

Women in Sociobiodiversity - CEDAC's Participatory Guarantee System



- Promoting sustainable products made by rural women in Brazil •

Produced by:



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1. BACKGROUND

The **Women in Sociobiodiversity - Participatory Guarantee System** was born as part of the 22-year journey building the *Rede de Comercialização Solidária de Agricultores Familiares e Extrativistas do Cerrado* (RCS) - a cooperative network to help farming families and traditional gatherers in the Cerrado biome of Brazil - assisted by the Centro de Desenvolvimento Agroecológico do Cerrado (CEDAC), operating through CoopCerrado. The RCS was built from the organization of two socio-productive chains based on sustainable and cooperative collection and trading of regional vegetation such as: *faveira*, *fava d'anta* or *favela* and *baru*.

The experience of sustainable *faveira* (a Brazilian bean producing tree) management, which was advised by CEDAC and developed by members of the RCS, provided a significant change in working relationships between men and women. In addition, there has been a significant change in family income as well as in the process of community organization. Until the year 2000, the harvesting of *faveiras* resulted in awful exploitation of farmers and gatherers in the Cerrado, mainly women who, through cooperation, exchanged their labor for food. And, when they received cash for their work, it was only 50% of what men received. On average, each male worker received R\$0.10 per kilo of fruit and female workers just R\$0.05 per kilo of fruit.

PRINCIPLES OF THE NETWORK

1. Respect the Cerrado

- No burning;
- Collecting only fruit that has fallen to the ground and leaving part of the fruit for the animals;

Not dropping the fruit with a stick or any other instrument;

Cultivating gardens in an ecological manner, guaranteeing the biological diversity and autonomy of the agroextractivists.

2. Guarantee development with democracy and justice

- Not exploiting other agroextractivists, through the practice of buying fruits, or even hiring labor for the collection;

- Work must be family-based, without the participation of children up to 14 years old in activities that may compromise their physical, moral, and intellectual integrity, and participating adolescents must be attending school;
- The participation of women with equal rights;
- Establishing a fair price and encouraging sustainable consumption.

3. Strengthen the identity of Cerrado agroextractivists

- Valuing their traditional knowledge, as a form of survival and autonomy;
- With the participation of families that carry out activities such as agriculture, extractivism, and fishing under a family economy regime;
- Fighting for the guarantee of the means of social reproduction, such as land, water, and the biodiversity of the cerrado.



Poster on the sustainable management of baru

The extractivist work was monitored through an Agro-extractivist Notebook that allowed to evaluate by whom the work was done and the situation of the managed ecosystems. And one of the data that brought up the reality of the extractivist women was their socio-productive invisibility. About 98% of the production was paid to the men members of the cooperative and the production came from approximately 55% of women who recorded their collection in the notebook. And deepening this data, we found that they had no access to financial resources from the family production unit, despite the care and production/management work done.

So during all these years CoopCerrado has been stimulating mechanisms to guarantee the inclusion of women in the life of the cooperative. Currently, Coopcerrado has 44.8% women cooperative members, 36% are community center monitors, have their own bank account, possess personal documents, participate in public policies, and access social security as special insured members.

In 2020 from these achievements and with the experience of a system of participatory organic certification (SPG) started in 2012 and approved by MAPA (Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock) in 2014, where CEDAC assumes the role as an anchor organization, or OPAC- Participatory Organism for the Assessment of Organic Conformity is proposed the inclusion of a gender scope within the SPG / CEDAC to strengthen and drive change within families, communities and network. Aiming to value and give visibility to women in Brazilian society through their sustainable products, we propose the creation of the Sociobio Women's seal.

The seal seeks to reach not only consumers who identify with this value, but to create a strong adhesion of companies in the adoption of these criteria for the purchase of their products, thus expanding the impact and visibility of agroextractivist women. CoopCerrado has large, medium, and small clients and works with exports, weaving a trade network for the products of people and communities from the Cerrado and transition areas with the Amazon.

In partnership with Conesus in the nuts export project, CoopCerrado is invited to participate and gets to know the company Teça, which develops actions/mentoring in the construction of GESI (Gender, Inclusion and Race).

In this way, Coopcerrado presents its proposal for the construction and development of the Women Sociobio seal, which is now supported by Conesus and Teçá.

This document is the result of this first stage of the construction of the Women Sociobio seal by CoopCerrado and CEDAC.

2. CENTRAL PROBLEM

Gender inequality and the sexual division of activities in rural areas is a reflection of the ingrained cultural perception of what is considered the role of men and women in the family and society.

According to Herrera (2016)¹, men are usually assigned productive agricultural work, while women are assigned domestic and care-related work. What is considered light and heavy work varies according to culture, as many women can perform "heavier" tasks depending on the context in which they are situated.

According to HIRATA and KERGOAT (2007 apud HERRERA, 2016)¹, the social value of work is more related to who performs it than to the nature of the work itself, due to the representation of what it is to be a man and a woman in our society. Paulilo (1987 apud HERRERA, 2016)¹ points out that work is considered light or heavy not because of its characteristics per se, but because of the position of those who perform it in the family hierarchy. In addition, the more prominent the work, the more women are excluded from it, in such a way that the work performed by women is considered "light" and low-paid.

Due to this, the reality of women in rural areas is characterized by invisibility with little recognition of their work, which is usually seen as helping the husband or family and within the role of mother and wife. This is true both in productive and domestic contexts, even when they perform the same tasks as their spouses.

Social invisibility of women in rural areas can be caused by: a lack of territorial access, work, access to markets and resources as well as the cultural view of the role of women within the family and society. An additional cause is the lack of participation and protagonism of women in rural areas both in the family environment and other instances of daily life. This reality results in women who are more vulnerable, dependent on men, poorly empowered, undervalued and with low self-esteem.

¹HERRERA, Karolyna Marin. *From invisibility to recognition: rural women, productive, domestic and care work.* *Política & Sociedade - Florianópolis - Vol. 15 - Edição Especial - 2016.* Available at: <http://dx.doi.org/10.5007/2175-7984.2016v15nesp1p208>

3. EXPLANATION

According to Herrera (2016)¹, the work of women is fundamental for the biological and socioeconomic subsistence of families in the rural environment, for well-being, food security and for the preservation of the environment.

“Given the importance of women’s contribution to the social reproduction of their families and of family farming in Brazil, it is imperative to understand in detail the activities carried out by women through an analytical lens that highlights their role as rural workers both in productive terms and in terms of agriculture, thus allowing the work performed by rural women to become visible to society in its entirety.”
(HERRERA, 2016, pg. 211¹)

To this end, the creation of a certification process and certification for products made by women is a powerful tool to give visibility and encourage reflection on the work of women in rural areas as well as valuing and adequately remunerating this work. This is achieved by creating economic mechanisms to incentivize and generate benefits for farming units that meet the criteria established by the certification.

4. SOLUTION IN DETAIL - WOMEN IN SOCIOBIODIVERSITY - CEDAC'S PARTICIPATORY GUARANTEE SYSTEM

4.1 WHAT IS THE WOMEN IN SOCIOBIODIVERSITY - CEDAC'S PARTICIPATORY GUARANTEE SYSTEM?

The Women in Sociobiodiversity - Participatory Guarantee System guarantees and promotes **participation of and fair relationships between men and women**. It takes into account the well-being of the family production unit, community organization, valuing the origin of products, and the relationship of female farmers and gatherers with their products and territories.

4.2 HOW IS THE WOMEN IN SOCIOBIODIVERSITY - CEDAC'S PARTICIPATORY GUARANTEE SYSTEM STRUCTURED?

Certification for the Women in Sociobiodiversity - Participatory Guarantee System is divided into six Principles:

- **Principle 1 - Made by Women** - The product is made by women or comes from a production unit with equal division of labor and remuneration generated by the product. It is important to consider the reality of the division of labor in the production unit and how much men and women contribute to domestic work and production, in order to expand women's spaces in the fair distribution of responsibility and benefits. Production, therefore, is considered the result of shared effort, between genders, within the family unit and/or productive organization.
- **Principle 2 - Social Welfare** - Female producers and their families organize themselves to defend and demand that fundamental rights - such as education, health, work, social security, leisure, security, maternity and childhood protection, and assistance for those in need - are guaranteed to improve living conditions.
- **Principle 3 - Participation and Decision Making**² - Women participate in meetings, leadership positions and in community monitoring roles; are recognized in their role of mobilization, leadership and management; and are encouraged to organize

²At the family, associative and/or cooperative level.

around issues that directly affect them. They participate in training and are encouraged to strengthen the organization of their communities around common projects.

- **Principle 4 - Access to Resources** - Equal rights in relation to land strengthen women's economic autonomy and must be operated in parallel with access to information and financial resources, repositioning women in the domestic and public spheres.
- **Principle 5 - Sustainability** - Production is based on good practices of social, economic and environmental sustainability, according to practices and knowledge that bring these concepts closer to the realities and representations of family farming.
- **Principle 6 - Access to Public Policies** - Access to basic documentation and access to rural development policies, as well as full access to public policies that concern them.

These Principles apply to everyone interested in obtaining the Women in Sociobiodiversity - Participatory Guarantee System including family units, associations and cooperatives.

4.3 HOW ARE THE PRINCIPLES STRUCTURED?

Each Principle is divided into a set of **Compliance Criteria** to assess how well members are implementing the Principle. The Criteria must be met to become and remain a member of the Women in Sociobiodiversity - Participatory Guarantee System community.

The Compliance Criteria are more specific and can apply to different stakeholders, for example, workers, family units, producers, suppliers, associations and cooperatives. These stakeholders must be defined and validated by the applicants during the process.

Each Compliance Criterion is either required or needs continuous improvement.

- **Required** means the Compliance Criterion must be met for approval as a member of the Women in Sociobiodiversity - Participatory Guarantee System community.
- **Continuous Improvement** means that the organization must work on this Compliance Criterion and show progress in line with its size and abilities. Gradual improvement is expected until the Compliance Criterion is met.

4.4 PRINCIPLES IN DETAIL

PRINCIPLE 1

Made by women

The product is made by women or comes from a production unit with an equal division of work and equal division of remuneration generated by the product.

CRITERIA	PROCESS
Presence of women's work.	Required
Housework is accounted for and paid.	Required
Social division of labor.	Required
Work is valued by the family unit/production organization.	Required
Decision-making power.	Required
Power to manage resources and benefits.	Continuous improvement
Adoption of good practices.	Continuous improvement
Participation of men.	Required

PRINCIPLE 2

Social Welfare

Female producers and their families organize themselves to defend and demand that fundamental rights - such as education, health, work, social security, leisure, security, maternity and childhood protection, and assistance for those in need - are guaranteed to improve living conditions.

CRITERIA	PROCESS
Self-assessment of well-being.	Required
Own consumption and dietary security.	Continuous improvement
Focus on economically marginalized producers.	Required
Commitment to improving conditions.	Continuous improvement
Protection of children and young people.	Required
Sexual violence/harassment in the organization.	Required
Basic rights.	Required
Basic sanitation.	Continuous improvement
Safe conditions for workers.	Required
Hired labor.	Required

PRINCIPLE 3

Participation and Decision Making²

Women's needs and opinions are taken into account in the organization's decision-making.

CRITERIA

Presence and participation of women in meetings.

Presence of women in leadership positions.

Female empowerment.

Freedom of association.

Female participation at the core of communities.

PROCESS

Required

Required

Required

Required

Continuous improvement

PRINCIPLE 4

Access to Resources

Equal rights in relation to land strengthen women's economic autonomy and must be operated in parallel with access to information and financial resources, repositioning women in the domestic and public spheres.

CRITERIA

Access to land.

Rural development.

Access to information.

Access to financial resources.

Business investment.

PROCESS

Continuous improvement

Continuous improvement

Required

Continuous improvement

Continuous improvement

PRINCIPLE 5

Sustainability

Production is based on good practices of social, economic and environmental sustainability, according to practices and knowledge that bring these concepts closer to the realities and representations of family farming.

CRITERIA

Family unit management plan.

Manual of best practices.

No agrochemicals or GMOs.

Animal welfare.

Environmental legislation.

Sanitary legislation.

Sustainable extractivism.

Energy saving.

Cultural sustainability.

PROCESS

Required

Continuous improvement

Required

Required

Required

Continuous improvement

Required

Continuous improvement

Required

PRINCIPLE 6

Access to public policies

Access to basic documentation and access to rural development policies, as well as full access to public policies that concern them.

CRITERIA

Basic documents.

Documentation of access to public policies.

Access to public policies.

Gender policy.

PROCESS

Required

Continuous improvement

Continuous improvement

Required

5. PROJECT IN DETAIL

5.1 IMPACT OBJECTIVE

Enable visibility and market access to women in rural contexts.

5.2 SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

- **Objective 1:** Develop a certification tool for family farming products that assesses the working conditions of women in rural areas and encourages equal pay between men and women, inclusion of women in the market, and visibility and appreciation of female work.
- **Objective 2:** Develop the communication strategy and brand positioning for the certification of products made by women and of the system as a whole. This is to provide visibility and add value to the work done by women and in an egalitarian way in rural areas, as well as increase access to national and international markets for these products.
- **Objective 3:** Promote the creation of partnerships to promote the fight against gender inequality in rural areas in different instances.

5.3 COMPONENTS, ACTIVITIES AND BUDGET

IMPACT OBJECTIVE: Enable visibility and market access to women in rural contexts.

COMPONENT 1	Develop a certification tool for family farming products that assesses the working conditions of women in rural areas and encourages equal pay between men and women, inclusion of women in the market, visibility and appreciation of female work.	
	1. Modeling the certification tool	TIME 12 months
	2. Tool testing and improvements (pilot)	STEP BUDGET R\$270,000.00
	3. Refinement of methodology	<u>£45,000.00</u>
COMPONENT 2	Develop the communication strategy and brand positioning for the certification of products made by women and of the system as a whole. This is to provide visibility and add value to the work done by women and in an egalitarian way in rural areas, as well as increase access to national and international markets for these products.	
	1. Development of a strategic marketing and communication plan	TIME 18 months
	2. Implementation of the strategic communication plan	STEP BUDGET R\$310,000.00
		<u>£51,666.67</u>
COMPONENT 3	Promote the creation of partnerships to promote the fight against gender inequality in rural areas in different instances.	
	1. Travel and participation in events	TIME 18 months
	2. Holding of events	STEP BUDGET R\$230,000.00
	3. Meetings to make partnerships	<u>£38,333.33</u>
COMPONENT 4	Project management and execution.	
	1. Project management	TIME 24 months
	2. Technical coordination	STEP BUDGET R\$1,120,000.00
	3. Financial coordination	<u>£186,666.67</u>
	4. Legal assistance	
	5. System technology	
	6. Overheads	
	7. Bank fees and/or exchange fees	
	8. Taxes and administrative expenses (~15%)	
TOTAL		£321,666.67

6. IN SUMMARY

This document presents a proposal for the development of the **Women in Sociobiodiversity - CEDAC's Participatory Guarantee System** in order to enable visibility and promote reflection on gender inequality and the perception of the role of women in the family and in society within the rural context.

The proposal is for this gender certification to be undertaken using the same organizational and governance structure that already exists and is currently used to carry out organic certification in the Participatory Guarantee System (SPG), managed by CEDAC in partnership with Coopcerrado, through which 350 family units have already been certified, benefiting 1,500 people.

The activities listed above are macro steps for the development of the initiative and with an estimated budget for its implementation.

Women in Sociobiodiversity - Participatory Guarantee System

• Promoting sustainable products made by rural women in Brazil •

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CEDAC and Coopcerrado

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