employment of women, strengthen their role in selected *value chains* (VC), 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 Kurbin.

*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 VCs in the Municipality of Kurbin. 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, youngsters from all groups, aiming at the growth and sustainability of the (green) environmental economy, as well as their equal participation in digitalization.*

- o *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.*
- o *Increasing the access of women and youngsters from all groups (to financial services and products, as well as to productive resources.*
- o *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).

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 about the abilities of women 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, are mostly employed in the agricultural sector. 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 (Zhillima, Edvin et al., 2016).

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<sup>3</sup> Men and Women in Albania 2021. INSTAT

<sup>4</sup> Men and Women in Albania 2021. INSTAT

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 divide 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, 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. She 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, Krujë, Tiranë, Kamëz, Kavajë, Vorë, Rogozhinë, Kurbin, Mirditë and Lezhë, both in rural and urban areas.

The Gender Sensitive Recovery and Reconstruction Project, which is implemented in close cooperation with the Municipality of Kurbin, 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 Kurbin Municipality, 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 METHODOLOGY

The selected method for evaluation has been adapted from the methodologies successfully applied in some 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 Kurbin, 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.

Data and information regarding the general description of the Municipality of Kurbin, its economic development and the main sectors of economic potential are taken from the main reports prepared in the framework of the "General Local Plan of the

Municipality of Kurbin (GLP)", respectively "Territorial Development Plan (TDP)", and "Territorial Strategy" (TS), approved by the Decision of the National Council of the Territory no. 6 dated 08.02.2017; as well as the report "Strategic Environmental Assessment of Kurbin (SEA)". The information was also supplemented with data from the official website of the Municipality of Kurbin and official publications and statistical information from the Institute of Statistics in Albania. The information was updated and the data were obtained and processed 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 Kurbin, the information was obtained from the "Volume A Report of the Post-Disaster Needs Assessment of Albania (PDNA)", developed in 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, field research, were used to select sectors, including group consultations and discussion sessions with municipal representatives, producers and experts, and 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 and participants from the supporting organizations and field coordinators of the project aiming 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, opportunities and constraints and get a clear picture and understanding of value chains, and where they were identified as the main areas of focus are the value chains in the following sectors: **Agriculture**, with a focus on fruit and vegetable products, the cultivation of medicinal and aromatic plants; **Livestock**, with a focus on goat breeding and their dairy products processing; as well as cultural and culinary **Tourism**.

In the second phase, field visits, observations of activities, questionnaires and semi-structured interviews were conducted with questionnaires adapted for different actors in the value chain, namely: with the representatives of the MAP companies Filipi CO. and Agro Herbal, and women farmers and staff of the above-mentioned companies.

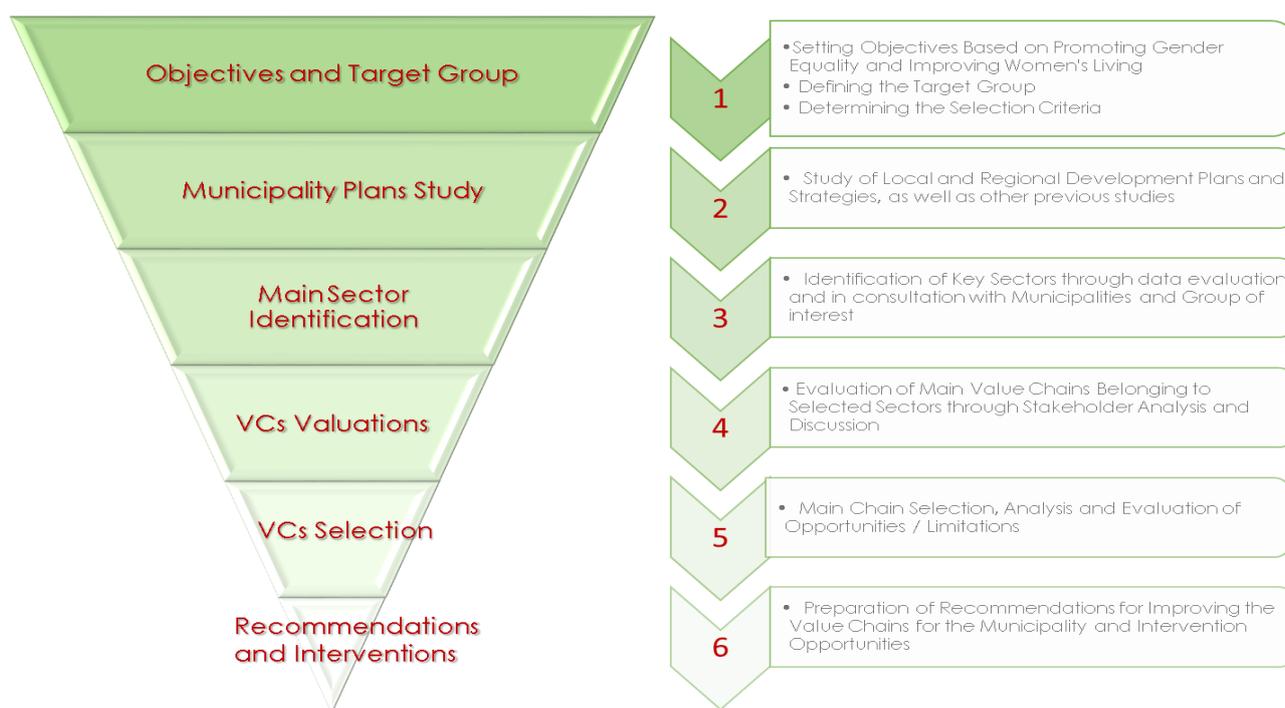


Figure 1. Methodology Approach

In general, these steps were followed in the process:

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: Low-income of women and men 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 through the evaluation of various reports, data and publications.
4. **Evaluation of VCs:** Evaluation of the main value chains belonging to the selected sectors through the brain storming, discussions and 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 recommendations for improving the value chain for the municipality and the possibilities of intervention.

**Limitations of Research Work.** The focus of this report is the practical analysis of the main value chains in the Municipality of Kurbin, 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. 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 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 sensitive value chain analysis 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 at improving the situation of women themselves. The purpose of this study is to provide the municipality of Kurbin with practical recommendations that affect the population of the selected municipality as a whole that would consequently lead to the improvement of the conditions of women in the municipality. It is important to bear in mind, that in Albania and specific municipalities analyzed, the situation in the value chains is often so difficult (and poverty is so high) that any overall improvement and sustainable development regarding value chains would lead to higher incomes for the family, which would automatically mean betterment of the conditions of 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 interests as well as the interviews conducted are representative of 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 KURBIN MUNICIPALITY

Based on the Law No. 139/2015 on Territorial Division in the Republic of Albania, for Statistical Purposes NUTSII, the Municipality of Kurbin is part of the Northern Region. It borders on the north with the Municipalities of Lezhë and Mirditë, on the east with Mat, on the south with Krujë and Durrës, and on the west, with the Adriatic Sea. The center of this municipality is the city of Laç.

This municipality consists of 4 administrative units, which are: Laç, Mamurras, Milot and Fushë-Kuqja. The municipality has under its administration 3 cities, Laç, Milot and Mamurras, and 27 villages. The following table presents some of the main administrative and demographic indicators of the Municipality of Kurbin.



Figure 2: Location of Kurbin Mun.

Data	Value	National Ranking	Ratio to national values	Av. national value
Region according to NUTSII	Northern	-	-	-
Surface	291 km <sup>2</sup>	41	1.03%	464.72 km <sup>2</sup>
Population by Civil Status	74,807	16	1.66%	73,876
Population according to the 2011 Census	46,291	16	1.65%	45,908.64
Density by Civil Status	257	15	-	159
Density 2011	159	17	-	19
Number of AUs	3	50	-	7.67
Number of Cities	3	-	-	-
Number of Villages	27	-	-	-

Table 1: Main Administrative-Demographic data of Kurbin Municipality.

The territory of the Municipality of Kurbin, has a diverse terrain, with plains in the western part, mountains in the eastern part while in the north lies the valley of Mat. The area is traversed by the river Mat, which is 115 km long and its catchment area is 2441 km<sup>2</sup> and average height about 746 m above sea level. The eastern part of this province is almost entirely mountains in which there are two mountain ranges that run almost parallel to each other, one of which is the eastern Skanderbeg mountain range (22 km long), while the other western mountain range is the Krujë-Dajt. The two mountain ranges are divided in the middle by the Hurdhaza River that originates from Skanderbeg Mountain in Vinjollë, while the western part is a plain. Skanderbeg Mountain starts from Shkopet, passes to the top of Mëlleza (1123 m above sea level) and continues with the top of Hith 1316 m above sea level, reaching the highest point at the top of the lake (1724 m). The western mountain range has the highest point at the top of Kunora above Milot (745 m) followed closely by the top of Suka (675 m).

The territory of the Municipality of Kurbin is dominated by the Mediterranean climate and it has the coastline, fertile plains, low hills, mountain ranges over 700 m above sea level and dense forests. The Mediterranean climate with hot and dry summers and mild and cool winters is typical for the plain and hilly area, while in the mountainous area, it snows in winter. Characteristic for each season of the year are the strong winds that blow from the northeast and east and are directed by natural corridors and mountain slopes as well as the result of raising of water levels of the Mat River by the construction of hydropower basins, where their speed reaches up to 100 km / h especially in the winter period.

Kurbin is located 45 km from the capital, 65 km from the port of Durrës, 20 km from the port of Shëngjin and 40 km from the Mother Teresa National Airport. The city of Milot is the connecting node with all the provinces of Northern and Northeastern Albania as a crossroads of national roads. In its territory there is a coastline that still remains unutilized while it offers very suitable resources for the development of tourism and where you can spend pleasant holidays (Patok Beach and Adriatic Beach).

The name Kurbin in the historical documentation is found in 1457 Curbino, 1467 Kurbin. In 1689, on a map of the Italian geographer Giacomo Cantelli, the name Corvino is found. This map dedicated to Gjon Fracesk Albani, 11 years before Pope Clement XI originally from Laçi, Ndre Mjeda, connects the origin of the name from the ancient Illyrian tribe Karavante, before the Roman occupation, with the capital Karavante, which is thought to have been to the place called Djetra e Selites.

In the medieval period, Kurbin was included in the Principality of Arbri, which is known as the first feudal state formation of the Albanians since the end of the XII century. In the XII-th century, the province was the principality of the Skuraj, which had greatly expanded, as far as Vlora, under Prince Alexander Skura. Skuraj became a strong military base of Skanderbeg, during the Skanderbeg wars and subsequent wars for freedom and independence. The Kurbin Uprising of 1903-1906 is undoubtedly the most vivid historical fact of the resistance with weapons in the hands of the Kurbin patriots.

Under the old administrative organization, Kurbin had 16 villages. Skuraj, Nuajë, Vinjollë, Milot, Malbardhë, Shullaz, Selitë, Gjonë, Laç, Daulë, Mafsheq, Shëmri, Gallata, Shkretë, Delbnisht, Zhejë. Over time some of them have seen shrinking in number of population and therefore have joined their center or neighboring villages as happened with Daula, Logapaq, Logorec, Prodan and Shkjez which today are preserved as neighborhoods of the village Selita. Ferrë-Skuraj and Shkopeti merged with Skuraj in to a single village. Mamurras, although it was part of Kurbin, was not included in the administrative unit of this municipality. In the administrative organization of 1921 Kurbin was a municipality of the sub-prefecture of Krujë in the prefecture of Durrës. The center of Kurbin municipality was Milot, which had its Gendarmerie Post Office, the Civil Registry Office, the Post Office and the administration. In 1945-1990, the province of Kurbin was divided into two localities (Milot and Mamurras) which were included in Krujë Municipality. Nuaja, Shkreta, Mafsheqi and Shëmërija villages were shifted under the Municipality of Krujë while Ferrë-Shkopeti and Shkopeti under the Municipality of Mat. In 1956, two new villages were created (Sanxhak 2 km south of Laç and Drita 1 km north of Mamurras), in which the inhabitants from Bushkashi settled, whose lands were flooded after the construction of the Ulza hydropower plant. In 1957, the Adriatic village was established as a residential center for political persecuted. Two villages were also created, Katund ii Ri just outside Mamurras and Dukagjin on west of Bushnesh from the relocation of residents from the Dukagjini highlands of Shkodra, who worked to deforest marshy lands and open canals. After 1992, Ferrë - Shkopeti and Shkopeti were returned to the administrative jurisdiction of Kurbin district and respectively the municipality of Milot. The population in the district of Kurbin at that time reached 74,000 inhabitants, and it was a heterogeneous population settled in mainly after the construction of the Superphosphate plant in the city of Laç. The autochthonous area lies mainly in the highlands of the district from Skuraj, Miloti, Gallata, Vinjolli, Daula, Selita, Mali I Bardhë, Delnishti, Shullazi, Laci, Gjormi, Zheja, etc., while the town of Laç and a part of the Fushë-Kuqe area are inhabited by those settled during the twentieth century.

## 2.1 VISION AND STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES OF KURBIN MUNICIPALITY

The development vision of the Municipality of Kurbin, for 2030 is formulated as follows:

*"The Municipality of Kurbin will be a service and processing center, contemporary and competitive, based along the trans-European axis Albania-Kosovo (E851) and will be developed as a center of alternative forms of tourism, based on its outstanding cultural reserves and natural resources"<sup>5</sup>.*

The strategy for achieving this vision is based on four strategic objectives as follows:

- **Strategic Objective 1:** Economic revitalization of the area through the use of key position.
- **Strategic Objective 2:** Protection and promotion of cultural heritage.
- **Strategic Objective 3:** Preservation and Sustainable Management of Environment and Resources.
- **Strategic Objective 4:** Improving the quality of life of the inhabitants

For the implementation of the Vision and Strategic Objectives realization, the Municipality will lead local development towards the stimulation of the tourism sector, taking advantage of the rich cultural reserves, the special architectural heritage of the Municipality in combination with its natural resources by identifying the key position of the Municipality as a bridge of communication between the coast and the inland regions of the country.

The municipality is planning to move towards the development of the territory and is aiming at highlighting the economic values of the three above-mentioned bands, both horizontally and vertically:

- a. In the horizontal direction, creating relationships and collaborations between the tourism resources of the coastline area and the urban area at the foot of the mountain. The induction of the tourism sector, in turn, promotes the short chain of local food production and the income from agriculture and livestock of the inland area of the territory.*
- b. In the vertical direction, along the three distinct areas across the territory of the municipality, in order to use the economies of scale and spill-over that will occur from the use of tourist resources and food production activities.*

The Municipality of Kurbin also aims to support the agricultural sector in the areas with prominent rural characteristics and where there is a desire and willingness to maintain their productive activity, by strengthening rural activities and ecological methods for the production of traditional products through the creation of agritourism units (such as rural farms with livestock, gastronomy, etc.).

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5 General Local Plan of the Municipality of Kurbin.

## 2.2 DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE

According to the 2011 Census of the Institute of Statistics (INSTAT), the Municipality of Kurbin has a population of 46,291 inhabitants, while according to the civil registry it has 72,987 inhabitants that constitute approximately 34.5% of the total population of Lezhë County or about 2% of the population of the Republic of Albania. With an area of 269.03 square kilometers, the population density according to the 2011 Census data is 172 inhabitants km<sup>2</sup>, while according to the Civil Registry, the density is 271 inhabitants km<sup>2</sup>. Based on the data of CENSUS 2011, in the Municipality of Kurbin live 13,787 families with an average family size of approximately 3.36 members. The data shows that large shifting demographic movements have occurred throughout the municipality, marking a population decline of 42.34%.

Based on the 2011 Census data, approximately 50% of the population or 23,182 inhabitants are female. The age group 15-64 years constitutes the largest number of the population, almost 66% of the population, both female and male. Table 2 provides the general population data divided for each Administrative Unit by age group, while Table 3 provides this data disaggregated by gender.

Administrative Unit	Total	Age Group		
		0-14	15-64	+ 65
Laç	17,086	3,927	11,432	1,727
Mamurras	15,284	3,654	10,066	1,564
Fushë Kuqe	5,460	1,202	3,625	633
Milot	8,461	1,975	5,532	954
<b>Total Mun. of Kurbin</b>	<b>46,291</b>	<b>10,758</b>	<b>30,655</b>	<b>4,878</b>

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

Administrative Unit	No. of Villages	No. Of Families	Total Population	Gender	
				Male	Female
Laç	1	4,547	17,086	8,445	8,641
Mamurras	7	5,117	15,284	7,712	7,572
Fushë Kuqe	5	1,637	5,460	2,714	2,746
Milot	14	2,486	8,461	4,238	4,223
<b>Total Mun. of Kurbin</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>13,787</b>	<b>46,291</b>	<b>23,109</b>	<b>23,182</b>

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

Figures 4 and 5 below show the composition of the population divided by gender and age group for the Municipality of Kurbin in total and divided by gender for each Administrative Unit.

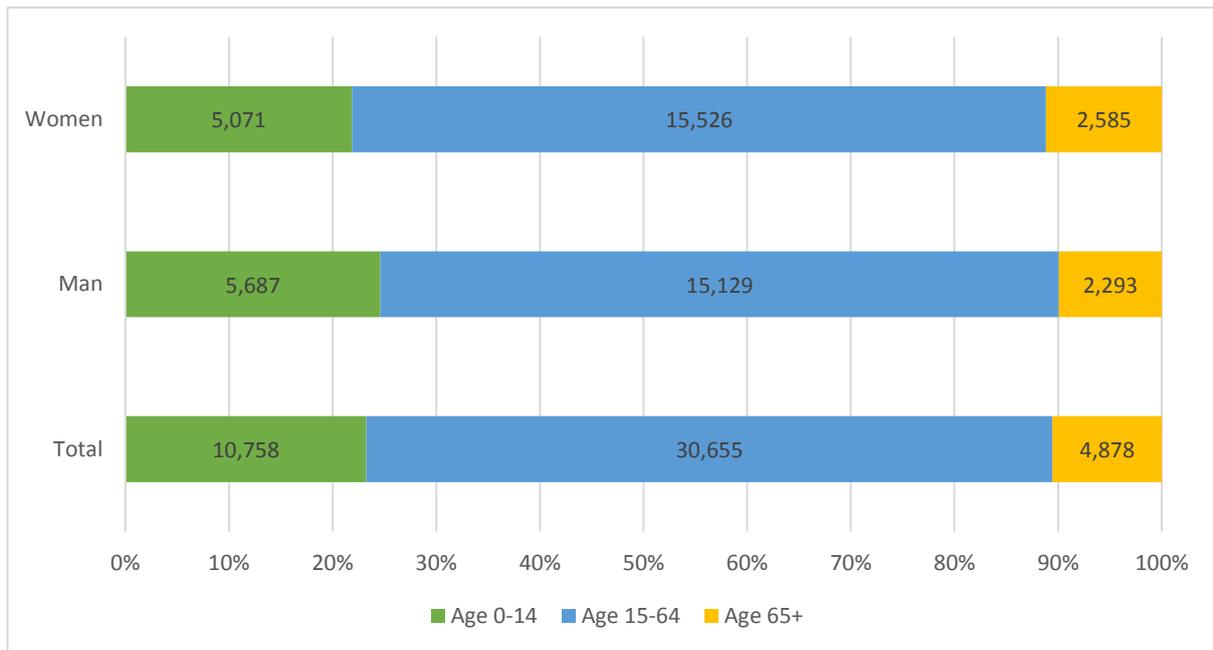


Figure 4: Population in % of Kurbin Municipality divided by gender and age group. (Source CENSUS 2011)

According to the same source, we have the following distribution of the population according to the civil status for each Administrative Unit.

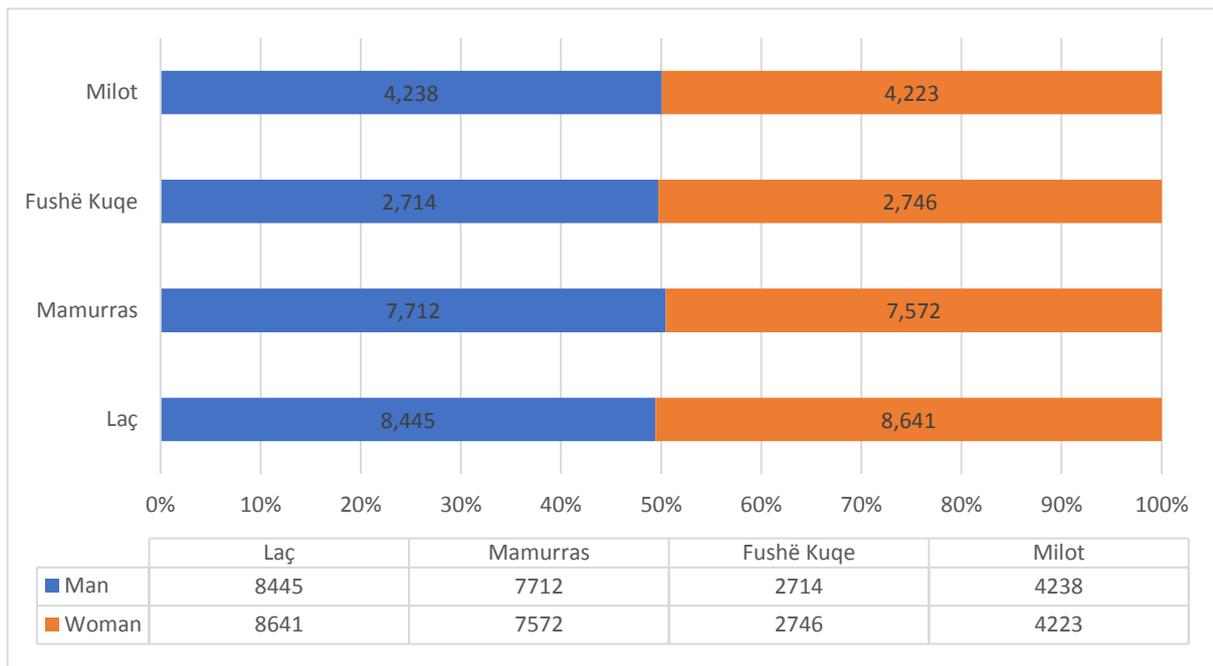


Figure 5: Population of Kurbin Municipality by AUs in % disaggregated by gender. (Source: CENSUS 2011)

Administrative Unit	Marital Status			
	Single	Married	Divorced	Widow
Fushë Kuqe	2,477	2,666	26	291
Mamurras	7,790	8,354	106	836
Laç	6,932	7,579	53	720
Milot	3,922	4,106	37	396
<b>Total Municipality of Kurbin</b>	<b>21,121</b>	<b>22,705</b>	<b>222</b>	<b>2,243</b>

Table 4: Data on the Civil Status of the population of Municipality of Kurbin AUs. (Source INSTAT CENSUS 2011)

## 2.3 ECONOMIC PROFILE

Kurbin Municipality has a natural environment characterized by: diverse range of terrain, climate and microclimate, with accessible plain areas, diverse forest formations, and wetland areas connected with littoral and wet beaches from the Adriatic Sea, mineral and groundwater rich formations, as well as a rich hydrographic network. This broad typology enables the division of the territory of Kurbin Municipality into 5 main areas:

- **Coastal area**, which includes the entirety of lands along the Adriatic Sea, characterized by sandy beaches, lagoons or wetlands with various forms of "protected areas" such as the Patoku nature reserve park can be mentioned.
- **Agricultural Lowland** is characterized by a plain land and in this area live about 62% of the population, but with a downward trend. Over the last 10 years the number of rural populations is decreasing in comparison to the urban population. Before the '90s, for the drainage of the agricultural land was used a well-managed system, consisting of underground canals, drainage canals and pumping stations. Currently, the system is already quite damaged and its condition is almost critical.
- **Infrastructure Corridor** passes through the agricultural lowlands and contains the main road axis of Albania.
- **The Urban System** is mainly situated the at the mountain ranges and includes a series of urban centers located mainly along the old national road.
- **Mountainous area**, which includes both the western side of the mountain ranges that descend towards the plains, as well as the valleys located in the inland area. This area represents an ethno-cultural and natural tourist reserve to be used for touristic purposes.

From an economic standpoint, the most developed sectors are the agriculture, forestry and fishing with about 32.0% of total Gross Value Added. Trade, transport and services are also important sectors with about 14.5% of the total GVA, while other sectors have less significant values. In terms of industry, in the territory of the Municipality of Kurbin operate many businesses. It should be noted that industrial activities have a high and significant environmental impact in terms of ecosystem quality and flood risk.

Based on official data obtained from the statistical database of INSTAT, at the end of 2020 in the Municipality of Kurbin there were 607 active enterprises, which are 0.36% of all businesses registered in Albania. The number of these businesses, as noted in Figure 6, in the last 5 years is almost constant with a variation of +/- 1.9%.

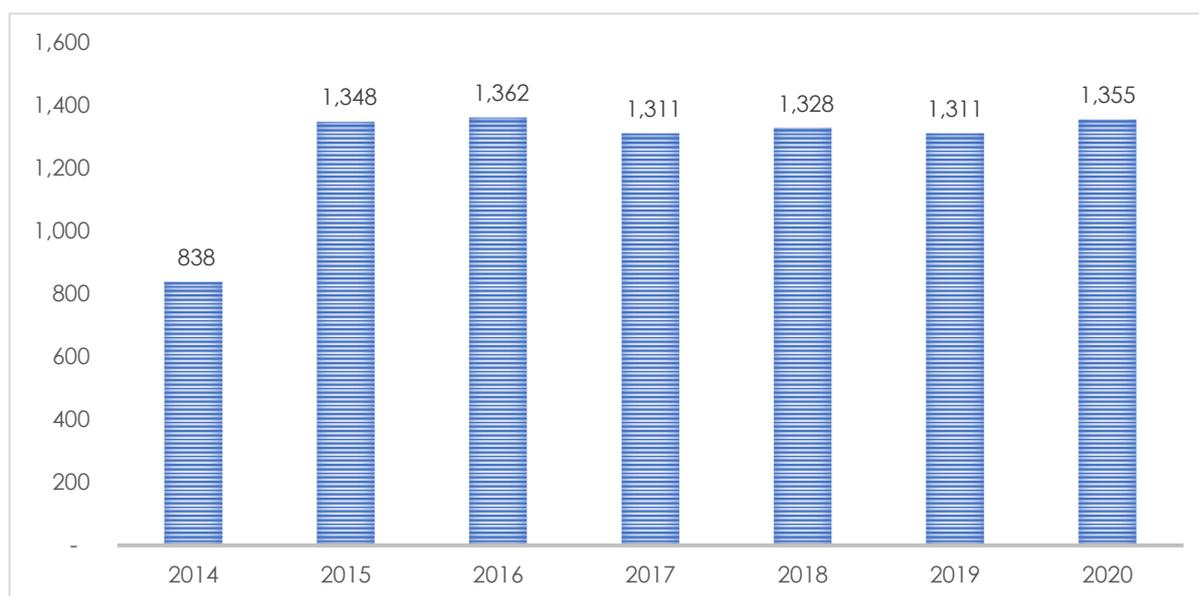


Figure 6: Changing in the number of businesses over the years.

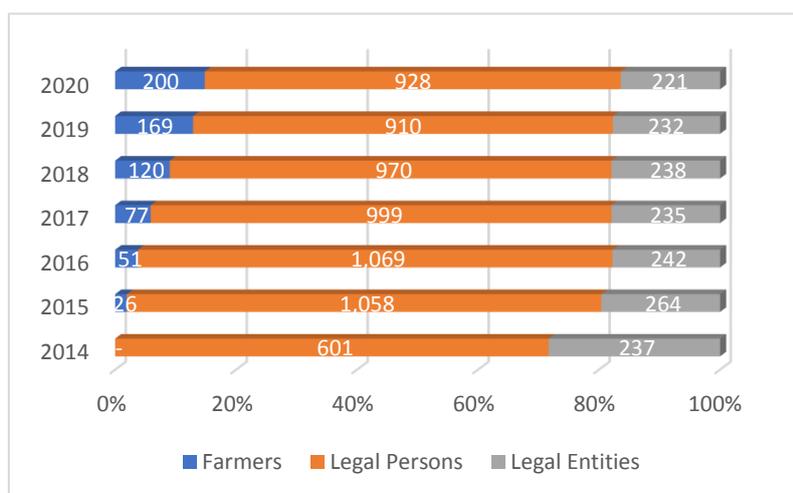


Figure 7: Percentage ratio of businesses by legal form over the years.

Based on the legal form these businesses are divided into:

- i) 200 Agricultural Farms;
- ii) 928 Legal Persons; and,
- iii) 221 Legal Entities.

It is an increasing trend of agricultural enterprises by about 4 times and a small gradual decrease of other businesses, mainly Legal persons.

The predominance of the Business Form as a Legal Person and Farmer is over 80%, is also reflected in the small number of employees in the private sector in this Municipality. Looking at the business structure in terms of number of employees only 66 businesses or 4.87% of them have over 10 employees, while about 90% of businesses have less than 4 employees

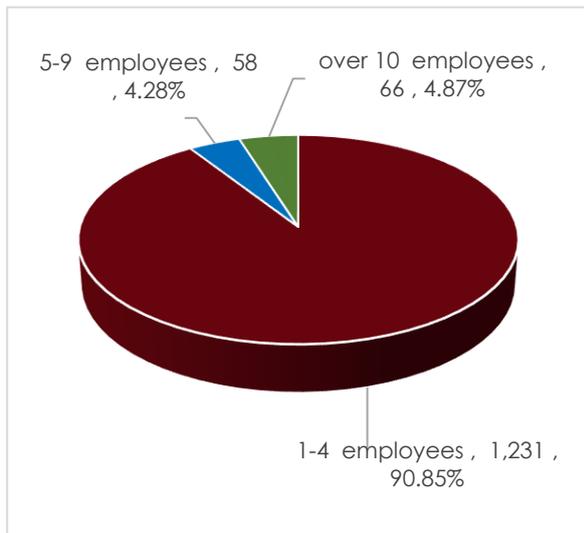


Figure 8: Number of Businesses grouped according to the number of employees. (Source: INSTAT)

According to the unofficial information obtained from the Municipality of Kurbin, there are over 30,000 citizens or over 9,800 families are living in the villages of this municipality. Obviously, the average number of farms should have been about 40 times higher. There are a small number of registered agricultural farms, only 200, this is another indicator of the informality that exists in this municipality.

Today only about 13.72% of businesses registered in Kurbin Municipality are run by women. Regarding the management of the businesses by women in this municipality, there are significant changes in the number of businesses run by women,

in the last 5 years. After a continuous increase in annual levels of approximately 30%, in 2018 and 2019 there is an annual decrease in levels of 20%. In 2020, we have a halt to this reduction and a minimum increase of 3%, as shown in Figures 9 and 10 below:

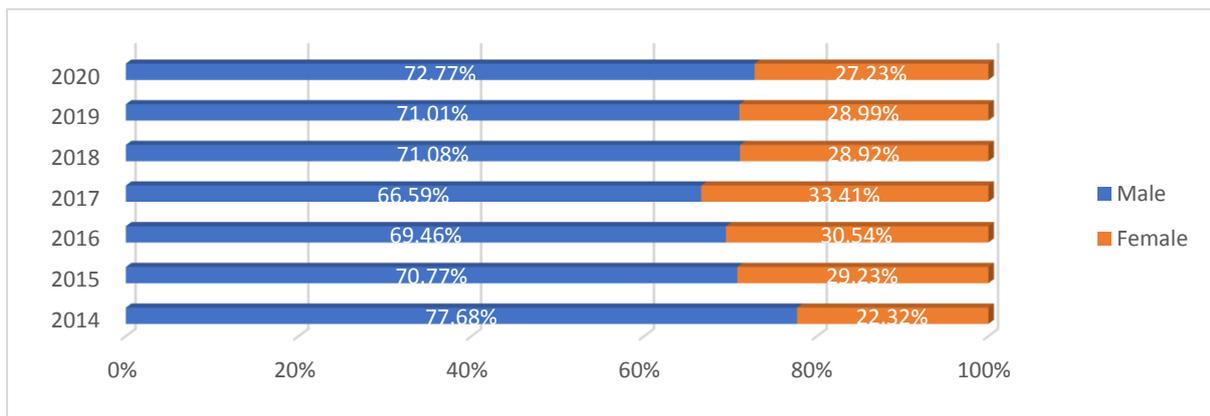


Figure 9: Percentage ratio of businesses by gender of administration / ownership.

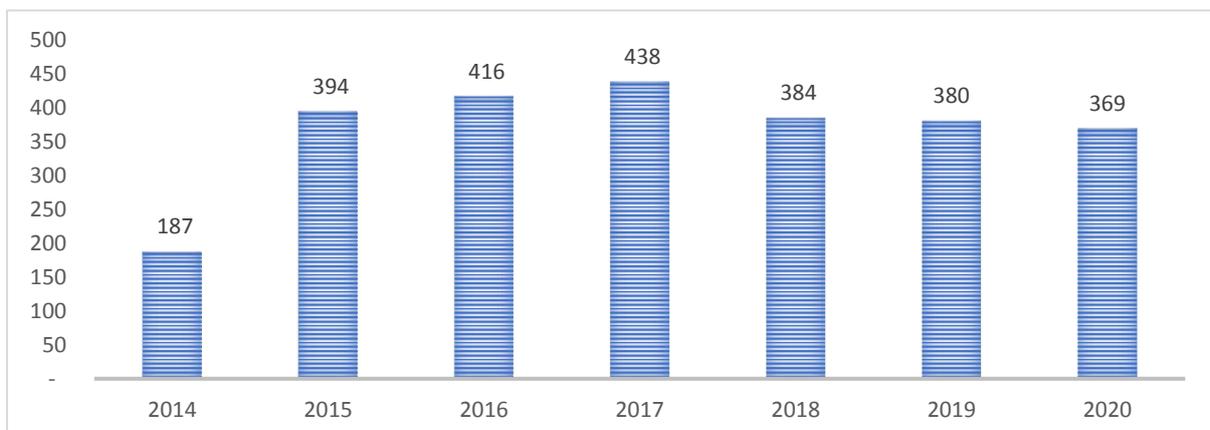


Figure 10: Changing in the number of businesses managed by women over the years.

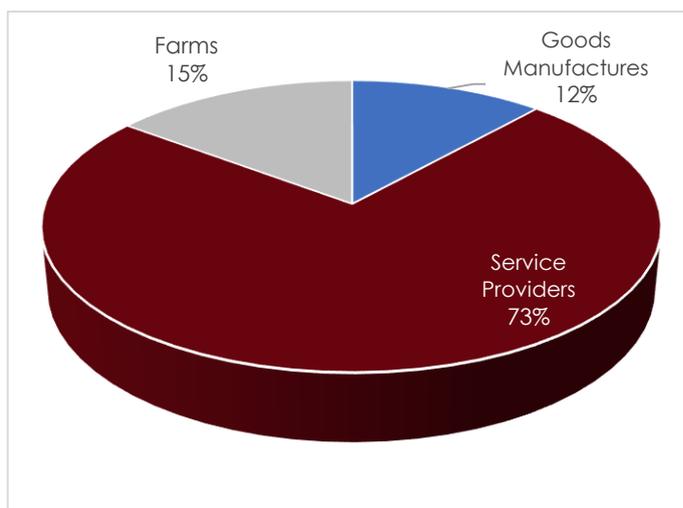


Figure 11: Ratio to the number of businesses by main sectors. (Sources: INSTAT and Kurbin Municipality)

According to the data of the local revenue office, in the Municipality of Kurbin 1,355 active enterprises at the end of 2020 are divided by main sectors as shown in Figure 11, into: i) 200 Agricultural Farms; ii) 158 Goods Manufacturing Enterprises; and iii) 997 Service Providers.

**Agriculture.** The Agriculture Sector, due to the fact that over 60% of the population of the Municipality of Kurbin lives in rural areas, is the most important sector of the economy of this

municipality. As revealed by the research, this sector, as everywhere in Albania, is also the most informal sector. In 2020, we see only 200 officially registered farmers who, as can be seen from figure 11, constitute only 15% of all businesses registered in the Municipality of Kurbin.

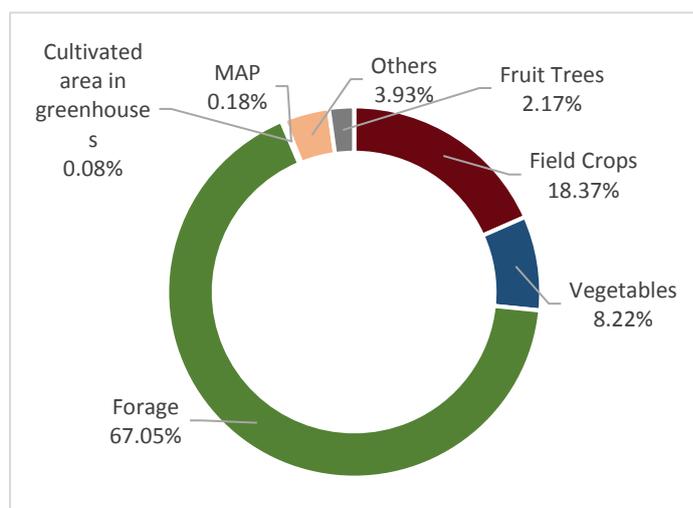


Figure 12: Structure of Agricultural Crop Groups (Source: Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, and Kurbin Municipality)

According to the cadastral office, the agricultural land fund of 9,762 ha is divided into 7,951 ha of arable land and 1,811 ha of orchards, of which 979 ha are vineyards, while the pastures are divided into 138 natural ha and 16 cultivated ha. The area of agricultural land in the Municipality of Kurbin makes up 44% of the territory of the whole municipality. In general, the farmers of Kurbin have enough land, but the ownership is very fragmented and this is one of the factors why agriculture does not see an intensive development.

The area of arable land (planted) in 2020 is 7,616 Ha or about 78% of agriculture land. Comparing to nationwide situation, the area of the land planted in the Municipality of Kurbin constitutes only 1.81% of the total area planted. This low percentage, apart from the phenomenon related to land ownership, also comes as a result of the lack of irrigation opportunities due to damages to the irrigation and drainage systems, the difficulty of farmers in securing key inputs and adequate mechanization. It should be noted that not all production chain links exist for different agricultural products.

In terms of agricultural crops are cultivated grains, vegetables, potatoes and beans, viticulture, fodder, fruit trees and nuts. Here the main weight is borne by fodder. Also, vineyards are widespread due to appropriate climatic conditions and production chain security.

Fodder is cultivated in over 65% of the area. Based on the terrain characteristics of this municipality, where a considerable part of its territory is totally plains, the field plants in the Municipality of Kurbin represent an important agricultural activity, which are the second in weight in the planted areas. The third crop is vegetables, although there are very good conditions for the cultivation of vegetable crops. In the Municipality of Kurbin farmers plant more of the first vegetable crops and a small area of about 12% is planted with second vegetable crops. The planting of secondary crops should be stimulated in the Municipality, because when the time comes to harvest them, the market has greater demand and as a result farmer can realize a significant income. This vegetable production is mainly used for the needs of farming families and its surpluses go only to the regional market of this municipality, or to the markets of Lezhë Region. Vineyards are also widespread due to the favorable climatic conditions and the security of the production chain. It is worth noting that the main problem for the development of the agricultural sector is the lack of adequate irrigation systems.

**Industry.** Until the 1990s, in the Municipality of Kurbin, namely in the town of Laç, operated the industry of Superphosphate and Copper enrichment plants, which were the reason for the establishment of the city.

Today, there are some slight developments in the light industry, in terms of processing livestock products and fruits. These developments are still in their infancy and in most cases are represented by family-run businesses. This industry is not yet formalized and cannot provide the proper certifications for the standards required for their selling in the local and national market or to ensure their export.

Manufacturing Industry during the last 5 years shrunk at 20% rate, a significant change

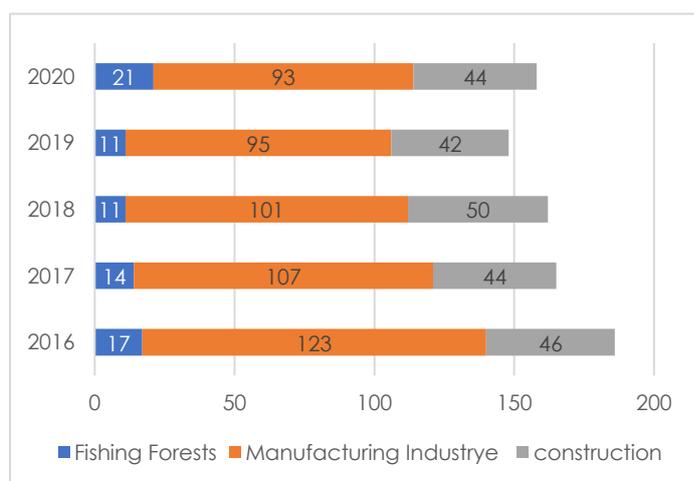


Figure 13: Manufacturing Industry Structure by 3 official classifications over the last 5 years. (Source: INSTAT and Kurbin Municipality)

that reveals the difficulties that this municipality is going through in terms of economic growth and development.

This decline is observed since 2018, but it is more significant during 2019. This indicator shows that the manufacturing industry did not go into decline for the reason of two major factors such as the earthquake of November 26, 2019 and the C-19 pandemic during 2020 but that the trend has existed earlier.

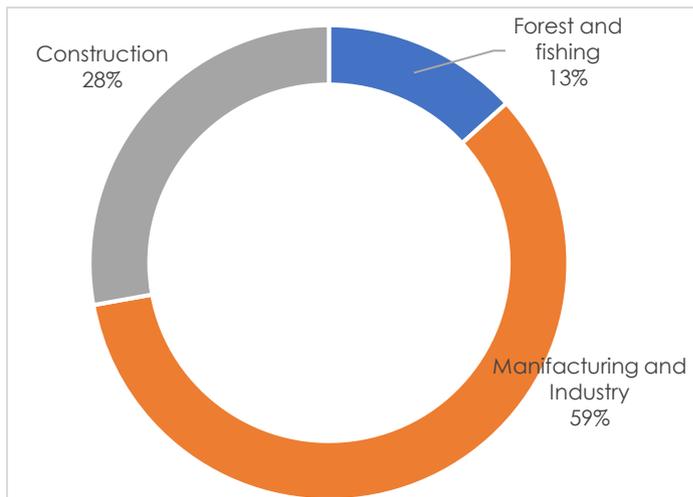


Figure 14: Report of the main classes of the industry for 2020. (Source: INSTAT and Kurbin Municipality)

Moreover, in 2020 we can observe an increase of about 10%. The largest decline is seen in manufacturing industry by about 25%. As shown in Figure 14, the other two classes of the industrial sector are at constant levels over the last 5 years, while the wood industry and the fishing industry have at wo-fold increase in 2020, compared to 2019. Specific weight of each class during 2020 is shown in figure 14. Although with a contraction of about 10% the manufacturing sector is still the

leading sub-sector in the Municipality of Kurbin with approximately 60% of the entire industrial sector.

**Services.** The services sector is also the sector with the largest share and constitutes 66% of the local economic structure in terms of the number of economic operators. This sector has also shrunk by 11.64% over the last 5 years.

What is different from the industrial sector is that the shrinkage is almost proportionally divided into all 5 sub-sectors. This trend makes us think that the main factor is the reduction of the services due to the emigration of the population of this municipality to the most economically developed areas.

A more detailed classification of this sector for 2020, as can be seen from Figure 16, results in that in the Municipality of Kurbin out of 997 registered businesses, 496 or 50% operate in the trade sub-sector; 57 or 6% operate in the transport and storage sub-sector; 214 or 21% in accommodation and food and 217 or 22% operate in other services sector.

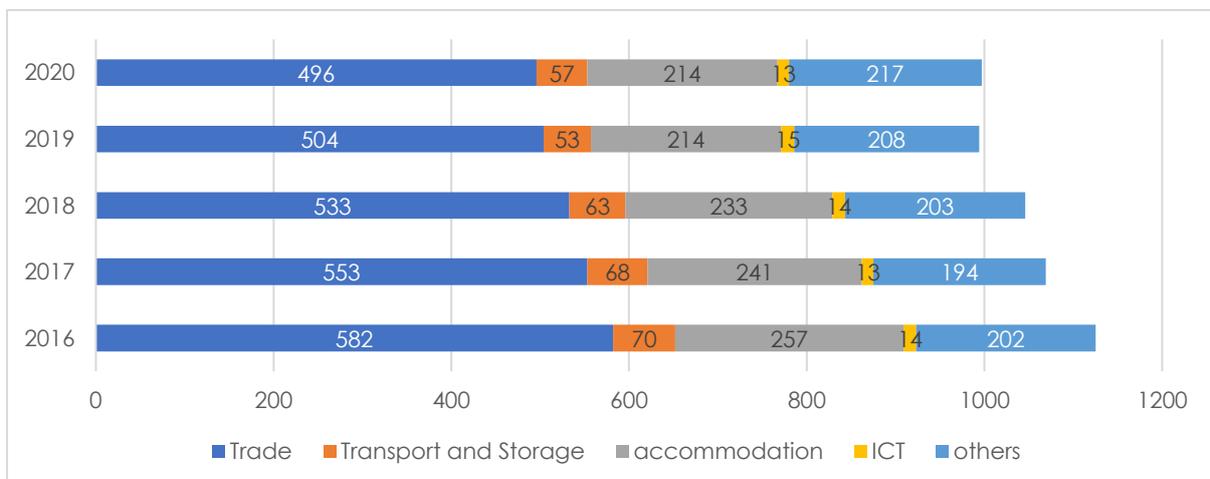


Figure 15: Structure of the services industry according to 5 official classifications during the last 5 years. (Source: INSTAT and Kurbin Municipality)

## 2.4 SOCIAL PROFILE

**Employment** in the Municipality of Kurbin is a sector with considerable problems. Regarding the year 2021, the number of the unemployed jobseekers registered with the Local Employment Office, Laç-Kurbin is 2174 jobseekers out of which 914 are male and 1260 female. Structural changes in the local economy, lack of a modern infrastructure, non-utilization of potentials in agriculture, livestock, tourism, forestry, services, etc. have created an unemployment rate of 25%. According to the 2011 Census, the working-age population reaches 14,664 people, or 66.3% of the municipality's population, with men accounting for 58%.

**Individuals in need** for at least one form of social care service, identified at the end of 2020 in the territory of the Municipality of Kurbin, are about 3776 individuals, which constitute 8.16% of the population registered, or about 5.17% of the resident population.

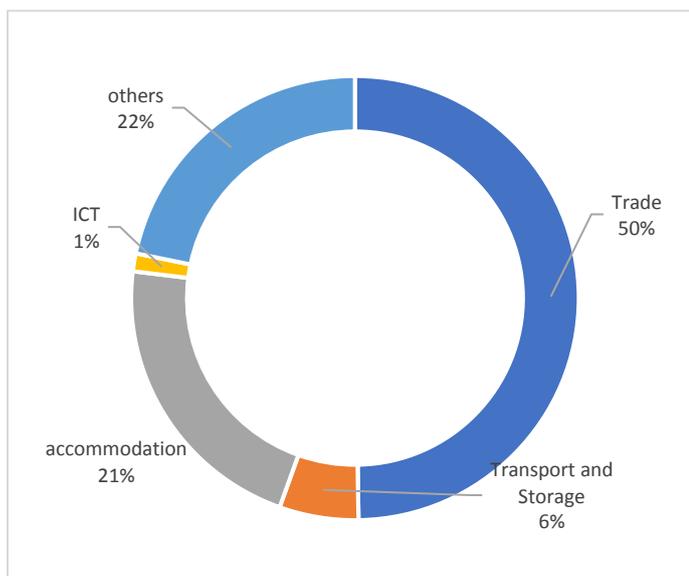


Figure 16: Report of the main classes of manufacturing industry for 2020. (Source: INSTAT and Kurbin Municipality)

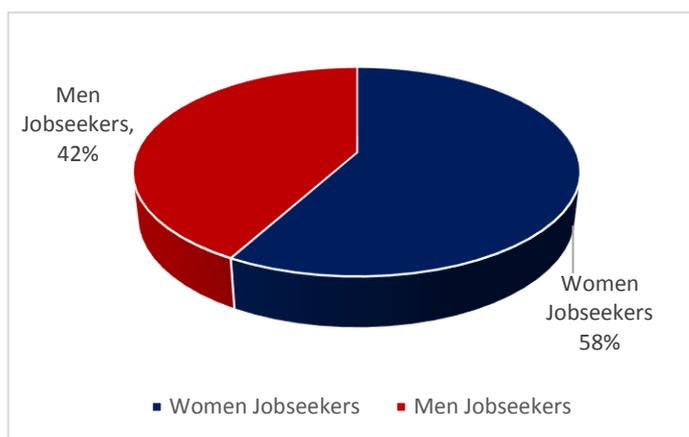


Figure 17: Ratio between male and female jobseekers. (Source: Kurbin Municipality)

Administrative Unit	Total	Individuals in Need of Social Care Services	
		Number	%
Laç	17,086	1,663	9.73%
Mamurras	15,284	1,104	7.22%
Fushë Kuqe	5,460	353	6.47%
Milot	8,461	656	7.75%
<b>Total Kurbin Municipality</b>	<b>46,291</b>	<b>3,776</b>	<b>8.16%</b>

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

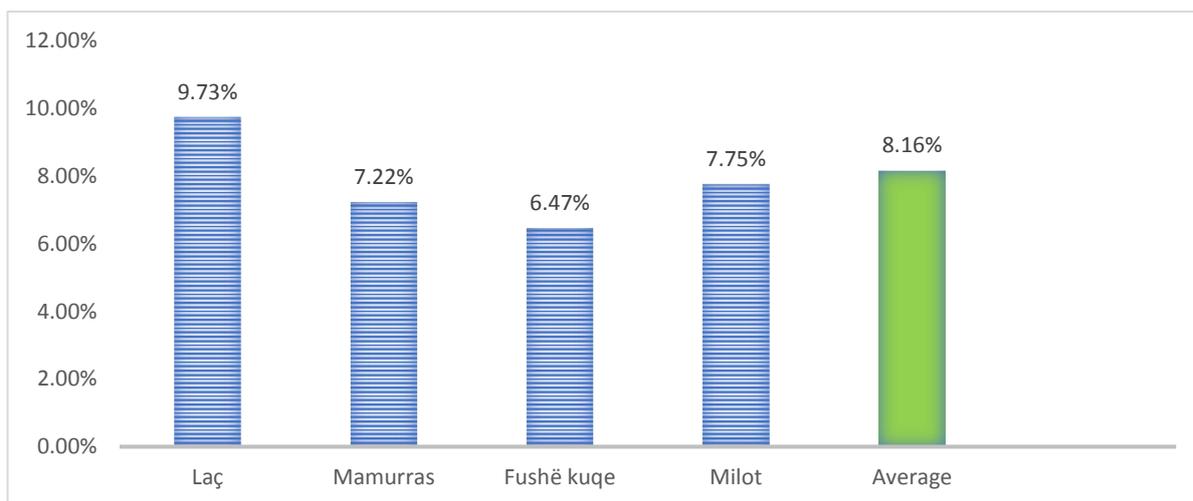


Figure 18: Percentage of individuals in need versus population for each AU. (Source: Kurbin Municipality)

As can be seen from the above data, all Administrative Units have a low percentage of individuals in need of services compare to total population, but in the city of Kurbin this percentage is higher than the average percentage in the municipality.

Regarding the persons with disabilities, 1241 persons in the Municipality of Kurbin are documented as having at least one form of disability and unable to work are 1486 persons. The table below is divided by administrative units:

AU	POPULATION	PAK	% PAK	IP	%IP
Laç	17086	554	3.24%	724	4.24%
Mamurras	15284	347	2.27%	465	3.04%
Fushëkuqe	5460	145	2.66%	134	2.45%
Milot	8461	195	2.30%	163	1.93%
<b>Totali</b>	<b>46291</b>	<b>1241</b>	<b>2.68%</b>	<b>1486</b>	<b>3.21%</b>

Table 6: Number of individuals with P.A.K and Invalid worker (Source: Kurbin Municipality)

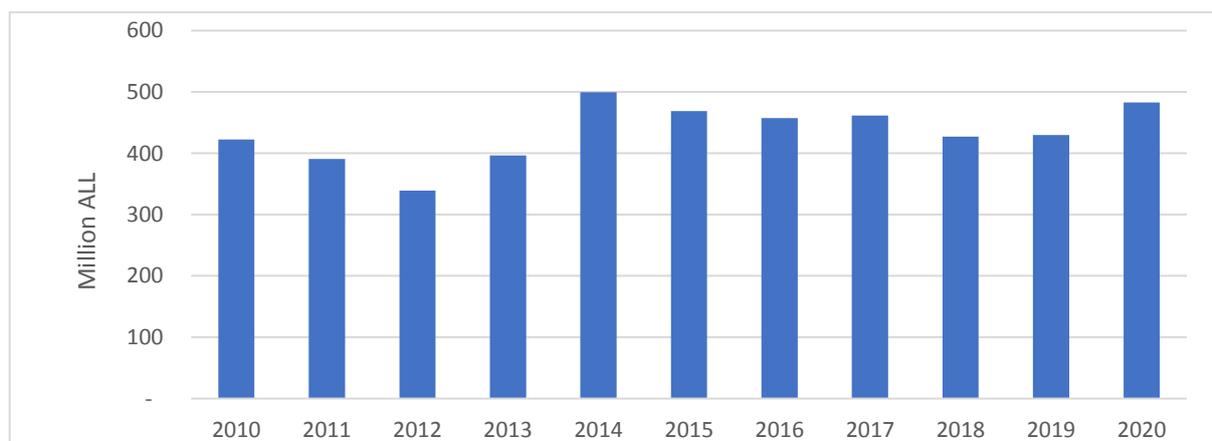


Figure 19: Budget used by the Municipality of Kurbin in 10 years. (Source: Kurbin Municipality)

The figure 19 above presents the budget used by the Municipality of Kurbin in the last 10 years for the payments to Individuals in Need. The budget of the municipality for 2020 was about 483 million ALL.

In the municipality of Kurbin are included in the economic aid program 1,049 families, of which 9 families have the status of orphans, also 25 victims of violence have

been identified and registered, with 20 of them in the city of Kurbin. The data show that there are 8 children placed in foster families.

Administrative Unit	No. of Families according to the Census 2011	Families with EA	% e families EA/total families
Laç	4,547	385	8.47%
Mamurras	5,117	292	5.71%
Fushë Kuqe	1,637	74	4.52%
Milot	2,486	298	11.99%
<b>Total Kurbin Mun.</b>	<b>13,787</b>	<b>1,049</b>	<b>7.00%</b>

Table 7: Data on the number of households receiving Economic Assistance in the Municipality of Kurbin divided by Administrative Units. (Source: Kurbin Municipality)

### 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 Durres and 30 kilometers from Tiranë, and the main damage was caused in 11 municipalities of Albania, where Tiranë and Durres were the most affected municipalities, followed by the municipalities of Shijak, Mirditë, Lezhë, Kurbin, Kamëz, Vorë, Kavajë and Rrogozhinë. 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 impact 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 8 and figure 20 below:

Sector	Damages	Losses	Total
Education	63.59	8.76	72.35
Health	8.02	1.91	9.93
Housing (Buildings)	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 8: Damages and Losses in Million Euros by sectors at Republic level. (Source: PDNA)

<sup>6</sup> [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%20Post-Disaster%20Needs%20Assessment%20(PDNA)%20Volume%20A%20Report%20February%202020.pdf)

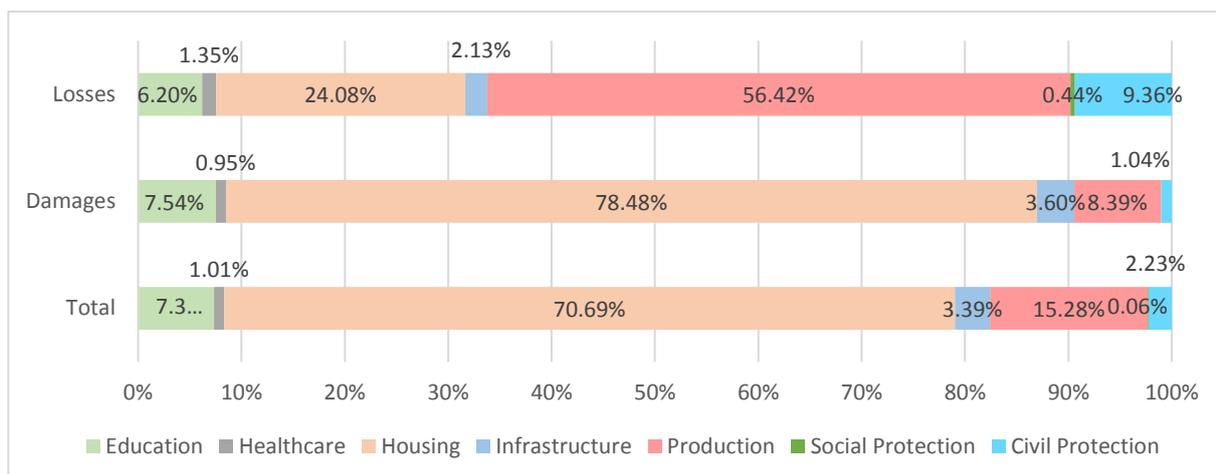


Figure 20: Specific Weight of Damages and Losses by sectors at Republic level. (Source: PDNA)

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 occupies the largest share of the total amount (56.4%), followed by the Housing sector (24.1%) and the Civil Protection Sector and the Disaster Risk Reduction sector (9.4%). Based on the same report, "Damage is defined as the cost of repairing or rebuilding infrastructure or physical assets that are 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 confirmed by the information provided by the municipalities, the two basic sectors of the economy, after the houses (which account for 70% of the earthquake damages), those most damaged are the infrastructure and the production, including buildings. Figures 21 and 22 present the data in % according to subsectors where the losses and damages are seen in these two sectors.

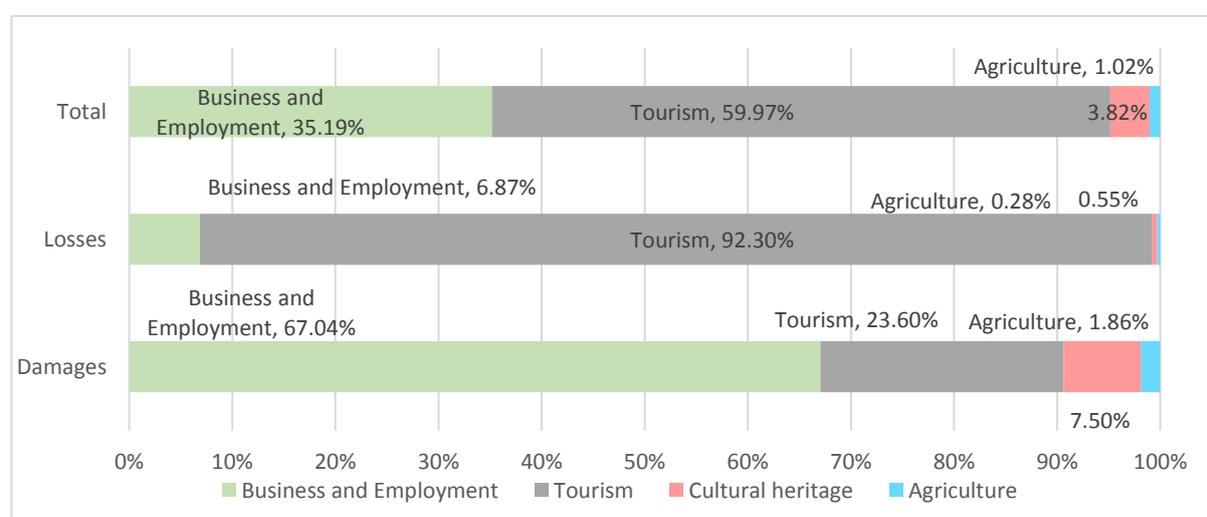


Figure 21: Specific Weight of Damages and Losses by production subsector. (Source: PDNA)

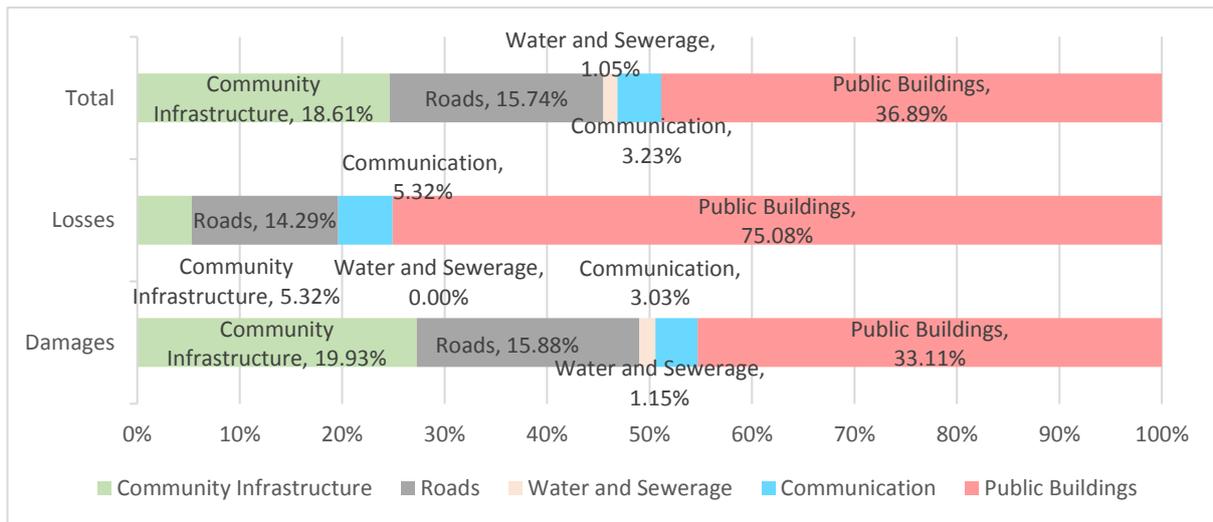


Figure 22: Specific Weight of Damages and Losses by Infrastructure subsector. (Source: PDNA)

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

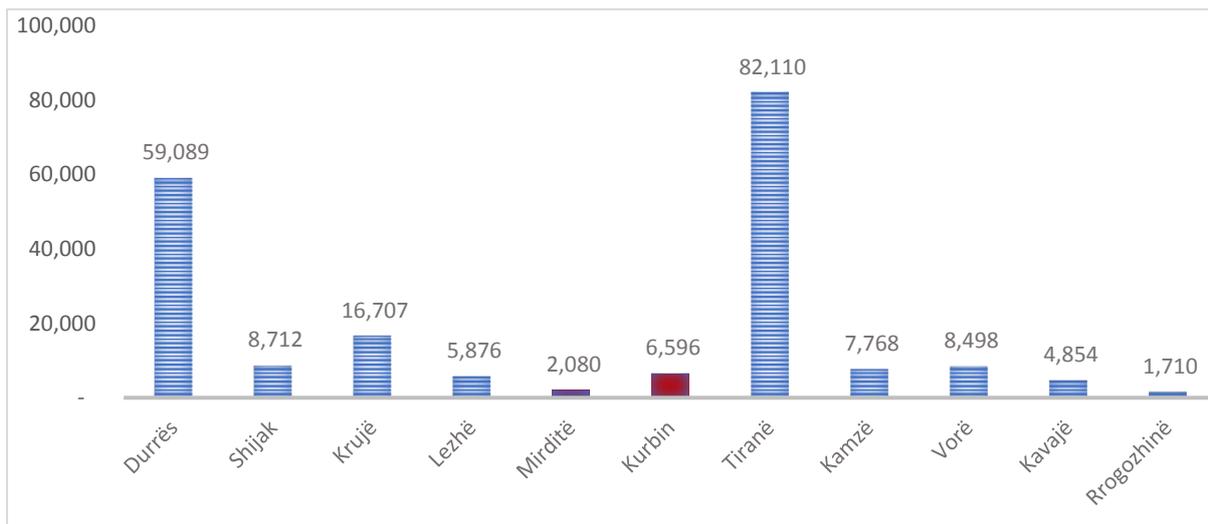


Figure 23: Number of populations whose dwellings have been damaged or destroyed by Municipalities. (Source: PDNA and municipalities)

As it appears from the data in figure 22 in the Municipality of Kurbin, a small number of the total population of Albania is affected by the earthquake, approximately 1%. In relation to the resident population and the number of affected persons is about 9.41% which is still considerable for this municipality and ranks it as the seventh 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 Kurbin with 39.78 million losses and damages is classified as the 10th damaged municipality. Graph 23 presents the values of losses and damages for each municipality in absolute values.

In million EURO

Calculating the losses per capita of the resident population, it is ranked 3rd, well below the national average. Figure 24 presents the values of losses and damages for each municipality as well as the national average per capita of the resident population.

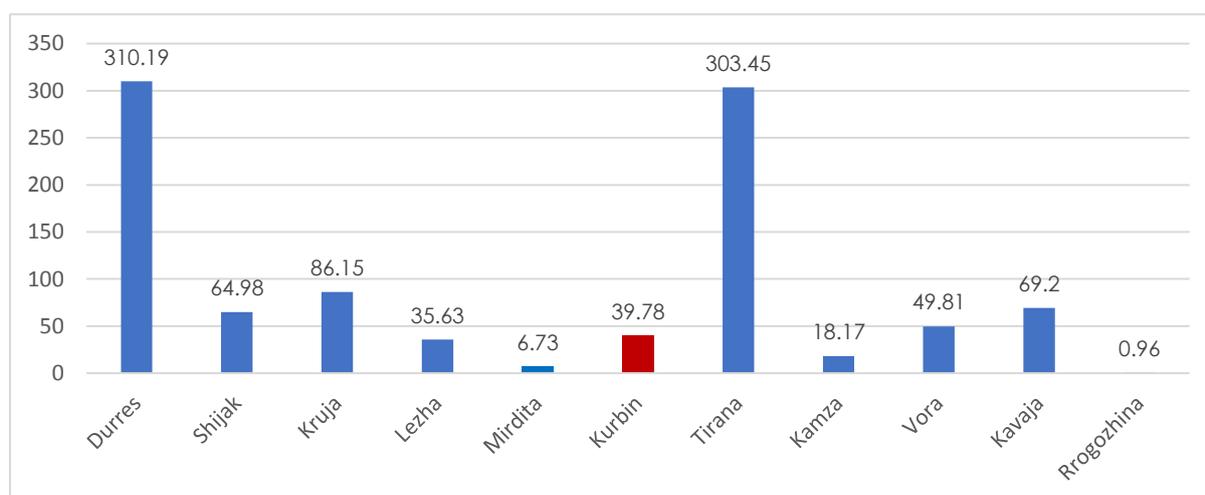


Figure 23: Financial damages in damages and losses by Municipalities. (Source PDNA and Municipalities)

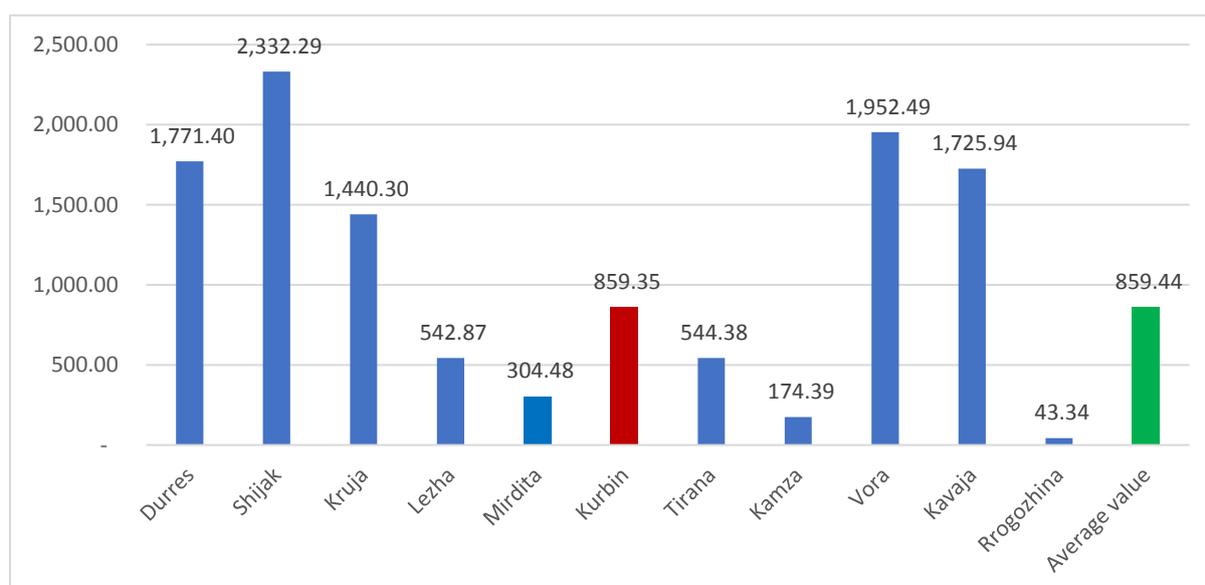


Figure 24: Financial damages in damages and losses per capita by Municipalities. (Source PDNA)

In the Municipality of Kurbin, from the total effect of damages and losses of 39.78million Euros, the housing sector is the most affected with 25.39 million Euros or 63%, followed by the Health and Infrastructure sector with approximately 5.56 and 2.32 million Euros or 13% and 5%. The Education Sector in this municipality had losses or damages in the amount of 4 million Euros or 10%. The Civil Protection and GDR sectors have suffered losses or damages in the amount of 0.06 million Euros. 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 amounts to 662.3 million Euros, while for the Municipality of Kurbin these damages are estimated at 25.39 million Euros, almost 3% of the losses of this sector.

Figure 26 shows the distribution by type of damage. Total damages and losses of the production sector, which includes the sub-sectors of Business and Employment, Tourism, Cultural Heritage and Agriculture, in the Municipality of Kurbin is only in the Cultural Heritage sector.

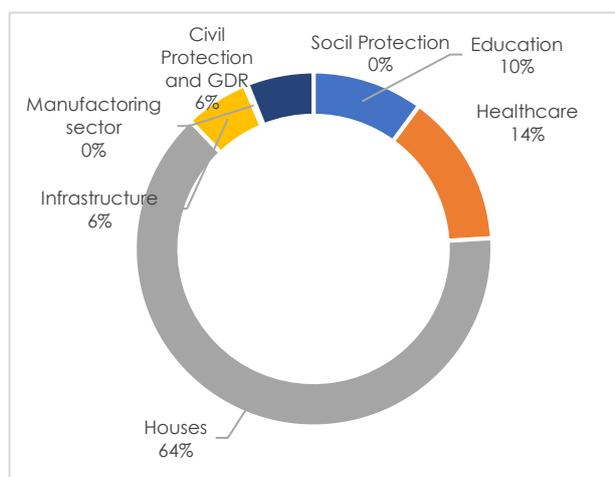


Figure 25: Financial losses by sectors in the Municipality of Kurbin. (Source: PDNA and Kurbin Municipality)

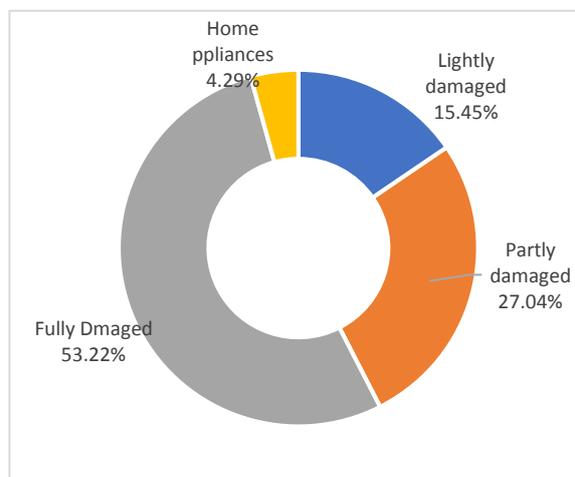


Figure 26: Financial losses of the Housing Sector. (Source: PDNA and Kurbin Municipality)

### Earthquake damage analysis and accommodation needs analysis.

In the Municipality of Kurbin, the great tremors of the earthquake of November 26, 2019 caused damage to apartments, service units and administrative buildings. After determining and assessing the damages, the Municipality of Kurbin proceeded with the reconstruction process. For this purpose, were implemented two Mandatory Local Plans (MLP) which were approved by the Decision of the National Council for the Territory Planning respectively on 25.02.2020 and on 09.03.2020. based on these MLP which enable:

- Development and / or re-development of an area damaged by a natural disaster;
- Development of a new area to meet the housing needs of families affected by the disaster;
- Construction of public infrastructures.

Work has begun on the construction of residences, commercial units and institutions as follows:

- Collective Residences 645
- Service Units 80
- Underground parking 250
- Administrative, educational or health institutions 4, including the municipal building

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

Apartment structure	Number
Residences with structure for 1-2 members	205
Residences with structure for 2-3 members	280
Residences with structure for 4+ members	160

## 4. ANALYSIS OF VALUE CHAINS IN KURBIN 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 the tools, 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 rural and agricultural value chains, but are also increasing in the manufacturing sector, in which women occupy the highest number in the "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 link in which change and improvement must take place in order for it to lead to chain 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 from time to time the multiple roles of women and the systematic disadvantage, as well as take advantage of the possibilities of using remedial measures which actively promote the transformation of gender norms and equal opportunities for women.

Developing the value chain and market system means performing actions that improve productivity and include value chains, as well as change the way market supporting functions and rules work 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 economic activity. The analysis and development of the value chain and the market system are increasingly being used 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; and,*
- *Opportunities to improve the situation of disadvantaged persons in the value chain*

Despite the role that women have together with men in the realization 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.

Gender-sensitive value chain analysis and development are an approach that helps achieve gender equality and broader goals in Albania, through the identification of value chain 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 provider". 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 9: Benefits of gender-based interventions in the value chain.

All the main economic sectors in the municipality of Kurbin were initially assessed using the criteria of gender-sensitive value chain analysis (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 Kurbin turned out to be as follows:

- Agriculture as a general sector
- Fishing
- Tourism as a general sector
- Agriculture: Cultivation of Medicinal and Aromatic Plants (MAPs)
- Agriculture: Grape Cultivation sector

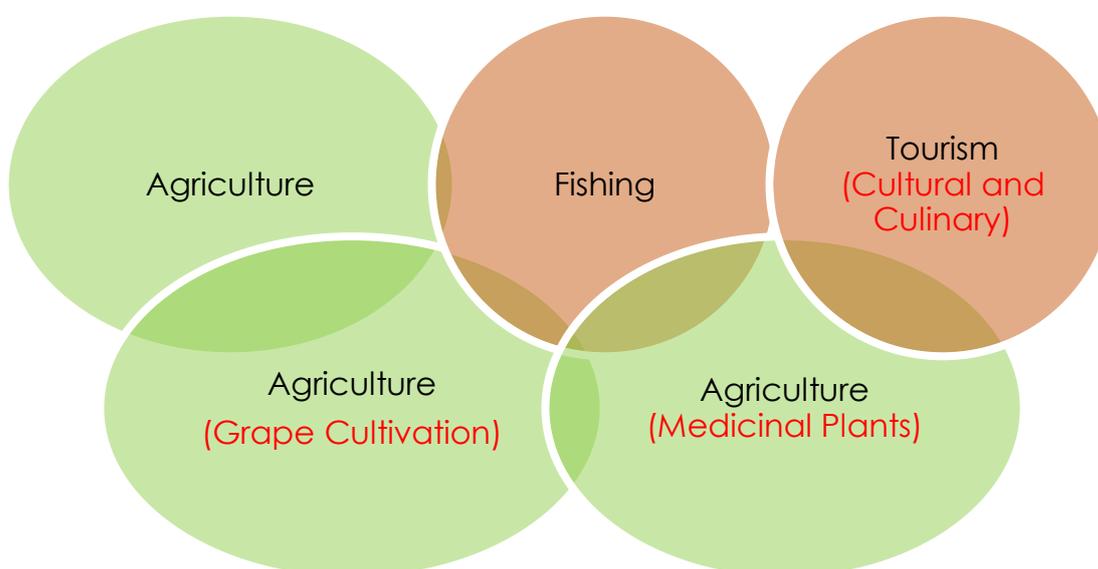


Figure 27: Identified Value Chains

During the sessions of the Working Group and upon conclusion of the discussions between the participants, they were divided into groups based on the possible value chains identified for the municipality of Kurbin. Among the above sectors with the highest potential for improving the living conditions of women, promoting gender equality and developing the value chain, were identified the Agriculture sector focused on Field Crops, Medicinal and Aromatic Plants, as well as in Grape Cultivation (Viticulture).

The general agriculture sector, while being the sector with the highest employment of both men and women, needs large interventions, mainly infrastructural interventions. As we have pointed out above, land fragmentation and lack of irrigation systems are two of the main reasons which hinder the growth of crop yields and have caused that the production is mainly dedicated to meeting household needs.

The fishing sector employs mainly men and does not have space for women employment. Women are employed in the processing subsector also some in the

marketing. In this sector any kind of intervention affects less than 10% of women's participation and any kind of intervention does not lead to the promotion of gender equality or women's empowerment.

The tourism sector is dominated by coastal tourism which is relatively stable and creates little space, except for the creation of new jobs, mainly seasonal, for the economic empowerment of women, while agritourism is still in the first steps in this municipality.

Further, in cooperation with the Municipality and groups of interest, a detailed assessment was conducted based on some basic criteria. 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 presented and summarized in the following table:

CRITERIA	AGRICULTURE (FIELD CROPS)	MEDICINAL AND AROMATIC PLANTS	AGRICULTURE (GRAPE CULTIVATION)
Is there a link between what women do and prospects for growth / diversification in the value chain?	Women are involved in family businesses and formal employment in this sector would be a good opportunity for them.	Currently women are involved in the process of collecting and drying wild MAPs. The sector is expanding but needs intervention to promote growth and diversification.	Women are involved and can be involved in various processes, mainly grape processing. The sector is in development but needs more work for further growth, especially in terms of grape processing.
Do women (or can they) acquire the skills needed to add value through product processing or diversification?	They can still acquire and improve their skills, especially skills related to the use of new technologies.	Women have some basic harvesting skills. However, the capabilities for post-harvest processes are at very low levels, thus resulting in large losses. There is a need to promote the sector as a profitable business, especially for young girls and boys.	Women have experience for some basic skills of collecting and processing grapes. In addition to traditional products such as wine and brandy, from grapes we can have many other products which add space for the inclusion of more women in the sector
Does this value chain offer new opportunities for women?	If steps for modernization of the chain are taken and efforts for increasing the interest, opportunities for women will also increase.	The sector offers good opportunities for women's economic empowerment.	The sector offers great opportunities for women and girls to be fully integrated.

Can this value chain improve living conditions for women / families?	Yes, if the sector is formalized and the inclusion of women will be higher.	Currently collection of MAPs has improved the living conditions of many families in the Municipality of Kurbin. The sector has the power to do so, but so far this sector is developed to some extent and at the local level some important actors are missing.	Today there is an ever-increasing integration between vineyards, canteens and agritourism as an important diversification strategy for inclusive tourism Agritourism development can increase farm sales and add value to agricultural products.
Is there an organization in the value chain committed to supporting / representing value chain actors so that they can develop further?	Yes, there has been support from various organizations, whose contribution has been mainly in creating local brands.	Investments and upgrades made by some foreign donors have supported this agricultural sector throughout the transition period. Thus, in this municipality from various investors in the vicinity of the city of Laç and in Mamurras have been made among the largest investments in all of Albania.	Today there is an ever-increasing integration between vineyards, canteens and agritourism as an important diversification strategy for inclusive tourism Agritourism development can increase farm sales and add value to agricultural products.
Are there opportunities to make changes with small investments?	There are opportunities, especially, making the sector more attractive and changing people's mentality and investing in technology.	Yes, there are opportunities, especially if investments are made in processing technology for the market, as well as in terms of improving market access, better risk management, increasing trade acumen, etc.	While working in groups, participants noted the growing number of tourists, but they mainly accommodate in coastal structures, Wine Canteens can help increase trips to tourist attractions, affecting the revenue generated by agritourism.

Table 10: Ranking and Selection of Value Chains, using the Gender Sensitivity criteria.

Since Agriculture is currently the main economic direction in the Municipality of Kurbin, we made a more detailed analysis of these sectors, and focusing on the three main sub-sectors of agriculture for this municipality, that of the production of Field Crops, Aromatic and Medical Plants and Grapes.

## 4.1 FIELD CROPS VC

### 4.1.1 DESCRIPTION OF THE SITUATION

In 2020, a total of about 7,600 ha of agricultural land were planted with these crops. However, it should be noted that the field crops are losing their primary role in the agricultural economy of this municipality and compared to just a year ago the area cultivated with these plants has shrunk by about 200 ha. In addition to the importance of these cultures, it should be emphasized the fact that the villages of this municipality are in constant decline in their population, as a result of people moving away from rural areas in significant numbers. It should be noted that this is an area quite affected by this phenomenon.

**Cereals.** In the Municipality of Kurbin grains are not among the favorite crops for farmers, they are generally focused on agricultural crops that have a significant income, thus taking advantage of favorable agro-ecological conditions of their region. Nevertheless, in this municipality there are about 1,430 ha planted with grains, realizing a total production of 8,464 tons.

- **Wheat** is not the favorite crop of Kurbin farmers, but despite that a considerable area is still planted with this plant and last year 550 ha of wheat were planted. The trend of this agricultural crop has not been in motion in recent years. This is due to the fact that farmers in lower socio-economic status generally prefer to plant wheat to meet their family needs only. From the data we gathered for this municipality, it turns out that very small quantities of wheat come on the market. In this year, a total production of 2,200 tons was realized. Despite the low agricultural importance of wheat for this area, its yield is relatively acceptable, with a full 4 tons/ha. This result is due more to the fertility of the land than to the care and investment made by farmers.
- **Corn.** The situation is different with corn. In the Municipality of Kurbin last year, 880 ha were planted with corn and a total production of 6,264 tons of corn was obtained. Farmers generally apply high agro-technologies for corn cultivation, but above all they use the irrigated conditions that the lowlands of this district have and which made it possible to achieve an average yield of 6.8 tons/ha. Corn is generally used for livestock, but also for bread, as this area has a tradition of cooking corn bread for their family needs. Thanks to the tradition of growing corn and the care shown by the farmers of this area, they realize among the highest yields in the whole country.
- **Other cereals**, unlike many municipalities with similar climatic and soil conditions in the Municipality of Kurbin, no barley or rye is planted.

The cultivation of fodder plants in the Municipality of Kurbin, as everywhere in our country, is in the first place thanks to the very favorable conditions. Last year, the area cultivated with fodder plants was 4,220 ha, from which a total forage production of 160,930 tons was realized. This area is mainly concentrated in the area of this

municipality that has flat terrain, but also in the hilly and mountainous areas has a significant surface area planted with forage crops (this refers to the real opportunities they have). This is dedicated to the development of livestock, but also the ease of production of these plants compared to others.

The main and absolute favorite type of fodder crops in this municipality is the alfalfa plant. Alfalfa in this municipality is used for wet production, but also for drying purposes to produce vitamin grass of alfalfa. It is also used for grazing livestock.

In addition to the cultivation of the alfalfa plant on a very modest surface, various forage crops are also cultivated, where among the main ones is the alexandrine clover as well as the gram forage crops.

Due to the cooperation that this municipality has with the Center for Transfer of Agricultural Technologies, it has become a reference center for the cultivation of soybean and especially for the production of its seed to be then distributed to other farms across the country. Last year, an area of 80 ha was planted with soybeans, where a total grain production of 158 tons was realized with an average yield of 1.8 tons/ha, which is still quite low.

**Industrial plants.** The area of the Municipality of Kurbin has had a very good tradition for the cultivation of industrial plants, especially sunflowers and tobacco. But in this municipality only insignificant areas are planted with industrial cultures, which shows not only the trend of this municipality, but the general for the country. This has come as a result of the total dysfunction of the processing industry in Albania.

#### 4.1.2 GENERAL ASSESSMENT BASED ON BASIC CRITERIA

The assessment of women's empowerment and gender equality in the fruit and vegetable production 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?	4	2	8	Yes, women are more involved than men, even though they are not formally registered (by law).
Are there many female entrepreneurs in the value chain?	1	2	2	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.
Do women control / own equipment and assets?	1	2	2	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?	3	1	3	Employees, and especially women, are usually trained in processes, but there is still a need for training in support services (most activities are carried out using traditional methods).
Do women have control over sales and enterprise revenue?	1	2	2	Men usually control the business, although women are involved in all processes. Men are also the decision-making authority. Nevertheless, often women are in charge of budget planning for food and other necessities.
Can work be located near home?	3	1	3	The work is located near the house, as the house is positioned close to the working grounds.
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	Among the mentioned barriers are the lack of financial resources, the lack of support from the relevant institutions, the lack of subsidy schemes and organization.
Is this a value chain with low barriers to women's involvement (time and movement, access to technology and assets, cultural constraints)?	2	2	4	Like in the above, adding that 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 general obstacles. Among the specific gender barriers can be mentioned: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Limited time,</li> <li>• Low access to property,</li> <li>• Low access to skills and training.</li> </ul>
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 of production and processing, a high potential is created for the work of women.
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 funding schemes for women small business owners in this sector that could be utilized that many farmers are not aware of.
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 registering as an employee in the business, prevents them from taking advantage of all the opportunities.
<b>Total for gender potential</b>	<b>60/102</b>			

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

Table 11: Assessing Women's Empowerment and Gender Equality in the Fruit and Vegetable Production VC.

### 4.1.3 SWOT ANALYSIS OF THE VC

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

SWOT ANALYSIS OF THE VALUE CHAIN OF AGRICULTURE (FIELD CROPS)	
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>Short distance to large urban areas of Tiranë and Durres (35 min).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lack of financial resources and consequently lack of proper investment in technology and processing activities;</li> <li>Lack of certification of safety and quality standards;</li> <li>Informal operations in the market (unregistered businesses and no employment contracts).</li> </ul>
OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Opportunity to benefit from the IPARD financing scheme;</li> <li>Increased demand in the domestic and foreign market.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lack of promotion and marketing strategies (regional brands);</li> <li>Lack of information from key institutions regarding the schemes and benefits of the sector;</li> <li>Lack of attention from institutions towards the needs of the sector.</li> </ul>

Table 12: SWOT Analysis of the Fruit and Vegetable Production VC.

## 4.2 MEDICINAL AND AROMATIC PLANTS (MAPS) VALUE CHAIN

### 4.2.1 DESCRIPTION OF THE SITUATION

The territory of Kurbin Municipality has agro-ecological and natural soil opportunities favorable for cultivating MAPs. The cultivation of MAPs in this area is expanding, although it is in its infancy. This is also thanks to the establishment of some associations of producers and voluntary unofficial cooperatives. The expansion of this sector is evident in this municipality, as farmers in recent years have begun to reduce their interest in collecting these plants and focus attention on their cultivation instead. The cultivation of MAPs is great in the lowlands of this municipality in the area of Fushë Kuge, but in other areas of the municipality as well, especially in the hilly areas.

Referring to the local statistics (provided during the field visiting this municipality), in all AUs of Municipality of Kurbin are collected on average over 200 Tons of MAPs products (dry product for trade). The main (as everywhere in other regions of our country) is the sage plant, which takes about 50% of the production volume and about 55% of the total value of the amount collected. However, in this district, unlike many other areas of the country, there is a decrease in the interest of farmers for sage and farmers are starting to seek to cultivate other types of MAPs in their plots.

In MAPs collection and cultivation sector in the Municipality of Kurbin, an average of about 750 farming families are employed. It should be noted that generally the work done with MAPs in this municipality is seasonal work. The main work for this activity is done by women and school children. Women deal with cultivation as well as harvesting. Men generally only deal with the transportation of the product harvested by women and school children from the fields to the warehouse. Work processes that require large amounts of manual labor are again done only by women. Even the packaging process is generally done by women.

Supporting women in the rural area of Kurbin Municipality to improve the standards in collection, drying, storage and cultivation of MAPs according to organic standards will make it possible to have a steady income for women involved in this sector.

### 4.2.2 GENERAL ASSESSMENT BASED ON BASIC CRITERIA

The assessment of women's empowerment and gender equality in the MAPs production value chain based on expert analysis and discussions with groups of interest 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	There is an almost 60% to 40% distribution among women and men employed in this sector, but informally. Moreover, the MAPs sector in Kurbin is not well known and well-positioned, and still remains a sporadic activity,

Question	Points*	Weight	Total	Description
				unorganized and not formalized. Most MAPs are cultivated in small quantities.
Are there many female entrepreneurs in the value chain?	2	2	4	Women are involved in activities related to the collection (cultivation) of plants, but interact with men in almost every activity. Business ownership belongs to men, if the business is even registered.
Do women control / own equipment and assets?	3	2	6	Women are involved in the processes of collecting cultivated (or wild) MAPs and in household chores, while men are mainly involved in trade and planting activities. Not much equipment is used in the process, simple equipment according to the stages of the activity.
Do women (or can they) acquire the skills needed to add value through product processing or diversification?	4	1	4	Women possess some of the necessary skills, mostly learned from men (the father of the family). But they need to be trained professionally and specifically for MAPs activities.
Do women have control over sales and enterprise revenue?	3	2	6	Although women are engaged in every step, the decision maker is the head of the family (husband). Nevertheless, budget planning for necessities like food is mostly done by women.
Can work be located near home?	4	1	4	The workplace is usually far from home, as far as collecting wild plants is concerned. As for the cultivated plants it is not far from home, and is located on lands that are owned or rented. But the largest ratio is occupied by wild plants. Bringing women closer to home would definitely improve the situation in the sector and make women's working conditions more acceptable.
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)?	4	1	4	Setting up a MAPs business does not face entry barriers. Initial costs are low, even they are almost non-existent. Usually owning a land or renting a land is what is considered an initial cost, adding to the costs of securing inputs.
Is this a value chain with low barriers to women's	4	2	8	As above. Also, there are no restrictions based on gender. Cultural

Question	Points*	Weight	Total	Description
involvement (time and movement, access to technology and assets, cultural constraints)?				constraints are not very obvious as women are involved in various processes in the VC and in general, women are often in control of the processes they participate in.
Does this value chain offer new opportunities for women?	4	4	16	Women are more involved in collection, processing and quality control activities. By gaining the right skills, more opportunities would arise, including the opportunity to get involved in more processes, which are currently the field of men and also to make the process easier for them, with the use of the right tools.
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)?	4	2	8	In this business, people are paid depending on the quantity they send to the collection point. Preliminary arrangements are made with seed traders for the cultivation of specific plants, but the overall level of profitability is considered high. If the contracts are introduced, the sector would become even more beneficial, especially for women participating in it.
Is there a connection between what women do and prospects for growth / diversification in the value chain?	4	1	4	Higher involvement of women would improve the overall efficiency of the VCs, thus contributing to better cultivation practices, better decision-making, better coordination, etc.
Are there gender norms (for example "women's work") that prevent women from taking full advantage of value chain opportunities?	4	2	8	No, both men and women are involved in gathering activities, but men are also involved in other farm-related activities. They are usually also involved in the trading process.
Total of gender potential			80/102	

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

Table 13: Assessing Women's Empowerment and Gender Equality in the MAPs VC.

### 4.2.3 SWOT ANALYSIS OF THE VC

SWOT ANALYSIS OF AROMATIC AND MEDICINAL PLANTS VALUE CHAIN	
STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The existence of deep knowledge of MAP's sector;</li> <li>▪ The existence of guaranteed market, based on the existence of large consolidators</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Excessive use of natural resources from their wild habitats and habitat changes have damaged the population levels of MAPs species.</li> </ul>

- Demand for teas and spices in the food industry has experienced an upward trend in the recent years
- Agro-environmental conditions favorable for the cultivation of MAPs
- Investments and upgrades made by some foreign and domestic donors, in some of the value chain links of MAP in the municipality of Kurbin
- The situation of farm families and the desire to be involved in cultivation of MAPs, mainly shown by women.
- Inadequate knowledge on sustainable harvesting, collection, post-harvesting, processing and value-added, as well as lack of respective infrastructure facilities.
- Limited processing knowledge and lack of equipment for post-harvest operations.
- Lack of infrastructure and post-harvest knowledge as well as proper storage facilities result in significant losses, which can lead to exportable rejections.
- Lack of incentive financial schemes with strong local contracts
- Lack of adequate information on supply and demand.

OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ High national and international demand for high quality products certified for sustainable collection and production, environmentally friendly.</li> <li>▪ Export growth is driven by a combination of growing supply (mainly through increased cultivated MAPs) and increased world market demand.</li> <li>▪ Increased consumer demand and preference for organically grown products.</li> <li>▪ Land suitable for organic cultivation of various medicinal plants in the municipality of Kurbin.</li> <li>▪ Availability of funds for grants and investments.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Exhaustion of natural resources at an alarming rate.</li> <li>▪ Uncontrolled harvesting of wild plants can destroy the biodiversity and sustainability of wild plants;</li> <li>▪ Increasing tendency of young people to leave rural areas for a better life in big cities.</li> <li>▪ Natural disasters such as droughts, floods and forest fires.</li> <li>▪ High fluctuations in the international market price and the development of illegal market mechanisms.</li> <li>▪ Property rights hinder investment.</li> <li>▪ Lack of agricultural schemes with strong local contracts</li> </ul>

Table 14: SWOT Analysis for MAPS VC.

## 4.3 GRAPE PRODUCTION AND PROCESSING VALUE CHAIN

### 4.3.1 DESCRIPTION OF THE SITUATION

In the Municipality of Kurbin, production of grapes has increased significantly and can now be considered to have reached the amount of 1/3 of the total area that was before the 1990s. Currently in this municipality are planted a total of 139 ha with vineyards and the trend is ever-increasing, but it must be said that the growth rates of this area are still quite low. In this municipality is realized a total production of about 6095 tons of grapes, which for the most part comes from the family pergolas that are planted in the yards of farming families. There are about 203 thousand vine roots that are grown in the form of pergolas in this district, of which only 180 thousand roots are

fruit-bearing and which realize a total production of 4195 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 district has, it is still above the national average and is full 10.6 kg / root.

The situation is different with viticulture for trade. Where from 135 ha with vineyards that are in production in this district is realized a total production of 1900 tons. The production capacity of these vineyards is satisfactory compared to other areas of the country and is full 17 tons/ha. This production is realized mostly due to the very favorable agro-climatic conditions that this region is blessed with.

**Food, wine and viticulture industry.** In the current market, in addition to local wine products produced in factories and wineries, there are also many imported drinks, mainly Italian, French, or from the Balkan region, such as those of Montenegro, Macedonia and Kosovo etc. Seen in this context, the development of this industry in Albania requires special attention and is quite complex, especially taking into consideration grape varieties produced in the Albanian vineyards.

Therefore, the development of viticulture in the Municipality of Kurbin should always be seen in the context of the development of the country and never separate from it, for the specifics of this sector, which acts as a more nation-wide sector and never as a regional sector.

**Regionalization.** Berat, Përmet (in the district of Gjirokastra) and Lezhë are the areas with the best reputation for quality wines. Right next to this municipality is the area of Kallmet, a well-known grape variety of the same name is cultivated with great success in many areas of this municipality. Neighboring Lezhë region is an area with several wineries, producing specifically the grape variety "Kallmet". In general, the production of quality wine is low compared to the potential that the municipality holds.

In the Municipality of Kurbin, the region that has the viticulture sector is the Administrative Unit of Mamurras. The Mamurras Hills were all planted with vineyards before the 1990s, which were unfortunately cut down. Given the very good soil and climatic conditions of this region, farmers have begun to replant these vineyards.

In addition to the administrative unit of Mamurras, the administrative unit of Fushë Kuqe has started to invest in the establishment of vineyards. This is based on the microclimate that this area has as well as the proximity to the Mati River from where they can provide water for their irrigation.

**Cultivars of vineyards.** In the Municipality of Kurbin there is a variety of cultivars present. Among the main cultivars found in this region are:

- ✓ *Shesh i Bardhë dhe Shesh i Zi* are the most important local varieties for wine production. The name comes from the hilly village of Shesh located 15 km away from Tiranë and from where it was distributed in many coastal regions of Albania, it represents about 35% of the grapes processed for wine production.
- ✓ *Kallmeti* is a red grape cultivated in ancient times in the provinces of Lezhë, Zadrima, Shkodra and around Lake Shkodra, also known as Tokai i Zi or Rrush Zi i Shkodra.
- ✓ *Pulesi* is the most important white grape of the province of Permet, Berat, Skrapar and Mallakstra. Gives wines with high alcohol content.

- ✓ *Cabernet* is a foreign cultivar that has started to be planted 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 preferred by Laç farmers, as it has a ruby red color and gives wines with a high percentage of alcohol.
- ✓ *Chardonnay, Riesling, Petit Verdon, Shiraz, Vranac, etj.* They are varieties that have the smallest spread in the territory of this municipality.

#### 4.3.2 GENERAL ASSESSMENT BASED ON BASIC CRITERIA

The assessment of women's empowerment and gender equality in the Grape production chain based on expert analysis and discussions with stakeholders and interviews with key actors is presented as follows:

Question	Points*	Weight	Total	Description
Is the participation of employed women in the value chain relatively high?	2	2	4	Women are very involved in many processes, mainly centered around processing
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. However, the situation is changing, grant programs give priority to women entrepreneurs, which will 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.
Do women (or can they) acquire the skills needed to add value through product processing or diversification?	3	1	3	Women have the ability to work in agriculture. There is always a high will among women to gain knowledge and skills to use the right techniques of cultivation, collection and processing of grapes, as well as on skills in the field of marketing.
Do women have control over sales and enterprise revenue?	3	2	6	Family income is usually managed by men, but the decision is made by family consensus. Women often are in charge of family budget planning, especially when it comes to essentials, such as food and expenses related to medical needs and children.
Can work be located near home?	3	1	3	Usually the vineyards are not located far from the house, they are located on lands that are owned or rented. The processing

				is also carried out near the premises of the house.
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)?	3	1	3	There are several legal barriers to entering this value chain. Initial costs are relatively high. Given the opportunities available for grants, this investment would be affordable for many rural families in the Municipality of Kurbin. Also, the business can be set up initially by possessing little technological skills and with production at a low scale.
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	There are no specific restrictions that prevent women from entering the VC. Women are involved in daily agricultural activities as well as in house management and raising children. In terms of processing, it is traditionally called men's work (wine and brandy processing).
Does this value chain offer new opportunities for women?	2	4	8	The sector offers great opportunities for women and girls to integrate.
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	Viticulture activity is considered as a diversification activity for farms; thus, in periods of low sales in agriculture, farms can offset this effect by providing services in this sector as well. Viticulture is not just a family activity, and there are employment opportunities.
Is there a connection between what women do and prospects for growth / diversification in the value chain?	3	1	3	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	Housework and childcare take a considerable amount of time, and this 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.
<b>Total for gender potential</b>			<b>54/102</b>	

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

Table 15: Assessing Women's Empowerment and Gender Equality in the Grapes VC.

### 4.3.3 SWOT ANALYSIS OF THE VC

SWOT ANALYSIS OF GRAPE PRODUCTION AND PROCESSING 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, Sheshi 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>▪ Fragmentation of agricultural land into small plots and Reluctance of local farmers to join for joint production.</li> <li>▪ . The fragmented structure of farms hinders the efficiency and investment needed to increase the competitiveness of production.</li> <li>▪ Weaknesses of national legislation especially in relation to land ownership.</li> <li>▪ Lack of technological infrastructure for grape processing.</li> <li>▪ Lack of subsidies and financial funds, as well as real difficulties in securing soft loans.</li> <li>▪ Production is quantity oriented (poor quality - low price).</li> <li>▪ High excise on grape products, while in Europe wine excise is not applied considering it as a common food product.</li> <li>▪ Lack of proper scientific studies for the viticulture and products market.</li> <li>▪ Cheaper packaging makes the product look to be of poor quality, and as a result this product does not stimulate consumption by the masses.</li> </ul>
OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Despite the fact that currently the area of land planted with vineyards is 139 ha, the unused area is a potential factor for increasing the productivity of vineyards and wine.</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 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 measures for the formalization of the market as a whole as well as to classify wine as a common food product excluding it from excise.</li> <li>▪ Defining the agricultural development economy as a priority in the current government program will be an important factor in increasing the support with financial funds.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Property rights problems can hamper investment;</li> <li>▪ Growing tendency of young people leaving rural areas for a better life in big cities.</li> <li>▪ Excessive supply of the global market with grape products, mainly wine.</li> <li>▪ Change in the culture of their consumption.</li> <li>▪ The pressure exerted in the market by importing companies on domestic production.</li> <li>▪ Competition from countries in the region is high, which offer products where quality / price is combined in a profitable balance.</li> <li>▪ Existence of a large number of informal producers who not only harm the fair competition in the market, and offer counterfeit products in the market.</li> <li>▪ Lack of loans with favorable conditions for viticulture and grape production.</li> </ul>

Table16: SWOT Analysis of Grape Production Evaluation and Processing Chain.

## 4.4 CONCLUSIONS

Based on the analysis of the above three sectors, using the criteria of gender sensitivity analysis in value chains (GSVCA) we have the following evaluation situation:

Analyzed Sector	Points	Notes
Value Chain in the Agriculture Sector for field crops	60	Requires significant funding for investments in technology and mainly in processing activity. It is therefore a long-term intervention and not with high guarantees of success.
MAPs VC	80	Dependence of production on climatic conditions, sometimes unfavorable for the growth of MAPs as well as the lack of a stable market in the territory of Kurbin Municipality.
Grape Production and Processing Value Chain	54	Property rights problems Poor road infrastructure and poor public transport in rural areas may hamper investment

Table17: Analysis in value chains and evaluation situation.

As it results from the above analysis with the most potential in women's empowerment opportunities is the MAPs Value Chain, in the following chapter we will analyze in detail this value chain.

## 5. DETAILED ANALYSIS OF MAPs VC

### 5.1 OVERVIEW

The MAPs sector is very important for the Albanian economy. There is a long tradition in collecting wild MAPs that began during the centralized economy system, when Albania was even exporting MAPs worth about USD 50 million.

In recent years, according to the statistics on agricultural products, there is a very large increase in exports of medicinal plants. The dominant weight of this sector has the neighboring region of Shkodra, where from 6,300 ha currently cultivated nationwide in this region are planted over 4,900 ha. This huge increase is caused by a combination of increased supply (mainly through increased cultivated MAPs) and increased global market demand. Exports consist mainly of raw MAPs, only a small proportion of MAPs is processed into essential oils, while there has been no production of MAP-based detergents, cosmetics or industrial medicines in Albania.

Albania is a major international player for some products, such as sage, thyme, oregano, etc. In some markets and specific market segments, Albanian products are market leaders, such as in the case of sage in the US and thyme in Germany.

Albania is an international player ranked as one of the 16 leading world exporters of MAPs at the beginning of 2016. In gastronomy, the demand for quality herbs and spices has increased and this area produces highly valued in terms of their quality. The world market has a growing demand especially when it comes to the cosmetics industry, which is one of the growing industries in the world market. Same goes for the pharmaceutical market. MAP products made in Albania have a very good reputation in this market. The trend in the pharmaceutical sectors is always targeting more the production of medicines based on natural medicinal plants compared to synthetic products. Especially with the current COVID situation, the demand for medicinal plants is increasing. Since this year, it is seen that the wholesale traders have increased demands for stable contracts for trading these products.

In recent years, the cultivation of MAPs is increasing and many farmers are switching from cultivating traditional crops to cultivating medicinal and aromatic plants. According to the data of the Ministry of Agriculture, there are about 4,000 small farms in Albania that are dedicated to the cultivation of MAPs. Women play a large role in the cultivation of these plants.

MAPs are widely found in the entire Lezhë Region, in all three municipalities thereof. They are found mainly in hilly and mountainous areas and mainly in the natural meadows of these territories.

The market for MAP products is guaranteed and is the safest market compared to all other agricultural products. This market has been consolidated for over 40 years and its demands have been growing. The market has the ability to attract any kind of Albanian MAP product without any restrictions.

**Wild collection.** More than 400 species of medicinal and aromatic plants belong to the Albanian flora which appears in the wild. Among them, 40 species are part of the Red Book of Flora of Albania as a result of uncontrolled exploitation during the last 30 years. MAPs are important natural and economic resources of the country. About 182 of these species are quite widespread and many of them are collected and exported. Most of these species, referring to the exploratory expeditions carried out for this purpose, are present in this municipality.

As in some other areas of the country, in the Municipality of Kurbin there is a long tradition in collecting wild MAPs that started during the centralized economy system and became a regional leader in the export of MAPs. Entire areas in Kurbin had mandatory MAP collection plans such as the area of Skuraj, Selite, Gallate, Sandzak, Adriatic, Fushë Kuqe, Patok, etc.

**Types of MAPs found in Kurbin Municipality.** Among the plants that are most popular and that have traditionally been the object of collection and sale are sage (*Salvia officinalis*), thyme (*Saturea montana*), clover flower (*trifolium*), linden flower (*Tilia cordata*), wild rose (*Rosa canina*) Red mountain tea (*Oreganum vulgare*) juniperus (*Juniperus communis*), thymus (*Timus vulgaris*), bee grass (*Melisa officinalis*) shtogu (sambucus), blackberry (rubus), wild apple (*Malus silvestris*), mallow (*malva silvestris*), laurel (*Lauris nobilis*), nightshade (*Helichrysum italicum*), basil (*Ocimum basilicum*), Peppermint (*Mentha piperita*).

It should be noted that natural vegetation has suffered a great deal from the lack of implementation of biodiversity protection norms, where often MAP collectors uproot them and damage their habitat area. This activity is decreasing as a result of the tendency of farmers to cultivate MAPs in the lands they own.

**Areas where MAPs grow.** The practice of collecting, consolidating and trading MAPs is well known in almost all four Administrative Units. According to the areas, sage is found mainly in the hills of Skuraj mountain and Gallata area. This territory belongs to the Administrative Units Milot and Mamurras. Thyme (*Saturea montana*) and Thymus (*Timus vulgaris*) are mainly collected in the Administrative Units of Milot and Laç, etc. Other plants of the MAP family are found almost everywhere in all areas of Kurbin Municipality.

**The quantity of MAPs that are collected.** According to the data provided during the interview and discussions with actors of this sector in the Laç AU, it results that the annual quantity of wild MAPs collected is about 100 tons/year.

**Problems encountered with collection of wild MAPs.** It is not uncommon to find work practices that are not always environmentally friendly. As a result of these practices, a significant part of wild vegetation has been damaged. Among the main problems encountered with the collection of MAPs in nature we can single out:

- ✓ *Harvesting before their technical ripening in time. This is because when farmers go to the mountains to collect these plants, they are profit-driven, so they don't wait for the plants to reach their maturity.*

- ✓ *Wrong harvesting techniques. There is a tendency to remove plants along with the roots as it is easier.*
- ✓ *Extermination (cutting of all flower buds = seeds) without respecting the relevant laws.*

**MAPs cultivated in the area.** The agro-ecological conditions of the Fushë Kuqe and the Adriatic area are very favorable for the cultivation of MAPs. The climate is typical for key MAPs requirements. Long summers and accompanied by prolonged drought are 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 production of quality MAP products.

In the territory of this municipality are cultivated and have a tradition plants such as sage, lemon balm, red clover, nettle, etc.

**Cultivation areas.** *Helichrysum Italicum* has started to be cultivated recently, mainly in the Sanxhak area. Also, in different areas of Laç municipality under personal initiatives of specific farmers has started the cultivation of medicinal plants such as mallow and / or cyan flowers in the administrative unit Fushë Kuqe. There are also initiatives for the cultivation of lavender in the administrative unit of Mamurras.

The farmers in this municipality have knowledge about the medicinal plants of their area and wherever they come across they collect them and use them either for their family use or for trade. Farmers based on their knowledge and the extension realized by agricultural experts possess deep knowledge of this sector.

It should be noted that generally the work performed in MAP VC, as in general all work in agriculture, is seasonal work. Today, with the activity of cultivating MAPs in the Municipality of Kurbin, an average of about 750 farming families are employed. Work processes in MAPVPs, starting from cultivation, collection, processing, etc. are generally carried out on a family basis where the main work is done by women and school children. Generally, the cultivators in the fields are women and young girls and a very small percentage are men. Women deal with all cultivation processes as well as the harvesting. Men generally only deal with the transportation of the product harvested by women and school children from the fields to the warehouse. In the warehouses, work processes that require large amounts of manual labor, are mainly done only by women. The packaging process is also generally done by women.

The economic situation of many farming families faces many problems, especially in this municipality. There are many farmers who see MAPs as an opportunity to provide enough income to support their living conditions instead of having to consider immigration. Everywhere there are farming families who are ready to immediately start cultivating MAPs in this municipality. Especially women in these municipalities have a desire to engage in MAP cultivation, so as to stay closer to home (often collecting wild MAPs are in the dangerous areas far away from home) but also, for their husbands not to be forced to leave the country in search of work.

## 5.2 VALUE CHAIN MAPPING

Based on the fact the MAPs VC consists of two sub-value chains that are:

- a) *Planting and production of cultivated MAPs;*
- b) *Collection of wild MAPs*

In all of the following analysis we will consider only cultivated MAPs.

The following figure shows the comprehensive outline of the MAPs Value Chain. It identifies key stakeholders, the turnover of products from securing inputs to reaching the final market, and helps identify gaps or barriers in the production flow.

## Medicinal and Aromatic Plants Value Chain

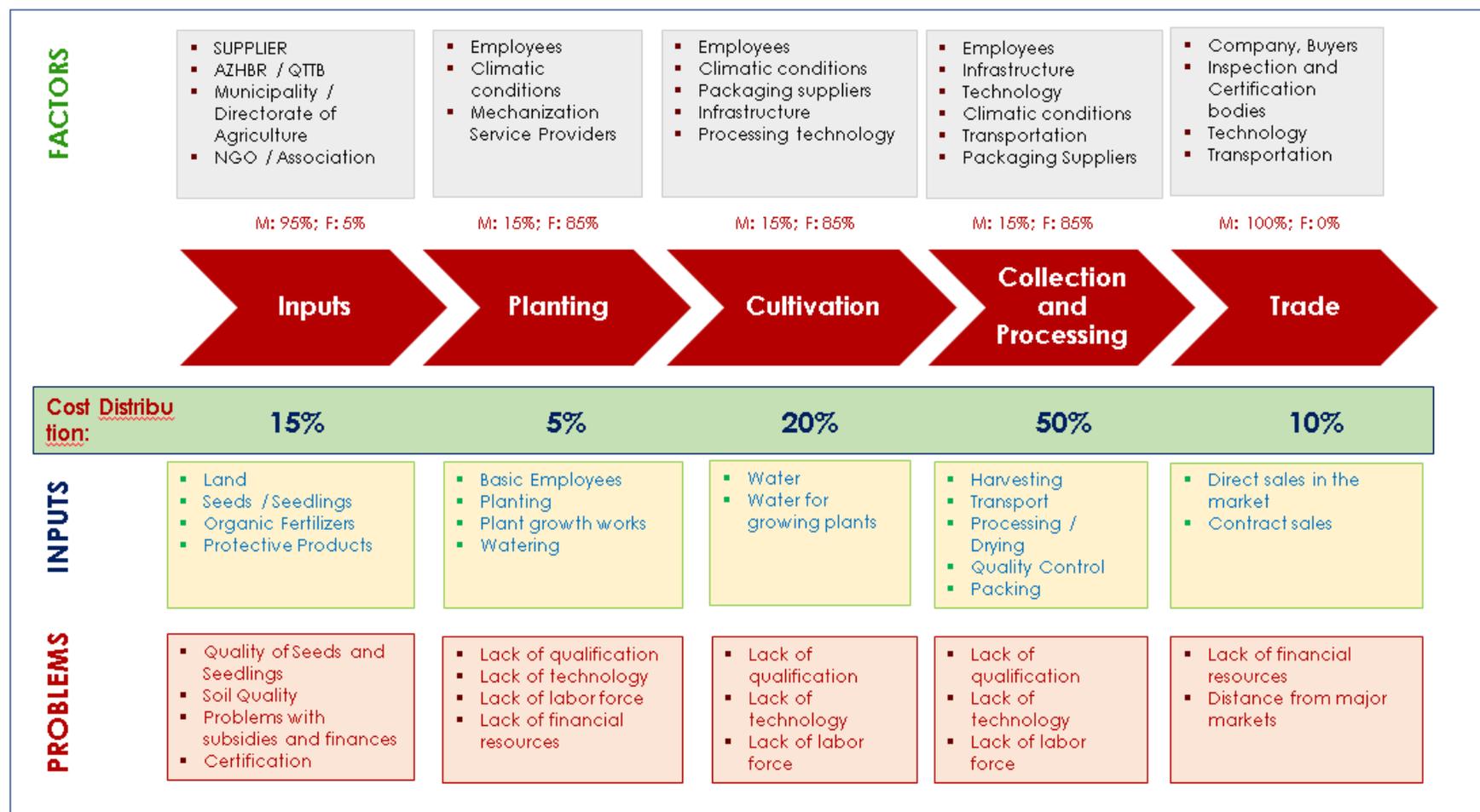


Figure 27: Mapping of the Medicinal and Aromatic Plants Value Chain.

## 5.3 VALUE CHAIN ACTORS

The Medicinal and Aromatic Plants Sector (MAPs) is organized in three main levels:

1. *Collectors and producers of MAPs;*
2. *Collectors and consolidators, divided into two subcategories: local and regional consolidators;*
3. *Processors and exporters of small, medium and large quantities.*

It should be noted at the outset that as in any VC, even in the MAPs VC, there are several key actors who indirectly influence the developments of the chain. Given that these actors are present in almost every link, we are doing their analysis in the context of influencing the entire VC.

### 5.3.1 CENTRAL AND LOCAL SUPPORT STRUCTURES

A very important role in the sector is played by other stakeholders, 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 MAPs VC.

**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 vegetable, fruit and plant protection specialists, livestock specialists and agricultural economists. At the local level for more than 4 years the municipalities have a functional duty to perform functions in the field of agriculture, rural development, forests and public pastures, nature and biodiversity. Municipalities are responsible for performing specific functions in this field according to applicable law. Furthermore, all these support service functions have been designed to offer equal opportunities to women and some, like Municipality, have it in their objectives to support women entrepreneurs in the agricultural field.

Currently in the Municipality of Kurbin, these functions are provided by the Forest Service and Agriculture Agency, but which is mainly oriented towards the administration of the public forest and pasture fund of this municipality and does not have sufficient structures for the creation and administration of the local system. agricultural and rural information and counseling as well as the establishment and administration of local grant schemes for agriculture and rural development, funded by the local budget and / or co-financed by third parties, guaranteeing gender balanced access. The information provided shows that there is no established structure for providing this service. Some of these grant schemes target women specifically.

**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, Vlora, 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 security, land consolidation, etc.

**National Food Authority (NFA)** is a government agency, subordinate to the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development and is the competent authority with national management inspection functions in the field of consumer safety and protection, plant and animal protection. NFA performs interventions 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, in the same law, gives the purpose of the inspection, namely: (i) assessment of compliance with legal requirements; (ii) documenting good practices in complying with legal requirements; (iii) advising the inspected entity on the correct implementation of legal requirements; (iv) ordering the correction of violations of legal requirements and the elimination of the consequences arising therefrom; and (v) sentencing and taking other administrative measures to avoid risks that may be posed to the 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 Lezhë, which conducts inspections based on the Annual Inspection Program, provided by the NFA office in Tiranë.

### 5.3.2 CERTIFICATION STRUCTURES

Regarding **Certification bodies**, 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 28: Steps for HACCP Certification.

Certification with HACCP goes through five steps:

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

All these steps take 14-30 days.

While '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 Albinpekt based in Tiranë. 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, Lezhë.

### 5.3.3 PRIVATE SUPPORT STRUCTURES

**Suppliers of raw materials**, play an important role in the MAP VC. They provide seeds, seedlings and fertilizers for farmers, etc. They often assist local villagers with knowledge in cultivating produce, but they also often serve as an information point.

**Technology suppliers**. Normally these suppliers also provide the necessary technology for mechanization and standardization of various processes, both planting and harvesting, as well as post-harvest, storage, drying, processing, packaging, etc.) along all levels of the VC.

**Collectors and Processors**. In the MAPs VC, it is often difficult to realize a separation of the structures involved in the MAPs collection and processing stages. It often happens that cultivators and collectors of MAP products are one and the same. However, in this analysis we will look at them as separate roles and entities.

- **Individual consolidators** are people living in municipalities who act as intermediaries between regional consolidators and processors. They decide pricing information to harvesters and are the main people serving as regulators among harvesters and larger collectors or processors. Usually they have no warehouses.
- **Regional consolidators** are located in districts and buy products from harvesters, and deposit them in their warehouses. Usually, they rent or own old warehouses of former state cooperatives. They collect a range of 20-150 tons of MAPs per year. A total number of about 30-40 regional consolidators is estimated in the entire Albanian territory.
- **Small processors** trade on average 150 to 500 tons of product per year. They have basic processing or packaging lines. It also includes companies that sell MAPs in the internal market, such as mountain tea and other spices used in cooking. Sometimes, these companies even manage to export to foreign buyers.
- **Medium Processors** trade an average of 500 to 1,000 tons of MAPs per year. About 10-15 companies are classified as medium. They have managed to secure contracts with foreign companies and export regularly. They compete with each other for the collection of MAPs.
- **Large processors** trade an average of 1,000 to 1,800 tons of MAPs per year. This constitutes a significant part of Albanian MAP exports abroad. They are supplied by collectors from all over the country, agents to whom they pay operating costs, MAP cultivators (who sell them directly), and small and medium-sized processors. They have the most advanced processing lines.

One of the largest Collectors / Processors / Exporters of the area is Filipi Co. This company has 30 years of experience in collecting, processing and marketing MAP products.

This collector provides ready-made collection capacities among the largest and most modern in Albania and is one of the three main exporters of MAPs in Albania. Export to all four corners of the world without exception to all continents. In general, there is no facility that is lacking in this business and it is one of the leading companies in the country in terms of product quality assurance.



Figure 29: Filipi Co. facility in Kurbin.

This consolidator is one that encourages farmers to start growing MAP plants on each farm by helping them to fix the cultivation technologies and technical drying and standardization manuals. This support comes naturally as a requirement to provide planned quantities and to control the cultivation technology, ensuring quality production, and without pollution from various factors that usually come from the harvesting of spontaneous plants (in mountains and hills).

## 5.4 VC LINKS ANALYSIS

As we have pointed out above in this part of the analysis we will deal with the VC of cultivated MAPs. As shown in the diagram above in Figure 38, the Value Chain (VC) for the Production of Aromatic and Medicinal Plants is composed of five main links. The following paragraphs analyze each link in the chain 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 Kurbin, the respective situations were identified and the following conclusions and recommendations were identified.

### 5.4.1 PROVIDING BASIC VALUE CHAIN INPUTS

**Activities that take place.** This chain link includes activities related to the main elements to develop an activity in the VCs and summarizes:

- ✓ **Land**, normally it is owned or used by farming families, but in some cases in order to increase production or even use agricultural mechanics, farmers rent the land from neighbors.
- ✓ **Providing Seedlings or Seeds**, which are used for Maps cultivation. In cultivated MAPs, this expenditure is incurred on average once every five years, depending on the type of cultivated plant.
- ✓ **Providing Organic Fertilizers**, which are used in very rare cases and in small quantities.

**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 of the cases, women accompany men mainly to ensure the quality of the products taken in the market. In this chain, there are few opportunities to increase the role of women and their empowerment.

**Cost of this link.** This part in the total cost accounts is about 15% of the cost of producing and processing MAPs.

#### 5.4.2 PLANTING

**Activities that take place.** In this part are realized all the activities related to the work necessary for the planting process. This is an activity that takes place on average once in five years. The main activities in this process are:

- ✓ **Preparing the soil for planting.** At this stage more agricultural mechanics are used. In such cases the participation of men in this process is over 90%.
- ✓ **Planting Seedlings or Seeds.** This is a process that is done by hand, because the use of agricultural mechanics is almost impossible due to the small area of the plots. Mechanical cultivation is used only in cases where the planting distance between plants allows this possibility. At this stage of the process, the work of women who are "hand planting specialists" for all agricultural products dominates. In cultivated MAPs, depending on the cultivated plant type, this occurs on average once every five years. Here almost 100% of this process is performed by the women and children of the family.
- ✓ **Watering after Planting.** In general, this process is semi-mechanized, so the participation of men in it is present just like women.

**Women's Participation.** In the Municipality of Kurbin, due to the small use of agricultural mechanics, this phase is dominated by women's work to an extent of about 85%. The increase of cultivated areas enables even greater use of agricultural mechanics, but it never devalues the work of women in the MAPs VC, it only frees them to have time to deal with other jobs.

**Cost.** Based on the fact that the planting of MAPs is generally carried out once every five years and in the total cost of production and processing of MAPs constitutes a relatively small weight, estimated at about 5% of the cost of production.

### 5.4.3 CULTIVATION

**Activities that take place.** This part carries out all activities related to the work needed to increase MAP and includes almost daily activities related to:

- ✓ **Elimination of other grass or plants.** This is a process that is done all by hand. At this stage women's work predominates.
- ✓ **Water.** In general this process is semi-mechanized, so the participation of men in it is present just like women. Irrigation is often carried out with drip irrigation plants.

**Women's Participation.** In the Municipality of Kurbin, due to the small use of agricultural mechanics, even this phase is dominated by women's work, about 85%. The increase of planted areas enables the use of agricultural mechanics, mainly in terms of the use of irrigation plants. But we emphasize that even in this chain, the use of equipment would help free women from hard physical work.

**Cost.** The activities of this part, 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 of MAPs. It constitutes a relatively average weight estimated at about 20% of the cost of production.

### 5.4.4 COLLECTION AND PROCESSING

**Activities that take place.** In this Part, the necessary work processes are carried out for the collection or harvesting of MAPs and their drying. Harvesting and the drying process are generally carried out in the traditional way (by hand), and in some cases are harvested by motorized means. In this chain are realized activities related to:

- ✓ **Collection of produce in the fields** This is a process that is done all by hand. This activity is dominated by women's work.
- ✓ **Transportation of production to processing facilities.** Generally, this activity is performed by the men who are responsible for the transport activities throughout the VC.
- ✓ **Drying process** Simple techniques are generally used, in the house and in warehouses and other places in the backyards, in the shade or in the sun. During this activity, the participation of men, mainly when drying in the open is present but not essential.
- ✓ **Selection.** This is a process that is done all by hand. At this stage of the process, women's work predominates.
- ✓ **Packaging.** This is a process that is done all by hand. At this stage of the process, women's work predominates.

It should be noted that during the above-mentioned activities, especially during the drying activity there is a high risk of contamination of the product, reducing the quality and as a result its price in the market.

**Women's Participation.** In the Municipality of Kurbin, even this phase is dominated by women's work at 85%. Also, in the activity, especially those that are realized in the home environment, often participate children after school.

**Cost.** This is the most important part of the process, as well as most costly. But despite the low labor cost in the total cost of production and processing of MAPs constitutes a relatively high weight estimated at about 50% of the cost of production.

## 5.4.5 TRADING

**Activities that take place.** This is the closing link of VC. In general, the sale of the product is pre-contracted or the production is bought in bulk by MAP collectors, but in special cases, mainly for teas or a part of aromatic plants (mainly those used in cooking) this is also realized by direct sale in market. In this chain are realized activities related to:

- ✓ **Production contracting.** Currently, the practice of contracts, as everywhere in the agricultural sector in our country, does not exist in the Municipality of Kurbin.
- ✓ **Transport 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.
- ✓ **Market sales.** Even in this activity the participation of men is almost exclusive, but women participate actively during the absence of men.
- ✓ **Promotions.** This process includes the display of products in the dedicated space and the promotion offline or online on social media, as well as the process of selling products to customers and the impact of buying.

**Women's Participation.** Normally the trading process is totally dominated by men (they make up 100% of the total workforce), taking into account that they enter the markets and also transport the finished products.

**Cost.** At the cost of VC, this process occupies about 10% of the production cost.

## 5.5 OPPORTUNITIES FOR WOMEN EMPOWERMENT IN THE MAPs VC

Based on the fieldwork, observations and interviews conducted with the main actors of the value chain in the Municipality of Kurbin, the following data were identified:

### 5.5.1 OPPORTUNITIES FOR EMPOWERING WOMEN IN THE VALUE CHAIN

Regarding the opportunities that the MAP production and processing value chain has to offer, the respondents mentioned / described as follows:

Figure 30: Opportunities in the MAP Value Chain.

Increased demand for MAPs throughout the area. This is directly related to the variety of products. Some of the actors in the chain cultivate Corn flowers, others cultivate other species, which come as a specific request of buyers (traders / sellers of seeds). For this reason, contract with farmers is a phenomenon that is recommended to be applied to this sector.



**Existence of deep knowledge about the sector of herbal and medicinal plants in the Municipality of Kurbin.** As in some other areas of the country, in the region of Lezhë and Municipality of Kurbin, there is a long tradition in the collection of wild MAPs coming from the communism period, when entire areas in Lezhë Region had mandatory MAPs collection plans. Currently the MAPs sector is turning into an important sector for the economy of this municipality, while nationwide this sector has become the main leader of exports.

**The demand for herbs and spices in the food industry has experienced an upward trend in recent years.** Europe and especially Germany is considered the most important market for Albanian products. Albania is an international player ranked as one of the 16 leading world exporters of MAPs at the beginning of 2016. In gastronomy, the demand for quality herbs and spices has increased, same goes for cosmetics and pharmaceutical industry, especially as a result of pandemic.

**Existence of knowledge of MAPs cultivation.** In recent years, the cultivation of MAPs is increasing and many farmers are switching from cultivating traditional crops to cultivating medicinal and aromatic plants. According to the data of the Ministry of Agriculture, there are about 4,000 small farms in Albania that are dedicated to the cultivation of MAPs.

**Favorable agro-ecological conditions for the cultivation of MAPs.** The agro-ecological conditions of the Fushë-Kuqe and Adriatic areas are very favorable for the cultivation of MAPs. This climate is characterized by long summers and accompanied by prolonged droughts - two of the main requirements for MAPs cultivation.

**Existence of guaranteed market.** The market for MAPs products is guaranteed and is the safest market compared to all other agricultural products. This market has been consolidated for over 40 years and its demands have been growing. The market has the ability to attract any kind of Albanian MAPs product without any restrictions.

**Investments made in some of the parts of the MAPs VC in the Municipality of Kurbin.** In this municipality, essential investments have been made by various investors in terms of some elements of the MAPs VC. Thus, in the vicinity of the city of Laç and in Mamurras, some of the largest investments have been made in all of Albania in terms of collection and processing of MAPs.

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.

**Existence of collectors.** In the Municipality of Kurbin are active several MAPs collectors, among whom we can mention:

- ✓ **Filipi Co.** with 30 years of experience in the collection, processing and sale of MAPs products. Last year alone it exported over 3,500 tons of dry herbs. This company also has installed machinery for the extraction of essential oils.
- ✓ **Agro Herbal Co.** based in Mamurras is also one of the largest companies in the country. Last year this company exported over 1,500 tons of dry herbs.

Both of these companies are equipped with all the necessary facilities for the collection, processing and sale of MAPs.

**Agricultural development strategy.** The Albanian government has for over 15 years announced MAPs as a strategic sector for agricultural development. MAPs sector is also included in the support schemes of the agricultural sector.

The situation of farming families and the desire to get involved in the cultivation of MAPs. The economic situation of many farming families leaves much to be desired, especially in this municipality. There are many farmers who see MAPs as an opportunity to provide enough income to support their living conditions instead of resorting to immigration. Everywhere there are farming families who are ready to immediately start cultivating MAPs.

Women everywhere in this municipality have a desire to engage in MAPs cultivation, so as not to have to work far away from home collecting wild herbs, or search for other job opportunities in the bigger cities or having their husband leave their families behind in search of work opportunities abroad.

### 5.5.2 VALUE CHAIN CONSTRAINTS

Regarding the constraints that the MAPs value chain faces, they can be summarized as follows:

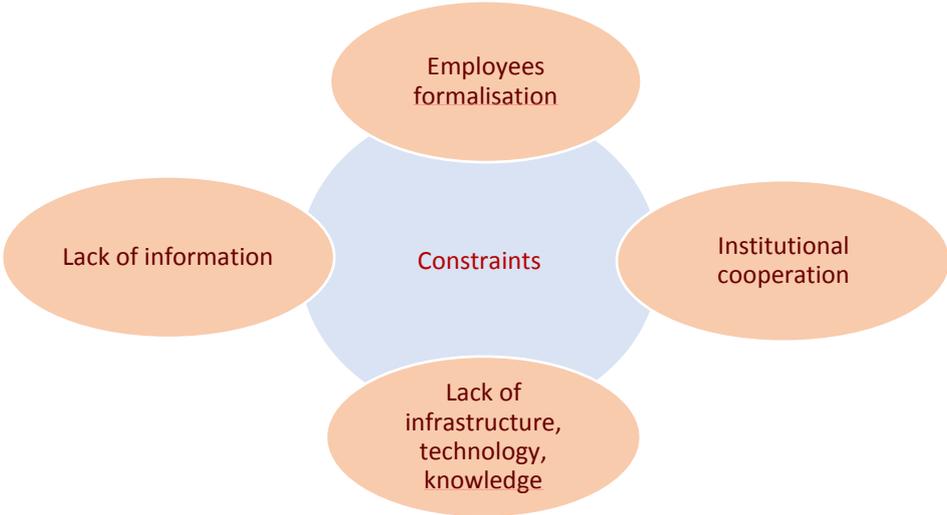


Figure 31: Value Chain Constrains.

**Formalization.** Most businesses operating in this sector are not officially registered. Only a few of them are registered as farmers, not having a 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** does not exist, it is never created between the institutions of a sector, specifically between the community, ARDA and farmers (Maps cultivators). Some of the criteria set by ARDA cannot be easily included and not all categories of the population are included in the national financing schemes.

From the session of the Working Group, it emerged that there is lack of information provided by different institutions to the stakeholders in this sector. On the one hand, the farmers do not have complete information about the initiatives and financing schemes (like IPARD

financing scheme); on the other hand, the stakeholders did not have information on the conditions and criteria that had to be contained to participate in the various trainings.

**Lack of infrastructure, proper knowledge and technology.** Lack of infrastructure facilities for collection, drying and harvesting, storage and processing. Farmer groups and mostly individuals have known little about post-harvest operations (drying and storage). Post-harvest treatments have a major impact on the final product quality and can be sources of contamination. Lack of infrastructure and post-harvest knowledge result in significant losses in the Municipality of Kurbin. Harvesting in late summer or early autumn severely impairs the quality of wild plants and cultivation MAPs.

**Lack of information** mainly for individual collectors or small land owners. A good portion of MAPs collectors have minimal or even outdated information about the potential benefits to smallholders: improved market access, improved technology, better risk management, increased trading acumen, 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 show that women are involved in most activities, especially in the collection process, while also contributing to household chores. They possess the necessary basic skills, which they have acquired across generations (from one generation to the next, or from qualified family members), but they need more specific skills, related to MAPs processes or the use of modern technology, which would increase process automation, increase efficiency and coordination for women. Usually, the women involved are family members and are not formally employed in the business.

### 5.5.3 FINANCING OPPORTUNITIES

Regarding Financing Opportunities, respondents mentioned that the income generated from engaging in MAPs collection is their only source of income. They perceive this business as a profitable business, especially if agreements are made with buyers, who are also seed suppliers. 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 are aware of the growing demand for organically grown Maps and have therefore met in the past with large consolidators interested in investing in the sector, particularly in this municipality, because the land is suitable for the cultivation of MAPs.

**Potential groups to be involved in MAPs.** Currently, 10-15 families are involved in the process of cultivating and collecting MAPs and each business (family) informally employs 2 to 10 workers. There is an opportunity to increase the number of growers and collectors by reaching over 30 families involved in this process. The locals also stated the intention to increase the variety of cultivated plants into more than just one species, thus diversifying their crops.

The demand from the area farmers and the goal is to have about 20 farms that are currently in contact with local MAPs consolidators. All of them have been contacted and are ready

to participate in a project for the cultivation of MAPs in their lands. The groups of farmers that are ready to start cultivating MAPs are present in almost all administrative units of the Municipality of Kurbin. But the focus should be on the areas with more tradition in the cultivation of medicinal plants.

**The areas that they are planting / will plant and with what?** There are diverse requirements for the types of MAPs plants that the farmers are looking to plant. Their request is based on:

- *lands that they own*
- *providing water for irrigation especially for some of the crops*
- *Prices in the in-country market*
- *easy to plant and resistance of plants to diseases and parasites.*

From the interviews with the women engaged in the sector or willing to, it was indicated that the preferences are more for plants like: *Melissa officinalis*, lavender, white oregano, rosemary, mallow, etc.

**Group of Mamurras** has about 15 ha ready to plant with MAPs.

**Groups of Fushe Kuqe (2 groups)** have secured 7 ha of agricultural land, but in the near future it is expected to expand up to 10 ha.

**Group of Milot** has secured 1 ha (this as a start, as the beginning of work), but with the increase of the number of its members it will soon go about 5 ha.

**Group of Laç** has secured 8 ha (to start with), but with the increase of the number of its members it will soon go to about 15 ha.

From the contacts made, we anticipate that in the management of MAPs activities, the participation of farmers at the representation level will be about 70% women and 30% men, while in terms of time they will be engaged in the process will be around these percentages:

- ✓ *Men will be about 40% of their time*
- ✓ *Women will be about 65% of their time*
- ✓ *School children about 10% of their time*

## 5.4 GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS FOR INTERVENTION

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

**Signing contracts with companies**, which can help farmers overcome market failures by creating links with markets for the production of high value products and thus guaranteeing a market for their products. Currently, the practice of signing selling contracts, as everywhere in the agricultural sector in our country, does not exist in the Municipality of Kurbin. Currently, in order to consolidate the progress of MAPs production, the collectors use agreements indicating the type and the amount of the product they need. The agreement requires the implementation of a controlled protocol of agro-technical services that will be used for the cultivation of MAPs, including chemical fertilization, protection against parasites

and diseases as well as drying in suitable conditions, avoiding contacts with animals, as well as consolidation of the product and its standardization is of utmost importance. However, contracts with farmers alone may not be sufficient to improve small household incomes if contractors do not provide inputs, technical assistance, and access to technology and input markets. MAPs growers have expressed interest in learning more about cultivation and in starting the cultivation of organic MAPs, especially if they receive seedlings from collectors, who have expressed willingness to do so as part of the contracts with farmers. Contracts would lead to the formalization of the sector and therefore to formal employment contracts for women involved in the sector and therefore, their access to social security and other benefits.

- **Clustering program for women** to strengthen their representation and enhance knowledge exchange, capacity building in advocacy and facilitation dialogue between women producers and municipality as well as to improve production processes jointly (in each link of the value chain), to take the product jointly to the consolidator to negotiate on the prices, to establish B2B linkages with other VCs (agritourism, tourism)– Associations related to Seedlings Collection, of MAPs collectors.
- **Focus on agriculture**, which in the current situation faces some difficulties. Relevant institutions, the municipality in particular, 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 lack of knowledge on the existence of IPARD schemes and national financing schemes, which directly contribute to improving the conditions of the sector.
- **MAPs marketing**. In recent years there is a trend of improving the marketing of MAPs everywhere in our country as well as in the Municipality of Kurbin. Currently the MAPs sector is turning into an important sector for the economy of the Municipality of Kurbin, while nationwide this sector has become the main leader of the exports. MAPs in the Municipality of Kurbin are being viewed by farmers as an important natural economic resource and especially as having development potential not yet fully used and not sustainable.
- **Processing of MAPs**. One of the weak points of the sector in the Municipality of Kurbin is that MAPs sales consist mainly of raw products. There are no MAPs processing businesses in this municipality. We estimate that one of the challenges of Kurbin producers would be to improve the physical and content standards of MAPs. In other words, we often suffer from the poor quality caused during cleaning and selection as well as from the pollution during these processes. Referring to the data from the chambers of commerce, 30% of the market value is lost due to these shortcomings. This is a great reserve to increase the revenues of the whole sector. Starting from the producers, it should be possible to increase the value of the MAPs products during the post-harvest treatment processes, which have a great impact on the final quality.

The following sections present some general recommendations for the MAPs value chain for the Municipality of Kurbin, categorized according to their impact on the sector (short / medium / long term) and budget requirements (low / medium / high):

MAP Value Chain Recommendations							
No.	RECOMMENDATIONS– MAPS VC	IMPACT			BUDGET		
		Short-term	Medium-term	Long-term	low	Medium	High
<b>1 INCREASE OF CULTIVATOR PROFESSIONAL EXPERTISE LEVELS</b>							
	Ongoing technical assistance, especially in the first year, in terms of:						
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Drafting the development plan</li> <li>✓ Technical assistance in negotiating with others</li> </ul>						
1.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Design of agro-technology that will have to be heard throughout the cultivation process</li> <li>✓ Follow-up and assistance on agro-technological cultivation processes</li> <li>✓ Consultation on post-harvest techniques</li> </ul>	X			X		
	Trainings to increase the level of knowledge about MAP cultivation:						
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Value of selected MAPs and know-how on their cultivation techniques</li> </ul>						
1.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Method of collection and reducing MAPs losses</li> <li>✓ Post-harvest treatment</li> <li>✓ Importance of the hygiene of the final product and how it is practically realized</li> </ul>	X			X		
	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 (in each link of the value chain), to take the product jointly to the consolidator to negotiate on price, to establish B2B linkages with other VCs (agritourism, tourism) – Associations related to Seedlings Collection, of MAPs collectors						
1.3				X	X		
<b>2 SMALL GRANTS FOR TECHNOLOGY IMPROVEMENT</b>							
	Support with basic and technological elements						
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Supporting elements used for planting MAPs in the field such as pickets, measuring tape, twine, soaking elements, etc.</li> </ul>						
2.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Seedling according to the development plan drafted in cooperation with the technical consultancy</li> </ul>		X		X		

## MAP Value Chain Recommendations

No.	RECOMMENDATIONS– MAPS VC	IMPACT			BUDGET		
		Short-term	Medium-term	Long-term	low	Medium	High
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Quality seeds according to the development plan drafted with technical consultancy</li> <li>✓ Packaging elements for the final product in order to preserve the product values of MAPs</li> <li>✓ Drip irrigation systems in a demonstrative way in order for farmers to see the values and advantages of innovative technologies</li> </ul>						
2.2	Support by increasing the quality value of the product, through the placement of simple dryers or photovoltaic dryers.		X			X	
3	<b>CERTIFICATION FOR 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 HACCP and Organic certification as the most basic requirements from national and international buyers.			X	X		
4	<b>AWARENESS FOR OPPORTUNITIES IN THE AGRICULTURE SECTOR FOCUSING ON MAPS</b>						
4.1	Information and awareness sessions about opportunities in the agricultural sector. Raising awareness of the economic importance of the MAPs sector and national and international demand for MAPs products in order to inspire their cultivation.			X	X		
4.2	Information and awareness sessions on IPARD funding schemes and other national schemes.			X	X		

Table 18: Recommendations for the MAPs VC.

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# EMPOWER WOMEN EARTHQUAKE RECOVERY

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

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