

Structure and Function of a Participatory Guarantee System (PGS)

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Introduction to PGS

1. Understand the basic components of a PGS
2. Learn the roles and responsibilities within a PGS
3. Explore real-world case studies of successful PGS models

What is a Participatory Guarantee System (PGS)?

"A PGS is a locally-based quality assurance system, designed to ensure that producers adhere to organic standards."

Main Principles of PGS:

Participation: Involvement of all stakeholders including producers, consumers, and facilitators.

Transparency: Open processes and clear communication among all parties.

Trust: Building mutual confidence between producers and consumers.

Learning: Continuous improvement and knowledge sharing among participants.

Comparison with Third-Party Certification:

Cost: PGS is more cost-effective.

Accessibility: More suitable for smallholder farmers.

Control: Offers more local control and adaptability.

Why Choose PGS?

Advantages of PGS over Third-Party Certification:

Community-Based Approach: Encourages community development and involvement.

Cost-Effectiveness: Lower costs due to the local nature of the system.

Suitability for Smallholder Farmers: More accessible and relevant for smaller farming operations.

Discussion Point: Engage participants in thinking about how PGS could benefit their own communities.

Basic Components of a PGS

Farmer Groups:

Collective responsibility for the certification process.
Examples of how farmer groups operate in a PGS.

Standards:

Development of locally adapted organic standards.
How these standards are formulated and agreed upon by stakeholders.

Participatory Approach:

How different stakeholders (farmers, consumers, experts) participate.

Basic Components of a PGS

Verification Process:

Peer Reviews: Detailed explanation of the peer review process, including how farmers review each other's practices.

Self-Assessments: Role of self-assessment in the certification process.

Decision-Making:

Consensus-Driven Decisions: How the group makes collective certification decisions.

PGS Stakeholders and Their Roles

Farmers: Responsibilities in peer review, adhering to standards, and participating in group activities.

Consumers: Role in providing feedback and ensuring transparency.

Local Experts: Providing technical knowledge and guidance.

Facilitators: Ensuring smooth functioning and adherence to standards.

Certifying Body: A local committee that oversees the certification process.

Responsibilities within a PGS

Farmers' Role:

Active participation in peer reviews and inspections.
Continuous learning and adherence to organic standards.

Facilitator's Role:

Managing group dynamics, organizing meetings, and ensuring standards are met.

Consumers' Role:

Acting as observers and providing feedback on the certification process.

Coordinator's Role:

Leading the process, training members, and documenting activities.

Case Study:

Example:

Key Factors that Led to Success:

Community involvement, transparency, and continuous education.

Lessons Learned for Replication:

Discuss how the success story can be adapted to different contexts.

Key Takeaways from Session

Recap of Main Points:

PGS is a community-based, participatory certification model.

Key components and stakeholders play distinct roles.

Real-world examples show the potential for successful implementation.

Call to Action:

- »»» More Members
- »»» More Representation
- »»» More Impact

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change, together!



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