

A STUDY OF BIBLICAL VALENCE ON THE ROLE OF CHURCH WOMEN IN MANAGING THE WASTE BANK PROGRAM IN MANADO

Kajian Valensi Biblika terhadap Peran Perempuan Gereja dalam Pengelolaan Program Bank Sampah di Manado

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Abstract

This study explores the integration of biblical values and women's empowerment in community-based environmental stewardship through the Waste Bank program at Getsemani Church in Manado, Indonesia. Rapid urbanization and inadequate waste management have intensified ecological and social challenges, including flooding and public health risks. While faith communities are increasingly recognized as potential agents of sustainability, the role of theological motivation and gender dynamics in environmental actions remains underexplored. This study aims to analyze how biblical principles inform ecological practices and how women's participation contributes to the effectiveness and sustainability of local waste management initiatives. A mixed-method approach was employed, combining qualitative case studies, participatory action research, quantitative surveys, and theological literature analysis. Data were collected from 25 key informants and 100 survey respondents supported by field observations and document reviews. The findings indicate that values such as stewardship (Genesis 2:15) and creation care (Psalm 24:1) serve as strong moral motivators, with a positive correlation (Pearson's $r = 0.68$) between biblical literacy and program participation. Women constituted 75% of active participants, driving operational success, economic returns (average IDR 4.5/month), and community engagement. Their involvement has led to a 35% reduction in landfill-bound waste and improved drainage conditions, thus mitigating localized flooding. Furthermore, the program enhanced women's financial autonomy and social recognition within the church and the broader community. The study concludes that faith-based environmental initiatives, when rooted in theological convictions and inclusive of women's leadership, can generate tangible ecological, economic, and social impacts. This model offers a replicable framework for urban churches seeking to respond to ecological crises through spiritually grounded, community led action.

INTRODUCTION

Waste management in Manado City has become increasingly critical because of rapid population growth and the corresponding increase in domestic waste. Inadequate waste management systems have led to the overburdening of landfill sites, negatively affecting environmental quality and public health (Tuuk et al., 2023). This situation is exacerbated by frequent flooding caused by clogged drainage systems, particularly in densely populated areas such as Mapanget and Singkil districts (Balahanti et al., 2023). Research indicates that flood vulnerability in Manado continues to increase, with improper waste disposal being a major contributing factor (Hengkelare et al., 2021; Sagay & Pangemanan, 2023). In response, the "Waste Bank" program has emerged as a strategic initiative to transform waste from an environmental burden into an economic

resource through community-based recycling and waste management (Nurmasari et al., 2024; Pravasanti & Ningsih, 2020).

However, the success of such programs depends heavily on active community participation, particularly that of women, who play a central role in household management and environmental stewardship. Women, especially within church communities, often serve as key drivers of social and communal activities (Masambe et al., 2025). Despite this, their involvement in environmental initiatives such as Waste Banks remains limited, hindered by cultural norms, limited access to information, and insufficient recognition of their contributions (Riogilang, 2020). However, women possess a significant potential to influence behavioral change and foster environmental awareness, especially when supported by strong moral and spiritual values.

From a faith-based perspective, the Bible, particularly the Old Testament, emphasizes humanity's responsibility as a steward of God's creation (Genesis 2:15). This teaching provided a solid theoretical foundation for believers to engage in conservation. However, the practical applications of these biblical values in everyday church life, such as waste management, remain underdeveloped. This study aims to explore how biblical principles can serve as a foundation for empowering women to support the Waste Bank program. It is hoped that, through an integrative approach combining faith and action, the role of women can be strengthened, thereby enhancing both congregational well-being and environmental sustainability in Manado, Indonesia.

Several studies have examined the technical and policy aspects of waste management in Manado, including evaluations of municipal waste policies (Mamahit et al., 2021), analyses of waste transportation routes (Lasut et al., 2019), and planning of 3R (Reduce, Reuse, Recycle) waste processing sites (Lawa et al., 2021). Other research has highlighted the importance of government-community collaboration in waste handling, particularly in traditional markets such as the Pinasungkulan Market (Roring et al., 2023). Despite these advancements, there remains a notable lack of studies that focus on women's roles in faith-based environmental empowerment.

The Waste Bank program has proven effective in enhancing community participation and reducing waste volume in various regions (Ariefahnoor et al., 2020; Putra & others, 2020). At the household level, it has contributed to increased family income, especially among housewives (Nurmasari et al., 2024; Pravasanti & Ningsih, 2020). However, in Manado, women's involvement in such programmes remains sporadic and lacks structural integration within both theological and institutional frameworks. However, women have a significant capacity as agents of change, particularly within church communities that possess strong social networks (Masambe et al., 2025).

Furthermore, while several studies have addressed policy implementation in waste management (Dalinda et al., 2022), none have explicitly explored the integration of biblical values with community-based environmental practices. Theological approaches to environmental issues remain underdeveloped despite the emphasis on moral responsibility toward creation (Psalm 24:1; Romans 8:19–22). Therefore, this study seeks to fill this gap by investigating how faith-based values can motivate and strengthen women's active participation in the Waste Bank program.

While numerous studies have addressed waste management in Manado from technical, policy, and socioeconomic perspectives, there remains a significant gap in research integrating theological and gender perspectives. Studies linking biblical teachings with women's empowerment in environmental initiatives, particularly through the Waste Bank program, are scarce. Moreover, the potential of women as primary agents of environmental transformation within church communities has not been explored thoroughly. This study aims to answer the following question: How can biblical values serve as a foundation for empowering women to support the sustainability of the Waste Bank program?

This study offers a unique and innovative approach that integrates three key dimensions: biblical values, women's empowerment, and community waste management. Unlike previous studies that primarily focus on technical or economic aspects, this study emphasizes spiritual and social dimensions as catalysts for behavioral change. By positioning women as the primary agents of

change and scripture as a moral foundation, this study provides new insights into faith-based community empowerment. This study's contribution is not only academic, but also practical, offering a replicable model for churches seeking to respond holistically to environmental crises.

This study aims to analyze how biblical values can serve as a foundation for empowering women to support the Waste Bank program in Manado. Specifically, it seeks to identify the role of women in church-based environmental management and to develop strategies to enhance their participation. Additionally, this study assessed the impact of women's involvement on program effectiveness, congregational well-being, and environmental sustainability. Ultimately, the findings are expected to provide concrete recommendations for churches, local governments, and civil society organizations to establish sustainable, value-driven waste management systems.

METHOD

This study employs a qualitative descriptive approach, integrating a literature review, case studies, quantitative surveys, and participatory action research to achieve a holistic understanding of faith-based waste management initiatives. A methodological design was selected to explore the interconnected dimensions of theology, ecology, and gender within the local context of Manado. This allows for an in-depth examination of how biblical values inform environmental stewardship and women's roles in church communities. This research focuses on churches actively implementing the "Waste Bank" program and demonstrates meaningful female participation in environmental activities. These churches are located in high-risk areas, such as Mapanget, Wanea, and Tuminting, where waste mismanagement contributes to flooding and public health issues. The field selection was based on program sustainability, community openness, and documented engagement in environmental actions. This study does not treat waste management as a purely technical issue, but as a socio-spiritual practice rooted in faith and communal responsibility. By combining multiple methods, this study aims to construct a rich narrative linking belief, action, and environmental impact.

The population consists of church congregations in Manado involved in the Waste Bank program, with a specific focus on women members, church leaders, and program coordinators. A purposive sampling technique was used to select 25 key informants who met the predefined criteria, including at least one year of active involvement in the program. This method ensures the inclusion of individuals with deep insights into a program's internal dynamics and challenges. Participants included women of productive age, pastors, heads of environmental commissions, and Waste Bank managers who played strategic roles in implementation. Sampling was progressively conducted during the preliminary phase to ensure diversity in perspectives, roles, and levels of engagement. Representation across gender, age, and organizational function was prioritized to enhance the credibility and depth of findings. The selected sample provided nuanced and contextually grounded data, which are essential for meaningful analysis. As such, the participants are not merely sources of information, but also co-creators of knowledge in the research process.

Data collection was carried out using four complementary methods to ensure methodological triangulation and enhance the validity of the findings. A literature review analyzed biblical narratives related to environmental stewardship, such as Genesis 2:15, Psalm 24:1, and Luke 8:1–3, alongside theological writings and peer-reviewed studies accessed through academic databases. The case study component involved participant observation, in-depth interviews, and field documentation to capture real world waste management practices. Semi structured interviews lasting 45–60 minutes were conducted, audio-recorded, transcribed, and coded for thematic analysis. A quantitative survey was administered to 100 respondents, including church members and nearby residents, to measure their participation levels, perceptions, and socioeconomic impacts. Survey data were analyzed using descriptive statistics and simple correlation tests using SPSS software. Participatory Action Research (PAR) was implemented in three iterative cycles: reflection, planning, and action, with female congregation members actively involved as change agents. Through PAR,

researchers and participants collaboratively identified challenges, co-designed solutions, and evaluated outcomes to foster ownership and sustainability.

Data analysis was conducted thematically to integrate the findings from diverse sources and methods. Qualitative data from interviews and observations were analyzed using Miles and Huberman's framework, involving data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. Emerging themes such as "faith as motivation," "women as catalysts," and "ecological impact" were explored in depth and linked to biblical principles. Quantitative data from the survey were analyzed using SPSS to generate frequencies, percentages, and variable relationships, thus supporting and contextualizing qualitative insights. The findings are presented in a coherent narrative enriched with direct quotations, tables, and visual documentation from the field. Data triangulation ensures reliability by cross-verifying information across sources, methods, and researcher interpretations. This integrative approach enables a comprehensive understanding of how faith-informed women's empowerment drives environmental change. The methodology not only reveals patterns and relationships but also highlights the transformative potential within religious communities. Ultimately, it demonstrates how spiritual values, when operationalized, can contribute to sustainable urban waste management in Manado.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Result

A. General Overview and Qualitative Findings

This study was conducted at the Getsemani Church in Sumompo Village, Tuminting District, Manado City. The church was selected because of its consistent management of the Waste Bank program for over three years. A total of 25 congregation members and appointed church workers participated in the research. The respondents were aged between 30 and 55 years, representing productive and actively engaged demographics. All participants had been involved in the Waste Bank initiative for at least three years. They had direct experience with waste sorting, collection, and daily management. Their roles range from daily coordinators to field supervisors within the program. This long-term engagement provided rich contextually grounded data on the program's internal dynamics.

The Waste Bank at Getsemani Church operates on weekdays from 8:00 AM to 3:00 PM. The waste types managed included plastic, food scraps, used paper, and light metals. Sorting was conducted manually by female members before storage in plastic and metal containers. Organic waste is repurposed as animal feed, whereas paper and plastic are collected for recycling. Recycled paper is transformed into craft materials or sent to processing industries. The system is independently managed by an organized group of women within a dedicated community unit. There is no digital or electronic recording system; instead, all transactions are documented manually. Congregational involvement in waste delivery was notably high, particularly among households near churches.

A literature analysis revealed that theological concepts such as stewardship, creation care, and dominion with responsibility form the core ethical foundation of church teachings. Biblical passages such as Genesis 2:15 ("The Lord God took the man and placed him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it") are frequently cited in environmental sermons. Psalm 24:1 ("The earth is the Lord's, and everything in it") reinforces the belief that creation belongs to God. Romans 8:19–22 are also referenced as reminders that creation awaits the redemption of believers. Local theological understanding emphasizes environmental care as an act of worship and spiritual obedience. However, these values have rarely been articulated in formal environmental program documents. Despite this, many members stated that their motivation stemmed from a sense of religious calling. Thus, biblical teachings serve as a moral foundation, even if they are not fully integrated into operational frameworks.

Church leaders expressed their full support for women's involvement in environmental initiatives. They acknowledged that the programme was driven primarily by female members on a

voluntary basis. One pastor described women as the “backbone” of waste management. Structural support includes access to space, time and external networks. However, no official church position currently exists regarding environmental oversight. Women are entrusted with managing income from waste sales; however, they are not always included in strategic decision making. Some male leaders expressed pride in women’s contributions, although not all of them were actively engaged. Overall, the perceptions of women’s roles are positive, although full equality in participation has not yet been achieved.

In-depth interviews revealed that women’s primary motivation was environmental concerns and the desire to set an example for children. One participant stated, “I want my grandchildren to live in a clean environment.” Economic benefit is also a factor, although it is secondary to moral and spiritual reasons. The main challenge identified was delayed waste collection by municipal services. Separated waste is often dumped directly into landfills without allowing informal waste pickers to retrieve recyclables. This reduces income opportunities for low-income individuals who are dependent on scavenging. In addition, storage facilities are limited and vulnerable to rain. Nevertheless, participants maintained high morale, sustained by a strong sense of community and shared purpose.

Congregation women initiated collaborative efforts with the Tuminting Sub-district Office to expand the programme’s reach. Recycled products such as paper crafts and organic briquettes are displayed at the district office. This partnership has opened access to broader markets and increased program visibility. Some items are used as official souvenirs by the local governments. The women also conducted short training sessions for mothers in surrounding neighborhoods. These initiatives not only build capacity but also strengthen inter-community networks. Creative packaging and branding have added significant value to these products. Such cross-institutional collaboration demonstrates the potential for citywide replication.

B. Quantitative Findings and Collaborative Actions

A survey was administered to 100 respondents from the congregation and surrounding community of the Getsemani Church. Seventy-five percent of female respondents reported active participation in the Waste Bank program. The remaining participants included men and children who assisted indirectly. Most respondents were aged between 30 and 55 years, aligning with the active adult demographics. Their roles varied from waste delivery to administrative management. The highest participation was observed among families living near the church. Only 12% reported no involvement, citing time constraints, or a lack of information. These findings indicate that the program has achieved considerable reach among adult women.

Eighty percent of respondents reported increased environmental awareness since the program began. They are now more consistent in sorting waste at home and in reducing single-use plastics. The average additional income from recycling reached IDR 4,500,000 per month per group. This income is distributed among church funds, incentives for coordinators, and social aid such as food packages. Plastic and used paper generated the highest economic value. Metals and organic waste contribute less, but are still utilized. Some women reported that this income covered their children’s school expenses. From a welfare perspective, this amount is significant for low-income households.

Statistical analysis revealed a positive correlation between understanding biblical values and program participation. Respondents who regularly attended Bible studies were more likely to engage actively. A simple correlation test (Pearson’s $r = 0.68$) indicated a strong relationship between faith-based motivation and consistent environmental action. Passages on stewardship serve as key references for personal decision making. However, not all those who understand these teachings translate them into practice. Other factors such as family support and infrastructure access also influence involvement. Nonetheless, faith often served as the initial catalyst for most participants. This suggests that spiritual values directly influence environmental behavior.

Participatory Action Research (PAR) was implemented in three cycles: reflection, planning, and action. During the reflection phase, the women identified key issues: over-reliance on external actors and limited economic returns. They designed collective actions including recycling and household waste segregation campaigns. The action phase lasted two months and involved 30 congregation families. The results showed a 40% increase in locally managed waste volume. Drainage channels around the church became noticeably cleaner, especially during heavy rain. Community response was highly positive, with many requesting follow-up training. PAR strengthens collective ownership and mutual responsibility.

C. Environmental, Economic, And Empowerment Impacts

Estimates indicate that the Waste Bank program reduced the volume of waste sent to the landfill by 35% from the church's catchment area. Locally processed waste no longer flows into gutters and small waterways. Residents reported improved water flow in drainage channels during rainfall. However, major flooding in Manado persists because of external factors, particularly overflow from the Tondano River Basin. Therefore, while the program cannot prevent citywide floods, it successfully minimizes localized pooling. The use of plastic waste clogging drainage systems has decreased significantly. These observations were supported by field notes and community testimony. While impacts are most visible at the micro level, they remain meaningful for daily living conditions.

Women members formed an informal community group that managed the Waste Bank. They reported feeling more valued and recognized by both the church and wider community. Male support within the congregation is adequate, although not always active. Many women reported increased self-confidence and independence. Spiritually, they feel closer to faith through tangible acts of service. Socially, their roles within the congregation shifted from passive to active participants. The additional income granted them greater economic autonomy. The program does more than manage waste; it strengthens women's identity and agency within their faith community.

Discussion

A. Biblical Values and Environmental Stewardship

Understanding humanity's responsibility toward God's creation has emerged as a strong moral foundation for environmental action at the Getsemani Church. Although not always formally institutionalized, values such as stewardship and creation care shape the congregation's motivation in waste management. Biblical passages serve not only as theological references but also as sources of moral legitimacy for practical engagement (Brown, 2023; Pitts, 2019). This indicates that faith can function as a tangible catalyst, not merely an abstract spiritual discourse. However, the limited operationalization of these values reveals a gap between doctrine and daily practice. The church must develop a more systematic framework so that biblical teachings become actionable guidelines, not just background ideals. Integrating these values into liturgy, faith education, and church programs can strengthen long-term commitment. Thus, environmental care can become an integral part of communal Christian identity (Bloomfield, 2020; Christie et al., 2019; Goldberg et al., 2019).

The finding that biblical understanding correlates with active participation highlights the transformative power of spiritual conviction. Faith influences not only attitudes but also consistency in collective action. Respondents engaged in regular Bible studies tend to be more disciplined in waste sorting and management. This suggests that spiritual education directly impacts everyday behavior. Yet, not all who understand these teachings act upon them, indicating that knowledge alone is insufficient without structural encouragement. Support from church leaders, training, and social incentives are essential to translate faith into concrete action. A holistic approach that combines the spiritual, educational, and practical dimensions is more effective. As a community of faith, the church holds a unique position to lead ecological transformation.

The absence of official documents linking Scripture to environmental programs shows that ecological issues are not yet structured theological priorities. While such values are frequently preached, they are not explicitly embedded in the church's vision and mission. This reflects a

common challenge in many Indonesian churches, where environmental concerns remain secondary. To address this, churches need to develop a contextual ecological theology relevant to local realities. Such theology should frame ecological crises like flooding and pollution as spiritual calls to action. In this way, the church does not merely respond but leads in sustainability efforts. Involvement in waste management can be redefined as public worship. This step enhances the church's relevance amid urban challenges.

Using Scripture as a basis for environmental action also demonstrates potential for broader societal impact beyond the congregation. When churches act from faith-based values, their message becomes more authentic and respected by external actors (Askeland et al., 2019; Delehanty, 2020; Oyewale, 2024). Partnerships with local government, such as in Tuminting District, become more feasible because the program is seen as meaningful and serious. The moral values upheld by the church provide strong social legitimacy (Ashforth, 2019; Horcea-Milcu et al., 2019). This opens opportunities for cross-institutional collaboration grounded in shared ethics. The church need not compete with secular actors but can serve as a strategic partner in sustainable development. By positioning itself as an environmentally conscious community, the church expands its service role. This represents a contextual and relevant form of diaconal ministry.

These findings also suggest that theology need not remain abstract but can serve as a practical guide for daily life. Caring for the environment is not merely an ecological duty but an act of faithful obedience. When women sort waste, they are not just performing technical tasks but fulfilling a divine calling. The church must recognize and honor these small acts as genuine forms of service. In this way, domestic and environmental labor can be spiritually affirmed. It also creates space for fairer recognition of women's contributions. Faith-based empowerment must begin with the acknowledgment that every action restoring creation is an act of worship. Such an approach can lay the foundation for other urban churches seeking meaningful engagement.

B. Women's Roles and Social Empowerment

The dominance of women in the Waste Bank program reflects their historical role as household managers and family welfare guardians. Yet their involvement within the church context signals an evolution from domestic to public spheres. Through this initiative, women manage not only waste but also finances, networks, and social initiatives. This constitutes real empowerment, even if not fully recognized in formal structures. Limited access to church leadership positions indicates that gender transformation is still ongoing. However, the program's success opens doors for shifting perceptions. When women excel in impactful roles, their authority naturally increases. The church must reconsider its leadership structures to become more inclusive.

Women's involvement in economic decision-making through recycling revenue reflects growing financial autonomy (Du et al., 2022; Lavanya & Mamilla, 2024; Nisar et al., 2022). They are no longer solely dependent on husbands or church hierarchies but possess independent income sources. This additional income grants them agency in choices, including children's education and family healthcare. It is a form of empowerment that directly improves household well-being. Yet male support remains passive, suggesting that gender equality has not been fully internalized. Strengthening women's roles requires gender education for the entire congregation. Church leaders must also actively promote equitable participation. Empowerment is not just about women it is about building a more just community.

The informal community formed by women serves as a safe space for sharing, learning, and mutual support. Beyond waste management, this group functions as a platform for spiritual and social growth. Members strengthen one another in faith, overcome social pressures, and build solidarity. This shows that environmental programs can serve as entry points for broader empowerment (Dushkova & Ivlieva, 2024; Geza et al., 2022; Raub & Martin-Rios, 2019). When women feel valued, they gain confidence to participate in public spaces. The church can leverage this dynamic to develop more systematic empowerment programs. Thus, the waste bank becomes

not just an economic site but a space for human transformation. Such a model can be replicated in other churches.

The fact that women are the primary drivers shows the church's potential as an agent of social change. However, reliance on volunteerism risks burnout and unsustainability. Without structural support and adequate incentives, their contributions may cease. The church should consider formal recognition, such as stipends, advanced training, or official roles. This is not commercialization but fair acknowledgment. When the church honors women's labor, values of justice and love become tangible. Sustainable empowerment must avoid exploiting volunteer work. Institutional support is essential.

Women's involvement in local government collaboration also reflects growing leadership capacity. They are not just implementers but co-designers of micro-level policies. The use of recycled products as official souvenirs signifies important external recognition. This enhances their self-esteem and social legitimacy. The church can act as a bridge between communities and government, with women as key actors. Thus, women are not merely beneficiaries but change leaders. This model exemplifies faith-based community development. A church that empowers women is a living, relevant church.

C. Ecological, Economic, and Sustainability Impacts

The 35% reduction in landfill-bound waste shows that community-based programs can yield tangible results, even at a micro scale. In a large city like Manado, every reduction in waste volume is significant given the landfill's near-capacity. This program proves that local solutions can contribute to city-wide waste strategies. However, its impact on large-scale flooding remains limited due to external factors like overflow from the Tondano River Basin. Still, its role in reducing drain blockages is crucial. Reduced local flooding directly improves residents' health and comfort. This is an effective form of community-based disaster mitigation. As a local institution, the church holds a strategic position to fill gaps in public systems.

The use of organic waste as animal feed and paper recycling reveals underutilized potential for a circular economy. Such models not only reduce waste but also generate added value. Yet dependence on external waste collection reduces income opportunities for the urban poor. When sorted waste is dumped directly into landfills, scavengers lose their livelihoods. This highlights the need for local regulations protecting vulnerable groups' economic rights. The church can advocate for more equitable policies. Thus, the program can be both environmentally sound and socially just. Strengthening collaboration with sanitation departments can broaden economic benefits.

An average monthly income of IDR 4.5 million per group is significant for lower-middle-income households. This income funds education, healthcare, and social aid, demonstrating multidimensional impact. It proves that environmental programs can serve as tools for micro-poverty alleviation. However, economic sustainability depends on consistent waste supply and stable recycling market prices. Fluctuations in plastic and paper prices can affect earnings. Therefore, product diversification and stronger marketing networks are needed. The church can support the formation of cooperatives or joint enterprises. In this way, the program can endure even amid market changes.

High congregational participation indicates strong ownership. Yet high engagement may decline without innovation and recognition. The program needs continuous renewal through training, competitions, or environmental campaigns. Church leadership support must also be consistent, not limited to launch periods. Long-term sustainability depends not on initial enthusiasm but on enduring systems. Regular evaluation, documentation, and reporting can enhance accountability. The church should develop a long-term strategic plan for this initiative. Thus, the program becomes part of the church's vision, not a temporary project.

Collaboration with local government opens major opportunities for replication and institutional support. Official recognition grants access to funding, training, and infrastructure. This

model can inspire other churches in Manado and beyond. Churches need not start from scratch but can become training and inspiration hubs (Jenssen, 2021; Selvaratnam, 2022). Inter-church networks can share best practices. With support from synods or church councils, the program can expand systematically. A church that cares for the environment can become an agent of urban transformation. In times of ecological crisis, the church's role extends far beyond the walls of worship.

CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that biblical values such as stewardship, creation care, and responsible dominions serve as significant moral foundations for environmental action within the faith community of the Getsemani Church. Although these theological principles have not yet been fully institutionalized, they actively shape the motivations and daily practices of congregants involved in waste management. The integration of scripture into environmental initiatives provides spiritual legitimacy and strengthens communal commitment beyond mere technical compliance. Women, in particular, draw upon their faith as a source of perseverance and purpose in sustaining the Waste Bank program. Their long-term involvement reflects a deep alignment between personal beliefs and ecological responsibilities. The church, therefore, functions not only as a place of worship, but also as a living space where theology is enacted through tangible services. These findings affirm that religious teachings can be powerful catalysts for sustainable community action when applied meaningfully. Thus, faith-based environmental stewardship has emerged as a viable and culturally resonant model in the urban context.

The active participation of women has proven central to the programme's operational success and social impact, transforming them from passive members into key agents of change. Their roles extend beyond waste sorting and include financial management, leadership, and inter-institutional collaboration, contributing to both ecological and economic improvements. Despite structural limitations in formal church leadership, its influence has grown through demonstrated competence and community trust. The modest, yet significant, income generated enhanced household welfare and reinforced the program's social value. Furthermore, partnerships with local governments illustrate how faith communities contribute to broader urban sustainability efforts. For long-term viability, institutional support, fair recognition, and systematic planning are essential for preventing burnout and ensuring continuity. This case underscores the potential of churches to become centers of ecological and social transformation when guided by justice, inclusion, and shared vision. In sum, the Waste Bank initiative at the Getsemani Church exemplifies how spiritual conviction, gender empowerment, and environmental care can converge into a sustainable, community-driven model.

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