



**March 2025**

## **“Inclusion and Economic Empowerment in the Western Balkans”**

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# I. Project Description

The SOE-10 project aimed to foster economic inclusion and empowerment in Albania, particularly targeting vulnerable groups such as unemployed youth and women, small businesses, micro-farmers, and agribusinesses. The initiative was implemented across the municipalities of Tirana and Berat, with additional community-based activities in Mallakstra, Kuçova, and Cërrik. The project successfully contributed to job creation, business growth, and access to vocational training and economic opportunities.

## Specific objectives:

**Specific Objective 2: Conditions for new jobs created through the Green Growth Grants scheme and appropriate capacity building trainings.**

**Specific Objective 4: Local communities mobilized and have improved access and inclusion of vulnerable categories.**

## Key achievements:

**153 Green Growth Grants  
(52 women beneficiaries)**

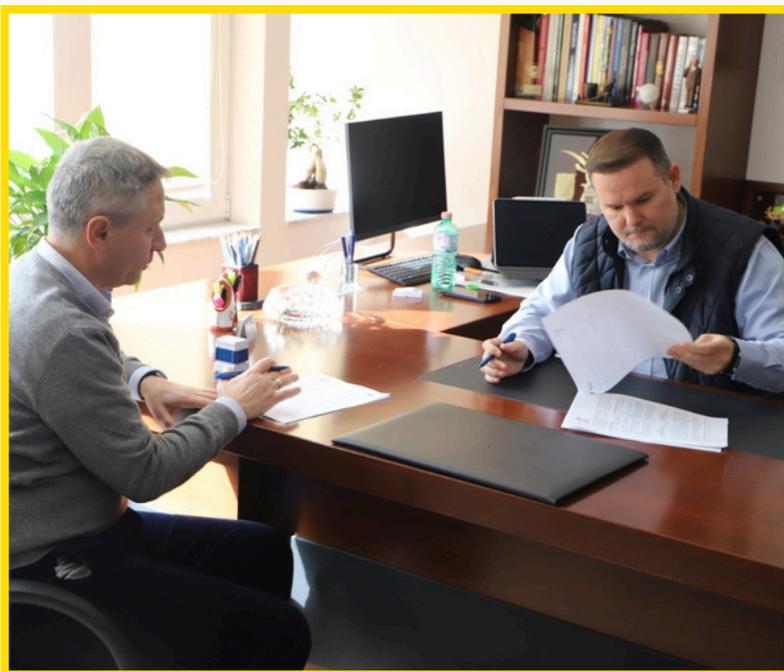
**166 individuals attended business trainings  
(33 women and 41 youth)**

**44 youth and women completed VET**

**4 community initiatives successfully implemented  
(benefiting 533 community members)**

## **II. Inception phase**

**Based on preliminary meetings with representatives of Tirana and Berat Municipalities who agreed to co-finance the direct costs of Green Growth Grants for 2023, several meetings were held with each of them in March–April 2023 immediately after the signature of the contract with the donor aiming to start the procedure of the co-financing.**



**On 20 March 2023, the Cooperation Agreement between Help and Berat Municipality was signed.**

**On 28 July 2023 the Cooperation Agreement between Help and Tirana Municipality was signed.**



# III. Green Growth Grants

## Information sessions



April - June 2023

Berat Municipality

# III. Green Growth Grants

## Information sessions



**August - September 2023**  
**Pezë, Ndroq, Bërzhitë, Zall-Herr**  
**Tirana Municipality**

# III. Green Growth Grants

## Information sessions



**August - September 2023**  
**Baldushk, Petrelë, Zall-Bastar, Kashar**  
**Tirana Municipality**

# III. Green Growth Grants

## Information sessions



**February 2024**  
**Bërzhitë, Zall-Bastar, Baldushk,**  
**Tirana Municipality**

# III. Green Growth Grants

## Information sessions



February 2024  
Ndroq, Petrelë, Zall - Herr  
Tirana Municipality

# III. Green Growth Grants

## Field Visits – Berat



**1-15 August 2023**  
**Berat Municipality**

# III. Green Growth Grants

## Field Visits – Tirana



October 2023; May 2024  
Tirana Municipality

# III. Green Growth Grants

## Equipment Distribution in Berat



December 2023  
Berat Municipality

# III. Green Growth Grants

## Equipment Distribution in Tirana



December 2023: July 2024  
Tirana Municipality

# III. Green Growth Grants

## Equipment Distribution in Tirana



December 2023; July 2024  
Tirana Municipality

# III. Green Growth Grants

## Equipment Distribution in Tirana



December 2023; July 2024  
Tirana Municipality

# IV. Business Training



**Berat Municipality - April 2024**  
**Tirana Municipality - February - March 2024**

# V. Vocational Training



**Berat Municipality  
QFP "Leta"**

**October - December 2023 - 17 Participants  
March - May 2024 - 15 participants  
December 2024 - February 2025 - 12 participants**

## VI. Community Initiatives



### Multifuncional Community Centre Mallakastër

During 2023, Help in Albania implemented a community initiative in Mallakastër Municipality equipping the newly established Multifunctional Community Center (MFCC) in Ballsh with essential furniture, creating a functional space for delivering social services to the local community. Since September 2023, the center has provided social and employability services for around 153 individuals. This initiative has significantly improved access to essential services, fostering social inclusion and community well-being.

## VI. Community Initiatives



### Daily Youth Centre - Kuçovë

The community-based initiative at the Kuçova Youth Centre has had an impact on the local youth community. Around 35 youth attend the centre daily. The donated ICT equipment has enriched the educational experience at the centre. This modern equipment has enabled the centre to offer a variety of digital literacy and digital skills training programmes. The ICT equipment has also supported the centre's efforts to bridge the digital divide by providing access to digital technology for all youth, regardless of their socio-economic background.

## VI. Community Initiatives



### "Selman Meta" Primary School – Bërzhitë, Tiranë

The community-based initiative at "Selman Meta" Primary School in Bërzhitë has had an impact on the students at this school. There are 160 students attending the "Selman Meta" school across the 9 grades including elementary and middle schools. The donated ICT equipment has enriched the educational experience at the school. The introduction of recycling bins has instilled a sense of environmental responsibility within the school community. Students are actively participating in recycling activities, learning about the importance of waste management and sustainability.

## VI. Community Initiatives



### Multifuncional Community Centre Cërrik

The community-based initiative in Cërrik is expected to be observed once the municipal premises have been renovated to serve as the new Cërrik Multifunctional Community Centre. The initiative is supporting the refurbished of the MFCC with ICT equipment and will aid in creating a space for the delivery of community-based social care services to vulnerable children and parents in Cërrik. The donated ICT equipment will enrich the educational experience at the centre. This modern equipment will also enable the centre to offer a variety of digital literacy and digital skills training programmes.

## VII. Human Interest Stories



**Kullolli Family – “This support has given us hope and motivation to keep growing. We want to build a better future for our children, and now we feel like at this moment we have the right tools to do it.”**

**The Kullolli family has long been involved in the olive cultivation and farming in the village of Pëllumbas, Bërzhitë in the Municipality of Tirana, an area known for its rich but demanding agricultural landscape. However, the family work was largely dependent on labor-intensive methods. Without proper equipment, olive harvesting and maintenance required excessive physical effort, which at some point was questioning their continuity on farming.**

**The family relied on traditional, manual methods for olive harvesting, which was slow and physically exhausting. Pruning trees required basic hand tools, often leading to inefficiencies and increased effort. Additionally, the lack of proper harvesting nets meant that a significant portion of their olives would be lost during collection.**

**Through the IGA grant scheme, the Kullolli family was awarded essential agricultural equipment, including:**

- **A tiller to improve land preparation and farming efficiency;**
- **An olive harvester, making the harvesting process faster and less labor-intensive;**
- **Pruning shears, ensuring proper tree maintenance and healthier olive yields.**
- **A net for collecting olives, reducing losses and improving the harvesting process.**

**The impact of the provided equipment has been significant on increased productivity, improved efficiency, reducing physical strain and better market positioning.**

## VII. Human Interest Stories



**Kodra Family – “Having the right tools has changed a lot of things for us. What used to take days of back-breaking work now takes just a few hours. We can finally focus on growing our farm instead of just maintaining it.”**

**The Kodra family has been working on their farm for generations, focusing on vineyards and olive groves in Zall-Herr. Before receiving equipment support, their farming operations were limited by outdated equipment and heavy manual labour.**

**The family struggled with land preparation, which required significant effort due to the lack of proper tools. Transporting harvested crops and grapes was time-consuming and inefficient, as they relied on traditional methods and hand equipment. Additionally, maintaining their land and managing weeds was a labour-intensive task, making it difficult to ensure healthy crop growth. These limitations affected the overall production and income, putting pressure on the financial stability of the family.**

**Through the IGA grant scheme, the Kodra family received this farming equipment, including:**

- **A tiller to improve land preparation, making plowing and soil aeration more efficient;**
- **A trailer connecting with the tiller, allowing them to transport harvested grapes, olives, and farming materials with ease.**
- **A corded and disc grass trimmer, helping them maintain their land by efficiently clearing weeds and overgrown grass.**

**The impact of the provided equipment has been transformative for the Kodra family on enhancing land preparation, improving efficiency and better land maintenance.**

## VII. Human Interest Stories



**Koqani Family – “We’re not just cultivating olives; we’re cultivating a legacy for our children and future generations”.**

**In the village of Morava, before you enter Berat, there you may find the Koqani family and their transformative farm journey that would not only change their family lives but also contribute to the thriving agricultural landscape of their community. The Koqani family is compound of 6 members, all working in the farm.**

**With a passion for olives and a desire to innovate, Besije and her husband set out to explore grafting techniques that could enhance the quality and yield of their olive trees. Grafting allowed them to combine the hardiness of one olive variety with the disease resistance of another, resulting in stronger, more resilient trees. They also turned into beekeeping and honey production, creating a unique synergy between their olive orchard and the world of bees.**

**Traditional farming methods were proven to be insufficient, while they struggled to reach their full potential. The equipment they possessed were old and mechanical thus not time efficient and required a lot of physical effort.**

**The Koqani family were supported with an electric olive harvester and an electric honey extractor.**

**The support from Help has helped them to be more effective and efficient. For example, the honey extraction process primarily done manually now is done electrically and in less amount of time.**

## VII. Human Interest Stories



**Sheftelia Family - "It has always been about belief and support. We turned our passion into a business and we're excited about what the future holds for our family"**

**The Sheftelia family consists of 4 members and they have been involved in agriculture for more than 15 years. They started cultivating vineyards 13 years ago, as a field of great interest to them. They also produce grape by-products such as wine and brandy. The machineries that they had before the help from Help are mainly manual machineries that require a lot of physical work and much more time to deliver the product.**

**In the early days, the Sheftelia's family faces numerous challenges. Outdated equipment and limited resources hindered their ability to maximize the potential of their vineyard. The equipment they possessed were old and manual. As Mirela stated - "We were struggling with outdated machinery, and this support gave us the tools we needed to unlock the potential of our vineyard."**

**The family was supported with fermenting tank for wine and an electric grape press equipment.**

**With the new tools they increased their grape yield while maintaining the high quality of their produce. The new equipment also improved the overall production of wine.**

**They dream that their vineyard become a popular destination for wine enthusiasts and tourist alike, besides their customer base to local restaurants and community.**



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