

Organic Certification Process by PELUM Kenya



**PARTICIPATORY ECOLOGICAL LAND
USE MANAGEMENT (PELUM)**



Swedish Society
for Nature Conservation

Brot
für die Welt



Issuing of PGS Certificates to 3000 Nooya Farmer Group Members during the Organic Market Day held at CSHEP – Kiserian – Kajiado County

The document has been developed by PELUM ASSOCIATION in partnership with



"The views herein shall not necessarily be taken to reflect the official opinion of PELUM Kenya funding Partners"



1 Participatory Guarantee System (PGS) Factsheet

1.1 What is a PGS

Participatory Guarantee Systems (PGS) are locally focused quality assurance systems. They certify producers based on active participation of stakeholders and are built on a foundation of trust, social networks and knowledge exchange.

1.2 What led to the Drive for PGS

Essentially PGS were developed to

- Reduce bureaucracy in the organic guarantee process
- Promote equity and fairness through the production chain.
- Promote consumer access to organic products.
- Support the transformation of current food systems by building alternative food networks, especially at local level.
- Contribute to enhancing food sovereignty by creating ownerships of production standards and certification among PGS members.
- Pursue a continuous improvement of practices enhanced by knowledge exchange.
- Foster community values and support the potential for community development through organic agriculture and participatory governance.

1.3 Common Theme in a PGS

PGS aims to provide credible organic guarantee to consumers seeking organic produce. Active participation on the part of the stakeholders results in greater empowerment but also greater responsibility.

There is a great need for creating knowledge and capacity building of producers and consumers.

1.4 Common Features of PGS

PGSes differ from one another (no two PGS groups are alike), since they are purposely created to serve their own communities however, they do share common features. These features include:

1. Recognized production standards – PGS operate to conform to existing production standards on organic.
2. Rules (norms) agreed upon by the stakeholders
3. Built from the grassroots
4. Appropriate to smallholder agriculture
5. Principles and values that reflect the culture of the producers
6. Documented management systems and procedures
7. Mechanisms to verify farmers' compliance with the rules (Peer review)



8. Technical development for farmers
9. Farmers Pledge – When entering a PGS all farmers have to pledge that they will follow all the rules (norms) of the PGS.
10. Seals and Labels – All PGS use seals and labels when marketing their products, in Kenya they use Kilimohai Organic as their main seal on top of their own logos.
11. Clear and previously define consequences for non-compliance.

1.5 Key Elements of a PGS

Globally, there are dozens of Participatory Guarantee Systems serving farmers and consumers. These PGSES are adapted and specific to local conditions (communities, geographies, politics and markets) but they all share the following key elements.

1. **A Shared vision** - It is where key stakeholders (producers, consumers, NGOs, traders, religious institutions, governments, and others) collectively identify and agree to support the principles guiding the objectives and goals of the PGS.
2. **Participation**- Is reflected through active engagement of stakeholders who share a common vision. This includes producers and consumers, retailers and traders, as well as NGOs and others that are active in PGS operations.
3. **Transparency** - is created by educating all stakeholders, including producers and consumers, on how the guarantee system works
4. **Trust** - is built by key stakeholders through the collective development of a shared vision
5. **Learning process** - A social learning process happens when different stakeholders get to know each other and gain awareness of each other's situations through participation in the PGS
6. **Horizontality** - PGS initiatives are intended to be non-hierarchical. This is reflected in the overall democratic structure and through the collective responsibility taken up by those involved

1.6 PGS Structure

PGS structure starts with farmer families which form local groups. The structure can be presented as follows:

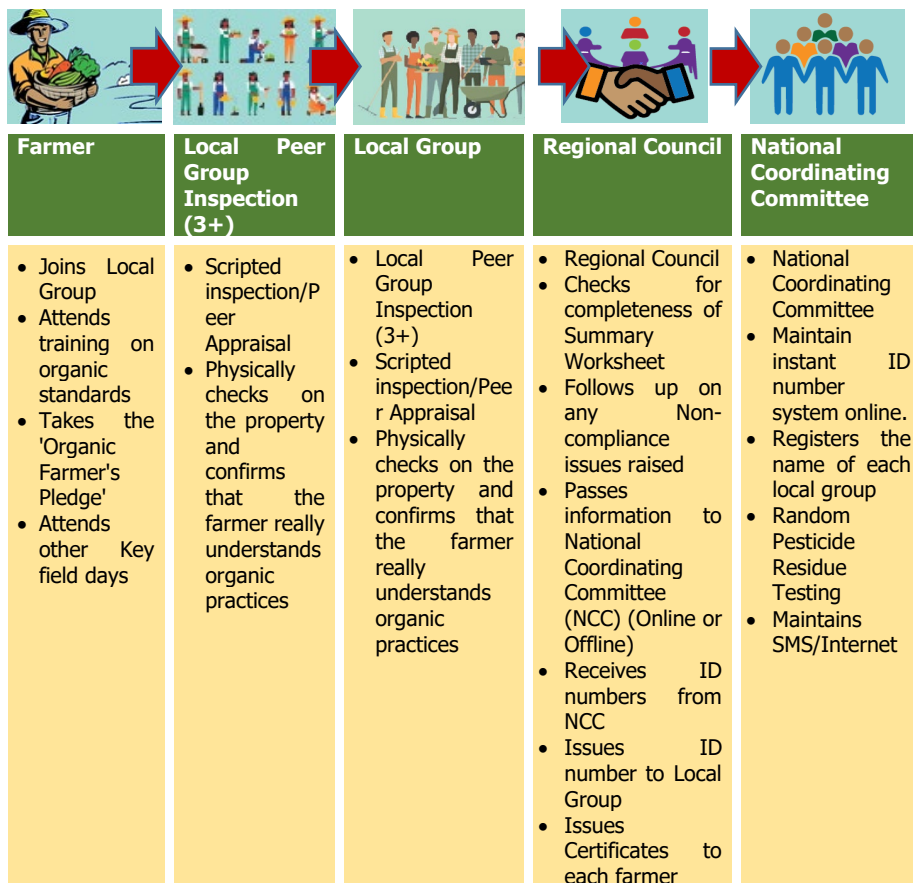
1.7 Role of Local Group

The local groups are the essential operational unit of a PGS, they are the farmers and consumers in particular village. They perform very important function of bringing together the stakeholder to form the PGS. Their main function includes,

- Local contact point for organics and PGS
- Coordinate the (peer) inspections of members
- Local support network for members
- Decision on certification
- Take action on fraud/non-compliance
- Collate farmer members' pledges
- Report on area, crops, etc. annually



1.8 Certification Process



1.9 Steps for implementing a PGS

When starting a PGS, the following steps can be followed in the order they appear;

- Step One: Situational Analysis
- Step Two: Stakeholders Share the Vision
- Step Three: Agree and Document How the PGS Will Work
- Step Four: Build Awareness for Standards and Make a Pledge
- Step Five: Map the Farm and Record Farm Details
- Step Six: Conduct a Peer Review
- Step Seven: Issue Certification Approval



2 Guide to Third Party Organic Certification

2.1 What is Organic Certification?

Certification is a system by which conformity of a product to applicable standard or code of conduct is determined and confirmed. Organic standards are voluntary codes of conduct that form the minimum requirements an operation must meet before it is certified/approved organic. They do not define quality standards that can be measured in the final product but they define the whole process from conception to sale. Organic certification is process certification and focuses on production, processing and handling systems/methods based on organic standards.

2.2 Why Organic Certification?

Organic certification is a marketing instrument that builds consumer confidence on the product and enables farmer's access to niche markets where they may earn premium prices. It ensures traceability and allows for independent verification assuring consumers that the products have met organic standards requirements.

2.3 What is certified?

- i. **Farm:** The farm, farmer skills and knowledge, farm records and facilities used in production and on farm processing (if applicable)
- ii. **The Processing and handling:** The processing methods, aids used, staff knowledge and skills, transportation, and storage.
- iii. **Products:** products are finally labeled with a mark/logo of the certification program.

2.4 Elements of a certification system

- i. **Standards** – They form the basis of certification. The target market for the products to be certified dictate the type of standards to be complied to. For the national and regional markets, East Africa Organic Products Standards will apply. On the other hand, for the European Market, EU organic Regulations (848/2018) apply, for the US market National Organic Programme (NOP/USDA) apply, for Japanese market the Japan Agriculture Standards (JAS) applies. Other standards include Chinese Organic standard, Korean Organic standards and Canadian Organic standards. It's good to check the standards of the specific country and/or existing equivalence when you are selecting the standards to comply to.
- ii. **Documentation-** Verification of practices, systems and procedures in organic operations is done by checking records. Records also creates traceability and ensures that there is transparency in an organic system. Documentation is developed for production system, handling and processing.
- iii. **Contracts** – These are contracts between the operators (farmers, Cooperatives or exporter and the certification companies. All the concerned actors in a certification programme are contracted and their role specified.
- iv. **Inspections** – Internal inspections are done for every farmer annually by locally trained inspectors within the project usually before the certification body sends their



“external” Inspector. External inspections are usually done annually by external inspectors on behalf of the certification bodies

- v. **Certification & approval** – The certification decision/approval is done by the certification body normally after completion of the audits done by the certification body.
- vi. **Labeling** – Once certification approval is made, the operator is allowed to use the certifiers label on their products. The label is therefore the interface between the operator and the consumer – it communicates to the consumer that the product has met the organic standard.

2.5 Types of Certifications

- i. Third Party Certification
- ii. Participatory Guarantee System

2.6 Third Party Certification

This is a type of certification where a third party gives a written assurance that a product, process, or service conforms to specified requirements. In this certification programme the producer is the first party while the consumer is the second party, and an independent Certification Body is the third party. The certifier who is a certification company checks the system of production, handling and processing against the organic standards and once he confirms that the system conforms to the organic standards, he issues a certificate and allows the farmer/operator to use an organic mark to assure the consumer that the products are organic.

2.7 Certification Process under Third Party Certification

For a farm to comply with organic standards there should be an organic system plan or management plan put in place and implemented to ensure compliance with organic standards. Where certification involves a group of farmers, an internal control system should be developed.

Ordinarily the organic certification process involves:

- i. Mobilization and Registration of interested farmers to be included in the scheme
- ii. Awareness creation on the benefits of going organic and certification
- iii. Risk assessment.
- iv. Selection of field officers
- v. Capacity building of line Extension staff and partners staffs on organic standards requirements, compliance, and documentation
- vi. Capacity building of group representatives on organic standards requirements, compliance, and documentation
- vii. Field training of field officers.
- viii. Farmer trainings
- ix. Formal application for certification-to-certification body
- x. Development of Internal Control Systems and documents
- xi. Internal inspections.
- xii. Capacity building on gaps identified during internal inspections

- xiii. External inspections
- xiv. Communication of inspection result
- xv. Working on corrective actions identified during external inspections
- xvi. Issuance of organic certificate after the subsequent external inspection
- xvii. Continuous capacity building.
- xviii. Annual Renewals of Organic Certificates after internal and external inspections.

2.8 How to maintain certification status?

- i. Keep track on the changes on the requirements of the organic standard
- ii. Keep all the documentation up to date
- iii. Acquire more knowledge on organic production practices and requirements
- iv. Protect organic farm and products from contamination



*Launching of the Kirwara-Gatanga Organic Market with the slogan
“Buy Organic, Improve Health”*

3 Fair Trade Fact Sheet



Awareness creation on Organic foods & products during an Organic Market forum at DIG in Nyanza County

3.1 What is fair trade?

Fair trade is an organized social movement that aims to help producers in developing countries to make better trading conditions with their partners thereby promoting sustainability of value chains.

3.2 Goals of fair trade certification

Fair trade certification is aimed at:

- Defining social responsibility processes allowing businesses and organizations to position themselves with respect to their impact on society and the environment.
- Defining a fair-trade process applicable to both the producers of developing countries and the producers/buyers in developed countries.
- Enhance business accountability of fair trade for consumers and provide more transparency with regard to the process.



3.3 Principles of Fair trade

- a) Organizational governance: The organization Governance should include the following:
 - Coordinated CSR (Corporate Social Responsibility) policy
 - Clear and non-discriminatory membership rules (Producer groups)
 - Democratic and participatory operation (Producer groups)
 -
- b) Fair trade for Producers and producer groups: This includes the following components.
 - A Coordinated Fair-Trade policy
 - A development plan which has a medium- and short-term timeframe i.e. from 3 years
 -
- c) Human Rights: Human rights should be embedded in the fair-trade programme and includes.
 - No discrimination
 - No forced labor
 - No child labor
- d) Employment relations and working conditions: This covers workers of all categories who are employed by the company. The requirements are that:
 - Staff have formalized and regular work
 - Adequate salaries, social benefits and working hours
 - Freedom of association and collective bargaining
 - Staff health and safety
 - Regular Staff training
 -
- e) Environment: activities done by producers and processors should adhere to sound management practices which will protect the environment. This includes:
 - Good agricultural production practices
 - Adequate waste, disposal and wastewater management
 - Adequate water resource management
 - Adequate energy resource management
 - Respect for surrounding ecosystems
 - Eco-packaging policy
 - Organic or ecological certification
 - Prohibited materials in packaging of finished products
 - Good commercial practices and partnership
 - Respect for the rights of indigenous and tribal people
 - Responsible procurement policy
 -
- f) Fair trade: Participants in the value chain should commit to fair trade practices. This includes.
 - Justifiable fair trade profit margins
 - Clear sales contracts
 - Long-term partnership contracts
 - Compliance with payment terms



- Agreed fair prices
 - Context-related guaranteed minimum prices
 - Respect for freedom of sale
 - Pre-financing solutions on request
 - Constant dialogue between partners
 - Development support (provision of a Development Fund (DCs); direct support)
 - Transparent and participatory management of the Development Fund (DCs)
 - Consumers: Protection of consumers health
 -
- g) Social commitment and development: The actors in the value chain should have a commitment to participate in social development for communities. This commitment can be indicated by:
- Support to community projects
 - Promoting education and culture
 - Generating local employment
 - Technical support to producers
 - Actions to increase the local added value

3.4 Fair trade programmes:

There are different fair-trade programmes most of which have been developed by certification companies. The most popular programmes are:

- Fair trade labelling organization (FLO)
- Fair for Life
- Fairtrade Sustainability Alliance (SA)
- Fair trade USA

The choice of fair-trade certification programme depends on buyer preference and choice of market. For example, Fairtrade USA is more popular in North America while FLO is more popular in Europe.

3.5 Certification process

Certification process starts with expression of interest through application to the certification agency. After evaluation of the application, the certification agency evaluates the application and offers a quotation of the associated cost. Once agreement is made on the cost an invoice is issued to the applicant. Once the applicant makes the required payment, an audit is planned where the auditor comes for a physical verification on compliance with Fairtrade principles. The audit includes observation, document review and interviews with workers and farmers. After audit is completed, a report is submitted for evaluation and certification. There are different types of audits:

Full initial audit: This is the first audit of the operator, or the audit taking place after an interruption (greater than a year) in the certification process.

Full surveillance audit: Looks at non-compliances that were identified during the previous audit and to the efficiency and implementation of corrective actions and preventive measures listed in the operator's action plan.

Complementary audit: is required in case the results of the full audit (whether it is an initial or surveillance audit) are inconclusive and insufficient for the issuance of the certificate based only on the documentary review of corrective actions.

A random audit: is an audit that can be scheduled by certification company on the basis of a general assessment of the risk of failure to meet the requirements.

Additional audit: is an audit that comes in addition to the audit cycle

To reduce the costs of certification, it is advisable that an operation that is applying for both organic and fairtrade certification combines the two certification programmes so that the audit is done at the same time. This is because there is an overlap on the certification procedures of both organic and Fairtrade certification programmes.



A Youth Group from LPC showcasing their packed organic Cactus and Aloe-vera products during a past Green Action Week event in Meru County



4 Kebs Certification Factsheet

4.1 What is KEBS standardization mark?

This is a mandatory product certification scheme for locally manufactured products provided for under section 10 of the Standards Act Cap 496, Laws of Kenya. To acquire the mark, manufactured goods are expected to meet quality requirements as specified in the various Kenya/Approved Standards. A permit to use a Standardization Mark is issued to a firm to certify that a particular product conforms to requirements in a Standard

4.2 Why KEBS certification is important?

This is a quality product certification mark!

KEBS has developed a set of technical standards for briquettes. If a producer's product can meet those standards they can use the KEBS certification for marketing. The certification will give consumers confidence that the briquettes are good quality

4.3 Procedure of applying for KEBS certification

Step 1:	<p>Fill in the application form (Application form for grant of permit to use the standardization mark)-STA/1 Form. When filling this form, the following information is required:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Description of the commodity upon and in respect in respect of which the standardization mark is to be used. Trademark or brand which is in use in respect to the commodity. Declaration to comply to the applicable standards. Processed products normally have applicable standards which are gazette by KEBS and are found at the e-store, http://onlinecatalogue.kebs.org/ Details of the applicant.
Step 2	<p>Fill the Initial Factory Inspection form STA/10. This provides information about the business, its operations and staff. The details required include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Name of the company and its proprietors Contact information Information on personnel and their qualifications (Permanent employees). Return this form in the KEBS regional office near your business. Some of the KEBS regional officers include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mombasa- Coastal region Nyeri - Mt. Kenya Region Nakuru-South Rift region Garissa- Northeastern region Kisumu- lake region



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eldoret – North Rift region • Nairobi-Head office <p>The submission of this form enables KEBS staff to prepare for audit.</p>
Step 3:	<p>Fill in standard levy notification Form (SL 1) which is provided at the KEBS office.</p> <p>What is the Standards Levy?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Standards levy is a tax paid to KRA of 1000/ per month for entities with monthly sales between 16,000 and 500,000 KES. If below 16,000, you will have to file but not pay. It is required that you fill out the Standards Levy Notification form, collect the Standards Levy Letter, the Standard Act CAP, 496 Laws of Kenya and the remittance of Standards Levy through the iTax system
Step 4	<p>Submit all verification documents including a copy of the company registration form i.e., CR12 for Ltd Companies and evidence for registration for CBOS, Cooperatives societies, self-help groups, proof of payments of Standard levy and application fee e.t.c.</p>
Step 5	<p>Fill out the Declaration form if you have an annual turnover of less than KES 500,000</p>
Step 6:	<p>Pay the required product certification fees</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All Large Firms (Turnover between Ksh 200,00-Kshs 500,000 per annum) 20,000 for the firm plus Kshs. 7,500 per product/ brand. • Medium Enterprises (Turnover below Kshs 200,000 per annum) 10,000 for three products and Kshs. 5,000 for any extra product. • Jua kali and Small Enterprises 5,000 for three products and Kshs. 5,000 for any extra product <p>N/B</p> <p>All the payments for standardization mark application are made at the time of application. For any change request the on the permit, the client shall pay Ksh.1000 upon evaluation and change granted.</p> <p>Please note that no product samples are required at the time of submitting your application. You can also obtain STA1, STA 10, and SL1 forms at the nearest KEBS office.</p>
Step 7	<p>The Kenya Bureau of Standards quality assurance officers will pay a visit to your production facility to carry out industrial inspection, draw samples for analysis, agree on the scheme of supervision and control. This should take Should take approx. 2 weeks after submitting application</p>
Step 8:	<p>Your product samples will be analyzed at KEBS laboratories or any other other accredited laboratories to check compliance with Kenyan standards. If samples comply and inspection officer's report indicate compliance with codes of practice, a recommendation will be made for issuance of the permit to use standardization mark to the Permit Standardization committee (PSC) for standardization Mark.</p>



If the committee confirms that all requirements have been met, a permit will be issued. If your product samples fail to comply, retesting will be done free of charge and if the product complies, a permit to use standardization mark will be issued. If samples fail to comply in the second instance and subsequent tests, testing will be carried at the expense of the manufacturer.

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The total process will take about 56 working days

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