



Dear friends of the earth,

We are happy to introduce you to an exciting project: after months of work it has now matured enough, so that we can share the first seeds!

The project has the ambitious title of “**GROWING COMMUNITIES: Empowerment through social permaculture**”. Let us tell you a bit more about the germinating ideas and flourishing actions around it!

Our departure point was the common motivation of three organisations across Europe to exchange their know-hows on learning tools and methods to endeavor two of the biggest challenges of our time: **social inclusion and environmental crisis**.

Eduplus Association (Spain), Trial and Error (Germany) and Association Dominou (Roumania) have all three concrete experiences of these challenges in their daily work, but also positive experiences of transformation.

The exchange around these experiences is the ground for this cooperation : our intention is that these shared experiences and findings, gathered and condensed in theory and practice, can help other organisations, multipliers and facilitators to make a change in their local contexts as well.

The joint observation that **gardening and mostly permacultural gardening can have a positive impact not only on the environment but also on people and the way they live together, they participate in social life and interact with their surroundings, brought us to put our focal point on the learnings and potentials around it.**

The aim of this project is to enable adults – including vulnerable adults – to acquire a wide set of skills, knowledge and competences needed for participating actively in modern society in a lifelong perspective, such as critical thinking, civic and environmental awareness, food autonomy and learning for healthy lifestyles.

The most powerless people in our societies are likely to be worst affected by the consequences of a crisis (like the COVID 19 pandemia), not only economically, but also regarding the access to affordable and balanced food. Increasing food autonomy and changing consumption patterns towards sustainable habits could be a way for adult

educators to motivate and empower final beneficiaries to improve their socio-economic situation, health and educational opportunities.

As our associations work with learners with disadvantages and environmental education we were and are **interested in finding educational principles which can link social and environmental questions**. The **principles of permaculture** appear as very constructive in this regard and therefore we aim to explore and propose here a **pedagogical frame of social permaculture, with focus on learners with disadvantages**.

Our aim is to provide new approaches to facilitators to teach learners, including adults from disadvantaged backgrounds, to become true actors of change in their local communities.

Concretely, we are working on **3 main outputs**:

1. An **European Educational model** to empower adult educators to teach learners, including adults from disadvantaged backgrounds, to become true factors of change in their local communities.
2. **Bite-size learning tools** - a set of training and self-paced learning materials (OER) that support disadvantaged groups and adult educators in implementing transformative community processes.
3. **An Engagement program** to increase motivation for participation in society of 60 adults, with focus on those with fewer possibilities, who will exchange experience during microtrainings and social activities with peers

Are you interested in our research, experimentations and results?

We are currently working hard to develop these open source pedagogical tools and we would be happy to share them with you !

You can follow us on social media or/ and join our newsletter : then there is no way to miss our latest actions, tips and pedagogical tools for social permaculture !

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