

4th South African Conference on Essential and Vegetable Oils

Session 5: Collaborative Success
Africa Partners to MAPS ERASMUS Project

Esther Ngina,
Herbspice Market Link Ltd (Kenya)
Mobile: +254723353739
email: esther@herbspicemarket.com
www.herbspicemarket.com

24 July 2026



Presentation outline

- ❖ Introduction
- ❖ Herbspice Market Link Activities
- ❖ Medicinal and Aromatic Herbs Academy (MAPS)
- ❖ MAPS Project and its importance
- ❖ Training and Skills development
- ❖ Role of Herbspice in implementation of MAPS
- ❖ Benefits
- ❖ Key takeaways



Introduction - Herbspice Market Link



- ❖ **Harbspice Market**
- ❖ Established in 2016
- ❖ Kenyan agribusiness company dedicated to developing sustainable and profitable value chains for herbs, spices, and medicinal plants.
- ❖ Works closely with smallholder farmers, commercial growers, and international buyers to produce high-quality crops that meet export market requirements.
- ❖ Promotes women entrepreneurship to create decent jobs for rural women

Herbspice Market Link activities

- Farmer organization and capacity building
- Market access and export linkages
- Value addition for herbs and spices
- Quality assurance and SPS compliance
- Business development support for smallholder producers



Our Strategic Position

- ▶ The company serves as the Kenya implementation partner within the MAPS Erasmus initiative.

Medicinal and Aromatic Plants Academy MAPS ERASMUS Project

The Medicinal and Aromatic Plants Academy for Female Entrepreneurs in Africa (MAPS) is an Erasmus+ supported international partnership that aims to strengthen the participation of African women entrepreneurs in the medicinal and aromatic plants sector.

- **MAPS objective is to build a competitive, inclusive and sustainable African MAP sector led by empowered women entrepreneurs.**

- **Specific objective**
 - Build entrepreneurial capacity
 - Strengthen academia-industry collaboration
 - Improve value addition and quality
 - Foster innovation and digital learning
 - Increase market access



MAPS activities in Kenya



Why the MAPS Project Matters

Challenges in the MAP Sector

- Limited technical knowledge
- Weak access to markets
- Inadequate processing capacity
- Limited financing opportunities
- Low participation of women in higher-value segments of the value chain

The Project interventions

- Creating specialized training programs
- Supporting entrepreneurship development
- Promoting innovation and value addition
- Connecting African enterprises to regional and global markets



Training and skills development

1) Skills Development

Enhance technical and entrepreneurial skills of women in the MAP sector.

2) Sustainable Production

Promote sustainable cultivation and harvesting practices.

3) Value Addition

Improve processing, quality management and value addition.

4) Market Access

Strengthen market access through partnerships and networking.

5) Knowledge Exchange

Facilitate knowledge exchange between African and European institutions

Role of Herbspice Market Link in MAPS

Kenya Partner Contributions

- ✓ Implementation Partner
- ✓ Identifying and mobilizing women entrepreneurs
- ✓ Facilitating training and mentorship programs
- ✓ Providing market intelligence
- ✓ Supporting product quality and compliance
- ✓ Linking producers to buyers and exporters
- ✓ Promoting value-added essential oil products



Benefits to Partners

African Partners (Capacity and Growth)

- Capacity & Growth
- Access to international expertise
- Training materials and curricula
- Research collaboration
- Business networking opportunities
- Enhanced visibility in global MAP markets

European Partners (Knowledge exchange)

- Knowledge Exchange
- Access to African value chains
- Applied research opportunities
- Field-based innovation testing
- Strengthened international cooperation
- Expanded impact of Erasmus+ initiatives



Benefits to Women Entrepreneurs



Skills
Technical Training



Income
Improved earnings



Markets
Better access



Processing
Value addition



Quality
Compliance



Export
Trade
Opportunities

The ultimate goal is economic empowerment through participation in higher-value segments of the essential oils and MAP industry.

Key Message for the Conference

Theme: Treasure of the past



Trophy of the future

Africa possesses rich traditional knowledge in medicinal and aromatic plants.

Through partnerships such as the MAPS Erasmus Project, this heritage can be transformed into:

- Innovation
- Inclusive growth
- Global competitiveness
- Empowerment, creation of decent incomes for the vulnerable

Collaboration is the bridge between Africa's botanical heritage and its future leadership in essential oils and medicinal plant products.

Thank You

Questions & Discussion