



## **MADRID** COMMUNITY GARDENS

Community gardening projects are providing urban residents with the opportunity to reap the health benefits of growing their food, engaging in physical activity, and connecting socially. These projects offer the city a chance to simultaneously tackle several risk factors for diabetes.

---

### **Partners**

- Ayuntamiento de Madrid
- Madrid Salud



## **Residents in Madrid are sowing the seeds of good health**

### **Outdoor spaces offer health, social, and environmental benefits**

Approximately 600,000 of the 6.6 million living in the Madrid region live with diabetes<sup>1</sup>. Located within this region, the city of Madrid is home to 3.3 million inhabitants<sup>1</sup>. Almost half of the adults in the city are overweight or living with obesity, as are 40.9% of the children between the ages of 3 and 12<sup>2</sup>. There is a strong need for outdoor spaces that encourage citizens to participate in healthy behaviours.

There are many social, environmental, and health-related benefits to community gardens. In 2010, health professionals from various Municipal Community Health Centres in Madrid started working on community gardening projects. Madrid Salud, the city government institution responsible for health promotion and disease prevention, consolidated these efforts to create the Community Health Gardens project.

### **Shared spaces encourage community engagement**

The Community Health Gardens project was designed to bring together people from the community, private organisations, and public sector agencies. Trained professionals run each project, and the gardens are used by the residents of the districts in which they are located. Stakeholders encourage the whole community to engage in healthier habits within these shared spaces. The gardens are open to all and residents can choose to engage spontaneously with the project. Some residents are referred to the project by their local health centre.

### Working and gardening together

The stakeholders involved in the Community Health Gardens project have formed a highly committed working group that includes citizens, community associations, educational centres, social services and centres for senior citizens. The Environment Area, Employment Agency of the Madrid City Council and the El Bancal Association are also part of the working group.

By growing healthy food and bringing the community closer to the food that they eat, the project aims to fully contribute to health promotion, build interpersonal relationships among participants, increase individual confidence and autonomy, teach participants new skills and promote better environmental awareness.

