

# COMMUNICATING WOMEN-LED CLIMATE SOLUTIONS IN CENTRAL AMERICA

## RESTORE, REFOREST AND RAISE AWARENESS

The work of the women of Nandaime to reverse  
the effects of climate change

*Camaroncita and Eslabón Communities, municipality of Nandaime*



November 2023



## RESTORE, REFOREST AND RAISE AWARENESS.

"What future are we going to leave our children if we deteriorate the land any further? What air are we going to breathe? Are we going to buy air?" reflects Javiera Jiménez, president of the Network of Women Producers and Marketers of Nandaime, in the South Pacific region of Nicaragua. The soil and, in general, the natural ecosystems of this area have suffered years of deterioration due to deforestation and the use of agrochemicals in monocultures.

"Sometimes we say, 'oh it's so hot' but we don't look at what we're doing to the soil," says Javiera, who also notes that the impact of climate change is notorious. "Right now we were expecting a canicule and there was no canicule, it was a lot of rain. Many of us farmers lost our bean crops. Winters (rainy seasons) are not the same as they used to be," he observes.

In turn, this situation impacts families in the community. "Men have to migrate to another city or country to look for work. Some women go to look for work in the capital Managua, they work as domestic employees and those who cannot leave suffer because the situation is difficult," says Sugeyra Guevara, leader of the Network of Women Producers and Marketers of Nandaime.

Another problem that Sugeyra notes is the contamination of the water with the pesticides used for fumigation. This situation results in the loss of species such as river shrimp and also in the poisoning of livestock. "As women we organize ourselves to do community cleanups and work with nurseries to reforest compact areas, plots of land and water sources: on the banks of the creek and springs," she explains.

In addition, the Women's Network promotes the use of agroecological products. However, one of their most important and complex tasks is to raise farmers' awareness of the environmental impact of using agrochemicals that contaminate the soil.

The Network organizes workshops to raise awareness about the impact of agrochemicals on the health and soils of the communities. "We talk about how we can recover those soils because many producers say that the land is no longer useful, that it doesn't produce everything we grow. So, we explain to them that the soil is deteriorating and that the use of green fertilizers and compost is a way to recover it. And they can do this with raw materials they already have, such as cattle manure, the bean sprouts they harvest, and they have to integrate them into the soil," Javiera explains.

With the support of Tierra Viva, GAGGA and the NOCHARI Association, they carried out a project consisting of demonstrative plots in which they work with dosage and plant breeding to demonstrate the benefits of agroecology. "We have some plots with agrochemicals, some without any additives and others with biominerals. So we are demonstrating those results," Sugeyra explains.



Sugeyra also stresses the importance of training on women's rights and empowerment. "There are many women who could not make decisions and now that is changing little by little. Now we are sharing decisions with our partners."

In this sense, Javiera agrees that one of the changes in the community's customs is the awareness of both men and women about gender equality. "Before in the community it was customary for men to dominate everything and now women have more participation, they are more protagonists. This was a change in our local culture, in this case a positive change," said the Nicaraguan leader.

The orchards they plant have a variety of fruit trees, vegetables, medicinal, aromatic, and flowering plants. "Having a forest habitat like this allows bees, butterflies of all colors and other insects to arrive to pollinate. This guarantees an ecosystem that protects the vegetables from pests," Javiera explains.

In addition to diversified vegetable gardens, the members of the Women's Network also raise chickens and pigs. In this way, they also ensure that they have a healthy diet based on organic products and in turn represent a lower expense. "Before, we used to leave early and return late to go buy tomatoes, peppers and onions, and besides, the bus fare is expensive. That is why we must plant. It helps us to feed ourselves and we can also sell it in the community," says Sugeyra.

The Women's Network also works to rescue native seeds. "There are many organizations that go to the producers and give them supplies of improved seeds. We tell producers not to lose their seed, because it is already adapted to the climate, resistant to drought and heavy rainfall," explains Javiera. "That's why with the seed bank we are in heaven because we have the seed, and we know that we can sow again later."



**Network of Women Producers and Marketers**  
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