



## Project Newsletter

**Recent advances on MountainHer Project**

## Annual Meeting Terbol (Lebanon)

A week of discussion about project advancement and future plannings.



The 1st annual project meeting organized and hosted by the Lebanese Agricultural Research Institute (LARI) and gathered all MountainHER partners was held in Zahle (Lebanon) on June 2023. The meeting was a perfect floor for discussing about project advancements and challenges. Each partner presented activities and deliverables achieved. The meeting was a great opportunity for discussion and future planning. LARI also organized a field tour for the on-station trials for all project partners and agreed that LARI will share the seeds for all partners to be sown in 2023-2024. The participants had the possibility to visit the on-farm trials and a local women cooperative involved in the project and had the chance to taste some of the cooperative products prepared from durum wheat.

## Workshop on agroecology at SIAM

A great chance for presenting achievements and perspectives and to discuss about agroecology.



The workshop aimed to open a discussion about agroecology, the project objectives and their potential impact on social and economic progress in the remote mountain communities. From May 3<sup>rd</sup> to May 7<sup>th</sup>, 2024, the workshop was organized by ICARDA and INRA with the participation of the INRA General Director Dr. Fawzi Bekkaoui, the project coordinator Dr. Rachid Mrabet and several other INRA researchers. Dr. Filippo Bassi and Dr. Andrea Visioni represented ICARDA at the meeting. The SIAM is the most important agricultural fair of Africa with an average of half million of visitors per year and therefore represent a great opportunity to showcase the project to a broad audience.

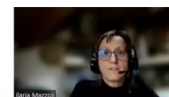
## Presentation of the project at the International ODT Forum, Crete (Greece), November 2023

The [MountainHER](https://lnkd.in/dQDtFpzt) project was been presented at the [Forum Origine, Diversité, et Territoires](https://lnkd.in/dQDtFpzt) (in CRETE, Greece). An interesting discussion has followed. We wish to thank the Forum with its president [Dominique Barjolle](https://lnkd.in/dQDtFpzt) and all the organisation team, the Origin for Sustainability Association (<https://lnkd.in/dQDtFpzt>) and the [MOUNTMED INSTITUTE](https://lnkd.in/dQDtFpzt) ([mountmedinstitute.com](https://lnkd.in/dQDtFpzt)).

At this link, the MountainHER presentation can be watched: <https://lnkd.in/dA5PbtwW>



Forum Origin, Diversity and Territories 2023  
Workshop 3 – Rural and mountain areas in Transition



Session 4 - The Mediterranean mountains:  
an exemplary form of transition



**MountainHER project:** Creating opportunities to increase the added value of mountain food products while strengthening women-led associations to ensure agroecological transformation in the Mediterranean basin  
I. Mazzoli et al (Open Field Srl), Italy

## Publication of an article on the project, in December 2023

The MountainHER project was described in a divulgative article on the Italian magazine "Assaggiarmi", December 2023 Edition.

You can read the article by following this link: <https://lnkd.in/dirHjRhF>

## Publication of an article on the project, June 2023

The MountainHER project told in the Italian Alpine Club magazine ("L'Orsaro"), June 2023 edition.

## Germplasm Sowing (all partners)

### Croatia

Croatia: In Skrad, Croatia, on October 13, 2023, the PINS team conducted a validation test by sowing MountainHER wheat and barley seeds grown in the previous season. Within two weeks, the seeds sprouted, and promising results are anticipated for the year 2024.



## Morocco

On May 18, 2003, in Morocco, a participatory diagnostic workshop was conducted with Al Amal Cooperative, a partner of the MountainHER Project. The workshop involved a comprehensive review of various aspects of production, marketing, and governance, with active participation from all the women members of the cooperative.



Morocco, May 30, 2023: Field day for the participatory selection of wheat and barley varieties on the farmer's land at Guigou.



## Algeria

Algeria, June 8, 2023: A productive exchange with women farmers regarding the selection of ITGC varieties in the MountainHer project, conducted under both conventional and agroecological systems in Sétif.



Algeria, 26 december 2023, Seed preparation and sowing operation in farms members of MontainHer project in Sétif





## Lebanon

Typically, the sowing period falls between mid-November and mid-December. However, due to a shortage of rain, on-station planting was delayed until December 20th, with germination recorded on January 1st. Subsequently, owing to weather conditions, on-farm trials involving 10 farmers were planted on January 2nd and 3rd. Soil analysis and moisture assessments were conducted for both on-station and on-farm trials prior to planting.

## Italy

On November 13th, braving strong winds and grappling with the impact of exceptionally heavy rain in the previous weeks on soil structure, the Open Fields - Stuard team successfully completed the planting operations in the experimental fields of the Italian MountainHER 'living lab' at Corte di Rigoso Cooperativa di Comunità. They planted both barley and durum wheat varieties, intending to assess their 'local' performance through a comparison of 'usual' and agroecological techniques.



On Dec 18th the Italian MountainHER fields were visited for a check. Experimental areas over 1000 meters s.l.m. received exceptional rain and in this period are very cold. Nearby fields

located at around 800 meters s.l.m., where (out of the experimental areas) durum wheat was planted earlier, show the importance of early planting (October better than November).



## Event in Rigoso (Italy) with Birrificio Emiliano

On the basis of ideas and expertise that are being developed within the mountainHER project, the first edition of a local kermesse, called "Rigoso in Festi Valle", has been launched by the "Cooperativa di Comunità Corte di Rigoso" on September 1st, 2nd and 3rd. Open Fields and the partner Birrificio Emiliano participated. Dedicated meetings were held, regarding further developments. The event also hosted a conference with Alessio Gennari, agroecology, biodiversity expert, and, of course, a presentation of MountainHER and of the involvement of the Rigoso Cooperative in the project. In the photo, the project poster is visible.



# RIGOSO in Festi VALLE 1-2-3 SETTEMBRE 2023

COOP. COMUNITÀ  
CORTE di  
RIGOSO



✓ BIRRA

✓ ARTIGIANATO

✓ MUSICA

✓ LABORATORI PER BAMBINI

✓ GASTRONOMIA  
DI MONTAGNA



## Training on seed cleaning and processing (Tunisia)

In an effort to address challenges related to access to high-quality seeds in remote mountainous areas, a training day on seed cleaning and processing was organized on September 28, 2023, at the INRAT agricultural research station in Kef. The training aimed to benefit 50 farmers and policymakers involved in the seed multiplication system, ensuring the establishment of community seed enterprises.

The focus of the training was on operating the locally manufactured seed processing machine and was provided to a selected farmer committed to establishing a community seed enterprise for the multiplication and sale of new cultivars under the PRIMA MountainHER project. It is anticipated that these 'informal' units will be guided to obtain official legal recognition.



## Training on seed multiplication (Italy)

On December 4<sup>th</sup>, a dedicated training began, starting with theory, with Open Fields experts.



## Open field day Croatia



*Dođite i posjetite*

**EKSPERIMENTALNO POLJE  
PŠENICE I JEČMA PROJEKTA  
MOUNTAINHER**

Okupljanje ispred zgrade Lokalne razvojne agencije PINS, Ivana Gorana Kovačića 3, Skrad **08.08.2023. u 9 sati**,

- mjesto posjeta: polje u Divjakama
- prijave na broj tel. 051/820-045

više o projektu saznajte na  
<https://mel.cgiar.org/projects/mountainher>




## Open Field day Italy

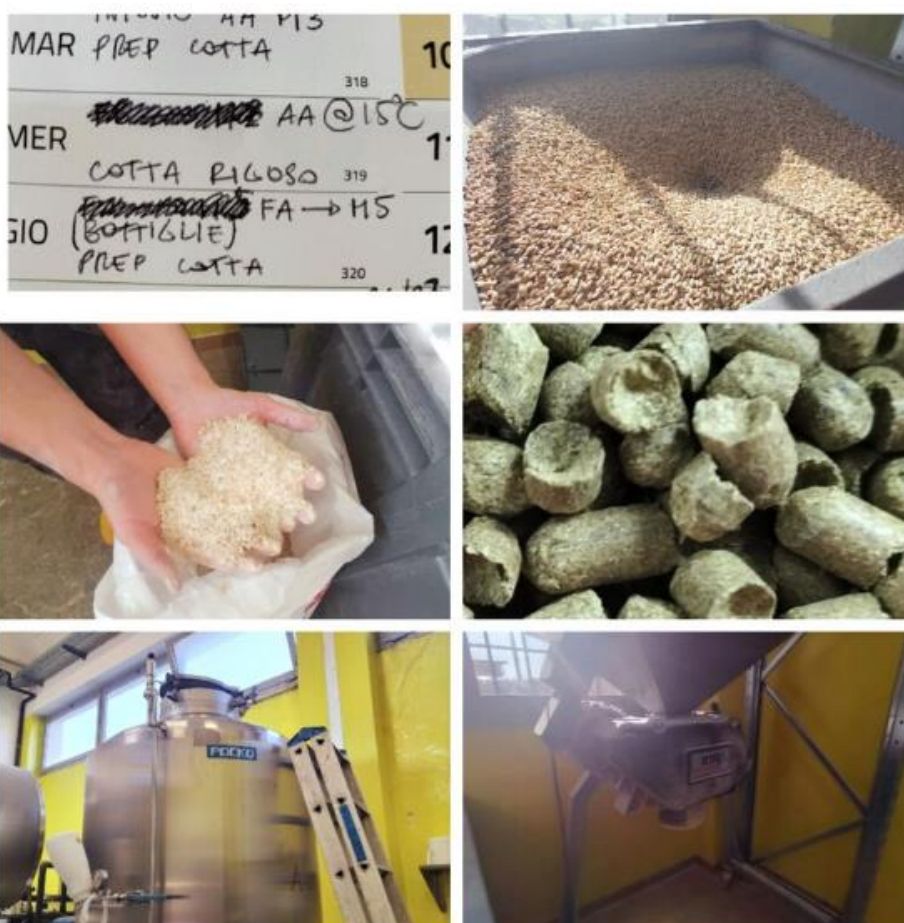
On July 7, 2023, the first field visit of the PRIMA MountainHER ([https://lnkd.in/dDCS\\_2zq](https://lnkd.in/dDCS_2zq)) project took place in Rigoso (PR). The participants observed the different varieties of barley and durum wheat and expressed their own evaluation. The project is a multidisciplinary intervention in six pilot mountain communities to strengthen the pathway from farm to fork by promoting agroecological production solutions and income opportunities through short value chains and circular economies. Production of traditional products with high added value, interception of marketing opportunities and definition of business models.



## Beer production... a beginning (Italy)

The MountainHER partner Birrifificio Emiliano (Anzola, BO) started beer production with the Cooperative "own" water coming from under the mountain, waiting for locally produced barley to grow...

After all, 95% of beer is made of water, and the quality of the used water matters. The Rigoso cooperative (1131 meters above sea level) has its own water, coming from the heart of the mountains, which has been fully analysed within the MountainHER project ... it is top quality! While the testing of the perfect barley varieties to be cultivated in Rigoso fields (with agro-ecological practices) is ongoing, one thousand litres of the Rigoso water travelled towards the premises of the Birrifificio Emiliano partner (MountainHER project). The product will be labeled with the logos of the MountainHER project and of the Rigoso cooperative, and used for a concept and product test during dedicated focus groups with women of all ages. As soon as the cooperative is able to produce its own barley and malt, the potential for own beer production will develop.





**MOUNTAIN  
HER**

Empowering women in mountain  
farming communities



**PRIMA**  
PARTNERSHIP FOR RESEARCH AND INNOVATION  
IN THE MEDITERRANEAN AREA