

Organic stands for Gender Equality



The organic movement has the potential to further fair and equitable opportunities by advancing gender equality and women's empowerment in Pacific countries and territories. Organic can build an alternative model to conventional agricultural systems using traditional practices and knowledge combined with the newest scientific knowledge.

HOW ORGANIC EMPOWERS WOMEN

Growing evidence shows that organic provides opportunities for women's empowerment in a way that industrial agriculture has not. The organic sector's holistic fundamentals often create more equitable gender distribution of labour, benefits and power that challenge unequal traditional agricultural systems.

Women's involvement and gender equality in organic value chains is promoted through:

- ✓ Advancement of smaller scale family farms that have fewer mechanical processes
- ✓ Decrease in reliance on commercial inputs
- ✓ Increased focus on crop diversity, food security and quality nutrition over commodity crop production
- ✓ Emphasis on traditional skills and knowledge, local markets and value addition products
- ✓ Stronger attention to health, wellbeing and social implications as well as fair trade working conditions (i.e., better payment / price premiums)
- ✓ Greater space for innovative ideas coupled with environmental sustainability principles.

The organic farming movement has significantly lowered barriers to entry by creating a better environment for the participation of women farmers. Women farmers generally have fewer capital resources than their male counterparts – a gender gap that can be lessened by the higher value of (and therefore greater incentive to grow) organic foods.

Organic farming also brings farm models closer to urban and suburban locations and in turn helps increase accessibility to a wider population that includes women, whose mobility is often limited and challenging.





WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION GROWS THE ORGANIC MOVEMENT

Organic opens opportunities to unlock women's potential for involvement in the sector – from farming to entrepreneurship. Women's participation also broadens and deepens organic and sustainable agriculture sector goals, emphasizing a broader perspective on livelihoods and welfare that moves beyond the cash-based narrative of traditional economic principles. Thanks to their multiple and varied roles, inherited over generations, women have become active conservation and natural resource restoration agents.

Profit is important to all farmers, but women often closely interlink profit to sustainability. Health and safety, social and environmental justice, and community development and responsibility are key considerations that drive women's choices, attitudes and decisions as producers, entrepreneurs, and consumers. The organic movement creates space for a deeper dialogue on, and consequent recognition of, women's contributions to agriculture and community through a deeper emphasis on the holistic approach and spiritual interconnection among the elements of nature.

AN EQUITABLE ORGANIC FUTURE

All Pacific communities include women and men with individual roles and perspectives that make different but equally valuable contributions to agriculture. Sharing a spirit of balance from all genders is essential to finding sustainable solutions that address social inequalities, food insecurity and critical environmental challenges in the Pacific Region.

Organic stakeholders need to make strong commitments to preserve and further develop organic farming, not only as an alternative agricultural movement, but also as a social movement that addresses gender equality.

POETCom's gender inclusive people-centred approach is a ground-breaking milestone for gender integration into the Pacific organic agriculture sector. POETCom's approach is based on traditional knowledge and cultural prosperity, a way forward that addresses the effects of industrial agriculture and the current state of unequal gender opportunities.

POETCom's Strategic Plan 2021-2025 includes specific recommended actions to guide POETCom, its partners and Pacific governments on resources for achieving gender equality and the empowerment of Pacific region women and girls.

Find the Strategic Plan on [this link](#)

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POETCom is housed in Land Resources Division of the Pacific Community. Contact: poetcom@spc.int for more information.

