



# **WOMEN, FOOD SOVEREIGNTY, ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT, AGRO-BIODIVERSITY AND COVID-19**

The story of the Inai/Ina market of  
Malinau, North Kalimantan, Indonesia

by Dolvina Damus

27 October 2020



# THE VALUE OF THE INITIATIVE

Trailer video *Pasar Inai*

[https://drive.google.com/file/d/1rfGwLpIMI\\_e9PXboNOmYm4VuRIYsq9op/view?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1rfGwLpIMI_e9PXboNOmYm4VuRIYsq9op/view?usp=sharing)

**The value of this initiative is two-fold:**

- First, to support the empowerment of women as economic collective force and ecological agents in local green entrepreneurship and preservation of local plant varieties and seeds.
- Secondly, to create stronger awareness among women of their powerful role in food security, food sovereignty and family health, as champions of healthy nutrition



## THE *PASAR* *INAI/INA*

- The beginnings
- First informal market by the side of a road
- With government support, a special marketplace was established



# WOMEN AS ECOLOGICAL AGENTS



**The ecological agency of women** in caring for the environment, maintaining traditional agricultural practices and help protect biodiversity. Local plants are also the basis for good and healthy nutrition given the characteristics of many varieties, cultivated and/or collected from the wild.

Many varieties of vegetables and fruit sold at the market are uniquely local. They are the result of the efforts of women to ensure that **the seeds** they have themselves inherited from their mothers and grandmothers are preserved and passed on.





## LOCAL ECONOMY

- In rural markets in Indonesia, **women represent the majority of the traders** and control most of the small trade. Women are also producers
- While this is part of so-called 'informal economy' it is a very **significant sector in generates important income for women** to exit a cycle of poverty.
- Sales per woman trader on average between **Rp 400,000/day (=US\$27)**. One market with over 120 women traders from 10 surrounding villages



# SELF-STRENGTHENING

- The women agreed on a special **Task Force (POKSUS)** to support the capacity building and self-empowerment of the initiative. This is supported by the local government, GOW or women's organizations association and NGOs
- **Training and skill sharing** (ICS, PGS), participatory assessments (supply chain; natural product); and **campaigns** (no plastic bags); **solidarity**

# PRODUCERS MEET CONSUMERS

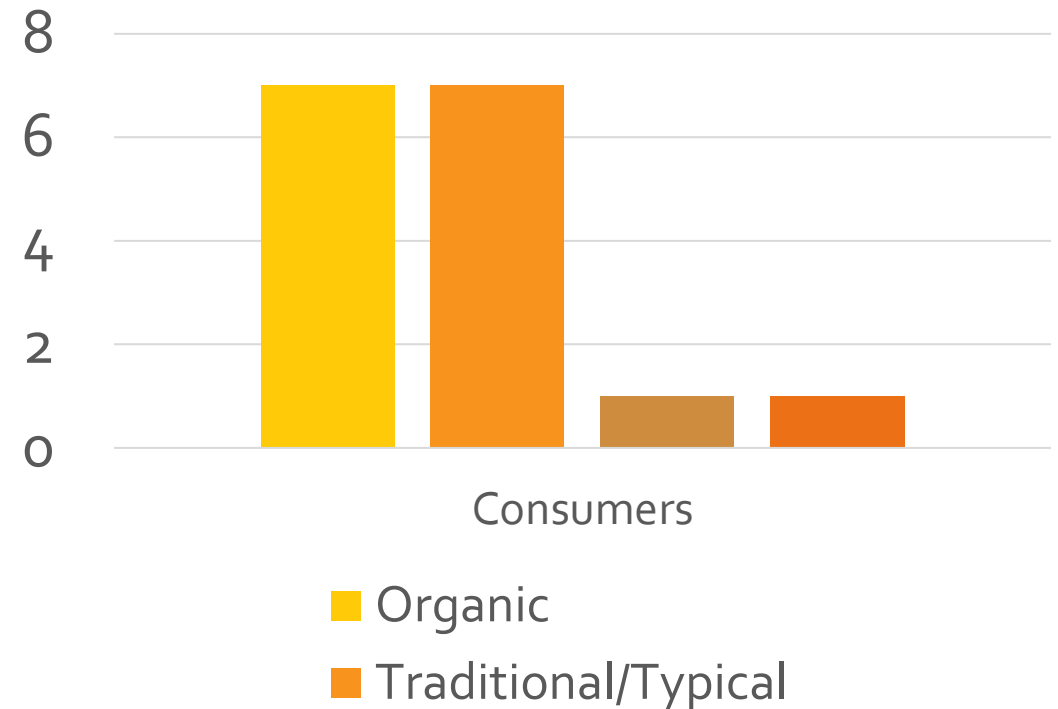
Short supply chain, more economic value captured

**Trust-building**

**Social and cultural exchange**, not just economic transaction



Why are costumers choosing to buy from the women's market?





# LOCAL MARKET AT TIMES OF COVID-19 & WOMEN TRADERS RESISTANCE

Short video at the women's market

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1otWwU3caUGPFUAXiRfp1CSorysa1P1m/view?usp=sharing>

- **Lock-down during COVID-19** affected the market operations
- **The concerns of women and their economic losses**
- **The negotiation with the government** in June 2020





## KEY LEARNINGS FOR FUTURE ACTION

- The importance of women as economic and ecological agents in building economic resilience and security of their families and hence contributing to sustainable and equitable development, helping restore and recover biodiversity
- (Local advocacy) Recognition and support, and budget allocation
- The development of the women traditional market: Local seed bank; online; traditional food; and market certification as LOCAL, FAIR, HEALTHY and SUSTAINABLE (PGS)
- Replicating market model, short supply chains for fair price



TERIMA KASIH  
THANK YOU