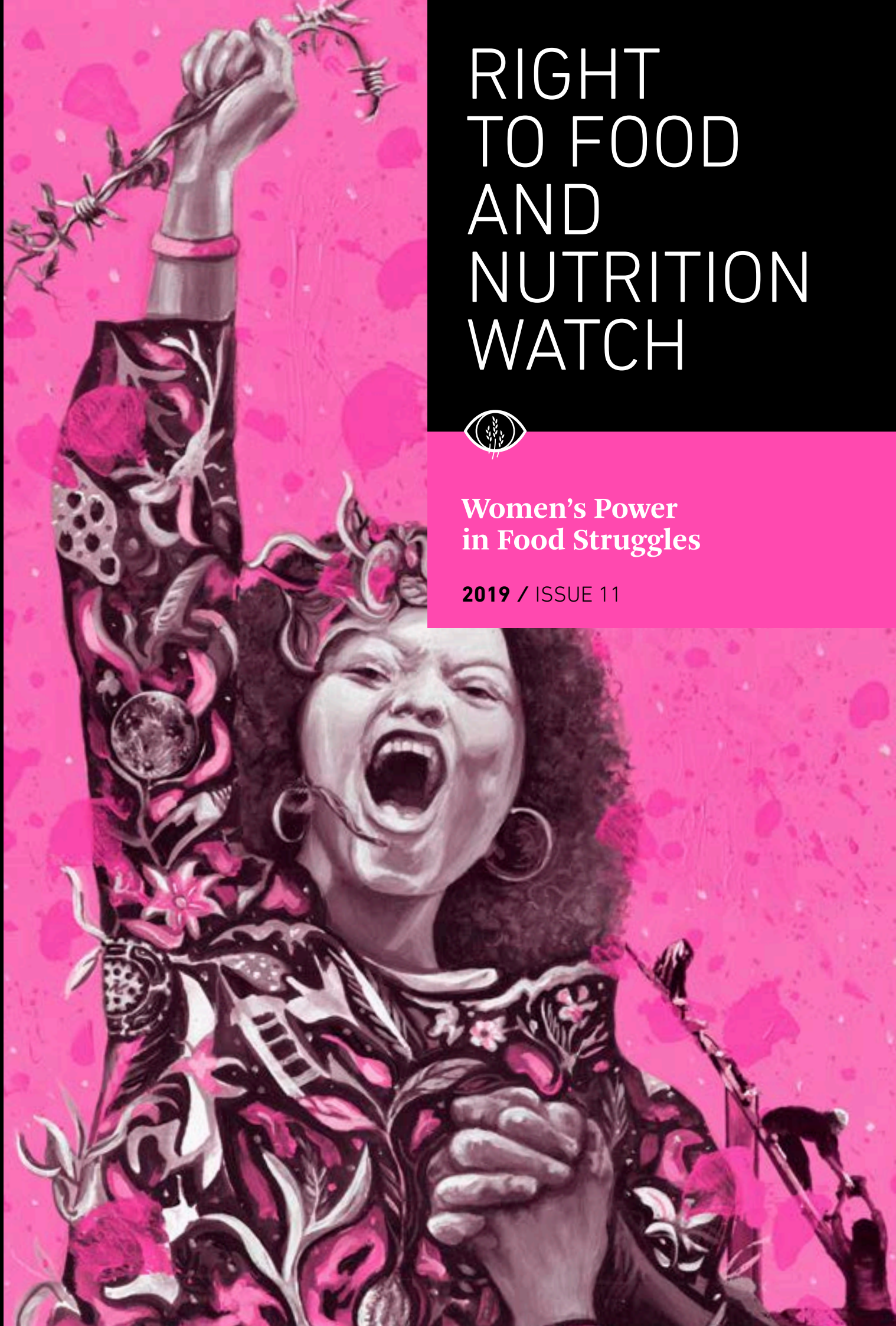
RIGHT TO FOOD AND NUTRITION WATCH

Women's Power in Food Struggles

2019 / ISSUE 11



GLOBAL NETWORK FOR THE RIGHT TO FOOD AND NUTRITION

The *Right to Food and Nutrition Watch* is the flagship publication of the Global Network for the Right to Food and Nutrition, which comprises the following organizations and social movements:

Asian-Pacific Resource and Research Centre for Women (ARROW)
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Association Paysanne pour le Développement (*Peasant Association for Development,* A.PA.DE)
Togo

Association pour la protection de la nature au Sahel (*Association for the Protection of Nature*, APN Sahel)
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Benin

Réseau des organisations paysannes et de producteurs agricoles de l'Afrique de l'Ouest (*West African Network of Peasant Organizations and Agricultural Producers*, ROPPA)
Burkina Faso

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Malawi

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Luxembourg

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United Kingdom

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Italy

URGENCI
France

WhyHunger
USA

World Alliance for Breastfeeding Action (WABA)
Malaysia

World Alliance of Mobile Indigenous Peoples (WAMIP)
India

World Council of Churches – Ecumenical Advocacy Alliance (WCC-EAA)
Switzerland

World Forum of Fish Harvesters and Fish Workers (WFF)
Uganda

World Forum of Fisher Peoples (WFFP)
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World Organization against Torture (OMCT)
Switzerland

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Zambia Alliance for Agroecology and Biodiversity (ZAAB)
Zambia

PUBLISHERS

Brot für die Welt
Germany

FIAN International
Germany

FINANCED BY

European Commission (EC)

MISEREOR

FIAN International

Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC)

HEKS/EPER (Swiss Church Aid)

This publication has been produced with financial support from the European Commission (EC). The contents of this publication are the sole responsibility of the authors and can in no way be taken to reflect the views of the EC.

| Editor in Chief
M. Alejandra Morena,
FIAN International – *morena@fian.*org

| Editing and Proofreading Katie Anne Whiddon

| Translation from Spanish into English Katie Anne Whiddon

| Art Concept & Design Ian Davidson, Marcela Vidal

| Cover Illustration by Tania González

| Print LokayDRUCK, Germany, on FSC-certified paper

OCTOBER 2019

Follow us on Facebook:
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ISBN:
978-3-943202-49-6

www.righttofoodandnutrition.org/watch

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ACRONYMS & ABBREVIATIONS

CEDAW	UN Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women
CEDAW Committee	UN Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women
CFS	UN Committee on World Food Security
CRT	critical race theory
CSM	Civil Society and Indigenous Peoples' Mechanism for relations with the UN Committee on World Food Security
CSW	UN Commission on the Status of Women
DFNS	Democratic Federation of Northern Syria
ECVC	European Coordination Vía Campesina
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
IACHR	Inter-American Commission on Human Rights
ILGA	International Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and Intersex Association
IMF	International Monetary Fund
LGBTTIQ	lesbian, gay, bisexual, transsexual, transgender people, transvestites, cross dressers, intersex and gender queer people
LVC	La Vía Campesina
NGO	non-governmental organization
OHCHR	UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights
SOFI	State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World (Annual Report)
UK	United Kingdom
UN	United Nations
UNHCR	UN High Commissioner for Refugees
USA	United States of America
WB	World Bank

01 ENRAGED: WOMEN AND NATURE

Donna Andrews, Kiah Smith and M. Alejandra Morena

Donna Andrews is a researcher in Critical Food Studies at the University of the Western Cape, South Africa. She is active in the Rural Women's Assembly Feminist School, and in the Permanent Peoples Tribunal on the Transnational Corporations in Southern Africa.

Kiah Smith is a researcher in the Fair Food Futures and Civil Society Project at the University of Queensland in Brisbane, Australia. She is a member of Future Earth, and co-convenes the Fair Food Alliance.

M. Alejandra Morena is a feminist human rights practitioner. She is Editor-in-Chief of the *Right to Food and Nutrition Watch*, and the Central America Coordinator at FIAN International.

Critical Food Studies develops knowledge about the contexts, cultural meanings and epistemological frameworks of food systems.

The Fair Food Futures and Civil Society Project engages food justice actors in dialogue with policy makers in Australia.

FIAN International was founded in 1986 as a human rights organization advocating for the realization of the human right to adequate food and nutrition.

"Women are, and have always been, central to the creation of radical food politics that have the power to reconnect us with nature, remake social relations and prioritize intersectional justice."

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS |

Special thanks to Felogene Anumo (Association for Women's Rights in Development, AWID), and Priscilla Claeys (Coventry University and FIAN Belgium) for their support in reviewing this article.

In the heart of Northern Syria, rising from the ruins, there is an ecological village built by and for women of diverse backgrounds and faiths. With their bare hands they build their homes, their schools, and their farms. Amidst the violence, these women create a peaceful place for themselves and their children, free from the oppression of patriarchy, and in respect with nature. This is just one example from this year's *Right to Food and Nutrition Watch* (hereinafter, the *Watch*), as it continues to support the struggles of small-scale producers and those most affected by hunger and malnutrition.[1] The *Watch*, grounded in the lived experiences of real people, seeks to contribute to radically transforming our food systems to ensure the realization of the human right to adequate food and nutrition for all, without discrimination. Contributors to the *Watch* have long underscored the pivotal role of women in food systems and food work,[2] highlighting women's rights as an inalienable component of a holistic understanding of the right to food and nutrition.[3]

This year's contributors seek to amplify this lens, placing women at the epicenter of food systems. It is a timely issue given the ever-increasing violence and attacks against women (and communities in general) who seek to reimagine food, environment and economies in ways that do not conform with the rise of corporate power and neoliberal right-wing governments. It is in the face of systemic violence – which is inherent in patriarchal capitalism and underpins the current ecological crisis – that women's individual and collective struggles for the right to food and nutrition are located.

1 Between 2008 and 2018, the *Watch* has had contributions from around 275 authors, civil society organizations and social movements from all over the world. In all issues, regional and gender balance has been key.

2 By food work we refer to all activities/labor around food: from producing, preparing, and cooking, to buying/sharing, and disposing of food.

As authors of this framing piece, we weave together the stories shared in this issue through the nexus of women-violence-nature. The five articles reflect an array of women's struggles, activism and analysis with regard to the right to food and nutrition. Each in their own way, the articles: (i) bring to the fore the predominantly right-wing political climate in which this activism takes place; (ii) highlight state violence through various discriminatory international and national policies which act to constrain and curtail women's autonomy through restricting and undermining their right to food and nutrition and other human rights; (iii) illuminate how patriarchy and the hegemonic neoliberal capitalist food and agricultural system negatively impacts both women and nature; and (iv) foreground the resistance being waged for a just food system. We view these insights as evidence of a food system in which both women and nature are exploited, 'othered', and made invisible, while also demonstrating new ways of being with each other and nature.

THE HIDDEN HANDS

The focus of this *Watch* issue is on women and the articles are developed predominantly by women from all corners of the world.[4] The five articles give explicit visibility to Black, Dalit, indigenous, migrant, refugee and LGBTIQ women. The articles also highlight the individual and collective struggles of urban and rural women, peasants, agricultural workers, small-scale producers, pastoralists, fisherwomen, consumers, asylum seekers, refugees, mothers, sisters, daughters and wives. Their identities and positionalities are multiple and fluid across time and space. As revealed by an intersectional feminist approach and a right to food and nutrition perspective, women's lives and experiences, and their relationship with and access to adequate food (or lack thereof), are shaped not *just* by their gender, but also by their race, ethnicity, caste, class, sexual orientation or identity, geographical location (urban/rural, North/South), and (dis)ability, among other factors. *Watch* 2019 authors Woods and Gioia critically challenge us not to render women as homogenous. Their conversation asks us to center questions of race as well as sexual orientation in our intersectional approach to the right to food and nutrition, and the food sovereignty movement at large.[5]

Women continue to be disproportionately affected by hunger, and rendered invisible in food systems. Yet paradoxically, despite all attempts to separate them from the land, women make up the bulk of food producers and agricultural workers. In many communities, women are the bearers of traditional knowledge around plants, biodiversity and seeds, in other words, the "progenitors of our food chains".[6] Women also play a key role in livestock rearing, in protecting forests, rivers, lakes and seas, and in fisheries – from net weaving and fish catching, to fish trading and processing.[7] Simultaneously, they are "at the forefront of the struggle for a non-capitalist use of natural resources (...), globally building the way to a new non-exploitative society, and one in which the threat of famines and ecological devastation will be dispelled."[8] Their actions are embedded in a context of ecological crisis, where present and future risk of climate collapse is an ever-present reminder of nature's rage.

The stories told show that, while many women globally are food producers, almost all women are feeding the world as food finders, makers and feeders – of men, families and communities. Women worldwide take up most of the burden of social reproductive work in both urban and rural contexts, even while on the move, taking up to 10 hours a day. Seibert, Sayeed, Georgieva and Guerra elucidate the varied food work that women accomplish: "[f]rom breastfeeding (...) to the preparation and cooking of food in daily life, women in many cultures are the custodians of

3 As outlined in the *Watch* 2015, "(...) FIAN International, the social movements and civil society organizations that constitute the Global Network for the Right to Food and Nutrition (GNRFN) have interpreted the right to adequate food and nutrition as embedding food sovereignty, the *full realization of women's human rights* [emphasis added], and the indivisibility of all human rights." Schieck Valente, Flavio Luiz. "The Corporate Capture of Food and Nutrition Governance: A Threat to Human Rights and Peoples' Sovereignty". *Right to Food and Nutrition Watch(2015): 19.* Available at : www.righttofoodandnutrition.org/files/Watch_2015_Article_1_The%20Corporate%20Capture%20of%20Food%20and%20Nutrition%20Governance.pdf.

4 It gathers the contributions from over 30 authors, interviewees and reviewers, all but one are women, from over 20 countries from all regions in the world. They include small-scale food producers, a farmer and beekeeper, an agronomist, and an environmental engineer, activists, academics and researchers, among others. Several articles were drafted through collective methodologies, including interviews, teleconferences and written inputs.

5 We are reminded that reflexivity and an awareness of positionality – particularly around who and how we organize, who speaks for whom, when and how, and which voices are elevated – should be central to any meaningful feminist praxis. Without this, we tread dangerously, risking to erase the very processes and voices which women fight to build.

6 Andrews, Donna and Lewis, Desiree. *Decolonising Food Systems And Sewing Seeds Of Resistance.* Johannesburg: African Center for Biodiversity, 2017. p. 2. Available at: acbio.org.za/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/Decolonising-Food-Systems-and-Sowing-Seeds-of-Resistance.pdf; Andrews, Mercia. "A case study of the Southern African Rural Women's Assembly: ‚We can bend the stick'. *Agenda* 33 (2019): 1-11. Available at: www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/10130950.2019.1598275; Permanent People's Tribunal on Transnational Corporations in Southern Africa. *Permanent Peoples Tribunal Juror Report on Transnational*

Corporations in Southern Africa. August 18-19, 2016. Available at: permanentpeoplestribunal.org/wpcontent/uploads/2016/09/PPT_SWAZILAND_FINAL_SEPT2016.pdf.

7 FIAN International. "Fishing for Gender Justice on Women's Day". March 8, 2019. Available at: www.fian.org/en/news/article/fishing-for-gender-justice-on-womens-day-2165.

8 Federici, Silvia. "Women, Land-Struggles and Globalization: An International Perspective". *Journal of Asian and African Studies* 39:1-2 (2004). Available at: journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/0021909604048250.

healthy food practices and promoters of just food and nutrition systems." Galeano and Sosa narrate that women migrating from Central America to the United States look for food, cook, and put their children first when food is scarce.

Throughout this issue authors underscore the importance to make visible this invisible, unpaid, unrecognized social reproductive work of women. At multiple levels, it is central to the maintenance of, and explicitly subsidizes, the current neoliberal global food regime – from the home to the countryside. Particularly in rural areas and working class communities, women's work is 'free' – it is not recognized as work, and is often regarded as a woman's duty. This obscures the unfair social division of labor, as well as the energy and creativity that goes into women's food work. These roles are ascribed and socially embedded, and call for constant reflection so as to shine light on our own assumptions, as well as on the values we assign to women's roles and food work in society.

THE FOOD NEXUS

Who is hungry? Who carries the burden of this hunger? Who produces food and why? These are crucial questions in our understanding of the dominant food system and to our resistance to it. A significant contribution of the five articles is that they draw our attention to the place of food at the nexus of women, violence and nature. They each demonstrate this by showing the multiple axes of power that actively discriminate against women's right to food and nutrition. In the UK, for instance, Woods describes how Black women, women of color, and migrant and refugee women have limited access to food and other human rights. These women are underrepresented, marginalized, and excluded, erased from policies, research and data. Their analysis suggests that it is in no way coincidental that non-conforming bodies are denied the right to food and nutrition.

Our gaze as readers is turned squarely on the unrelenting systemic attack on wellbeing. Contextualizing this nexus within the multiple crises of this current period, the articles bring to the fore the political and economic machinery that food work and activism are situated in. All this is the result of gender-ascribed roles that are rooted in the unequal sexual division of labor in the patriarchal and capitalist society, and which must be deconstructed from an ecofeminist critical perspective.

We propose an additional lens to deepen and examine this nexus, by locating it within a broader frame of ecological destruction and crisis. Natural resource exploitation, declining biodiversity, pollution and contamination, overconsumption and climate change are just some of the socio-ecological impacts of contemporary food systems.[9] These affect *all* humans (albeit unequally), who *all* ultimately depend on a healthy planet to survive and to thrive. We posit that the ecological crisis is a result of socially constructed hierarchies — the domination of "human by humans",[10] enabling us to situate and connect the structural inequality against women and the destruction of nature both materially and ideologically. The materiality of food and its embodiment and embeddedness espouses that food activism and narratives encourages the "right to the visceral, spiritual and sensory freedoms"[11] as well as the right to outrage, revolt and anger.

9 Smith, Kiah. "Food Systems Failure: Can we avert future crises?" in Shucksmith Mark, and David Brown, eds. *Routledge International Handbook of Rural Studies.* London and New York: Routledge, 2016. pp. 250-262.

10 Mellor, Mary. *Feminism and Ecology.* Cambridge: Polity Press, 1997.

11 Lewis, Desiree. "Bodies, matter and feminist freedoms: Revisiting the politics of food". *Agenda* 30:4 (2016): 6–16.

The narratives shared in the articles primarily show the denial, limited access, unequal and unjust distribution of food. The denial of food as a human right undermines our individual and collective humanity. Food is not equivalent to calories: "[n]utrition cannot be separated from food, health, the environment and agricul-

ture..., [they] are comprised of identity, love, care, and spirituality, as well as physical, mental and emotional health." More so, they "integrate the transmission of knowledge, languages, ceremonies, dances and prayers, as well as stories and songs related to subsistence practices and traditional foods."[12]

CAPITALISM, PATRIARCHY AND ECOLOGICAL DESTRUCTION

For decades, critical analysis has critiqued the dominant capitalist agricultural model and prevailing food regime.[13] Researchers have shown the negative impacts and consequences it has on the livelihoods of many subsistence peasants, small-scale farmers, producers and fishers in the countries of the South.[14] It is widely acknowledged that we need systemic changes and a human rights-based approach to address parallel crises of food, climate and livelihoods.[15] Yet there is little research on the gender impact of the current food regime on women, even less from a feminist perspective, and only a handful from an ecofeminist critique.[16] The hunger bias towards colonized bodies – be it in the countries of the South or migrants, refugees or first generation citizens in the countries of the North – appears absent in understanding who is hungry at a systemic level. Similarly there is limited race-, class- and gender-based analysis of who is over-consuming food, where they reside, and of how the well fed conceive of food, and their socio-economic position in relation to the hungry.

By contrast, ecofeminist work emphasizes that positionality matters and reminds those in countries from the North that they "dominate an increasingly fragile earth, 'mastering' a nature from which we are largely alienated. As a 'people of plenty' we produce a cornucopia of goods and services at the expense of our environment, the Third World, and the laboring peoples".[17] Society requires a renewed focus and critique on the overproduction and overconsumption of food, which would entail measuring food budgets, food waste, and more importantly, how skewed and disproportionate these are for those who are most hungry.

The articles presented here make evident that the dominant food system is biased. First, the history of global food regimes is one in which colonialism, imperialism, globalization and neoliberalism have sought to privatize land and dislocate women from food production so as to entrench reliance on global food markets.[18] This has been achieved through neoliberal, capitalist (i.e. the dominant) food and agricultural policies, as well as the privatization of social services, and the roll back on social protection. Several articles in this *Watch* cite some key barriers to women's right to food and nutrition, such as the World Bank's structural adjustment programs, tariff and import liberalization, market and financial deregulation, and a shift in food production from local consumption to export. Other factors are: the dismantling of food and nutrition councils and agricultural boards; market-related land reform policies; lack of decent wages; land grabs; corporatization and privatization; and peasant dispossession. As a result of all this, hunger disproportionately affects women, particularly in the Global South.

Second, of equal importance is to recognize that the current food regime is predicated on an extractivist model, which causes irrefutable ecological destruction on the commons, which women around the world depend upon. Galeano and Sosa cite land dispossession from peasant, indigenous and Garifuna (Afro-descendant) communities to advance extractivism in Honduras – and the resulting destruction of small-scale farming – as one of the structural causes of the feminization of both poverty and migration. Similarly, Leyesa and Gioia critique the extractivist model of

12 Galdames Castro, Mafalda and María Daniela Nuñez Burbano de Lara. "Gender and Food Sovereignty: Women as Active Subjects in the Provision of Food and Nutrition". *Right to Food and Nutrition Watch* (2015) :31. Available at: www.righttofoodandnutrition.org/node/32.

13 For example: George, Susan. *How The Other Half Dies.* New York: Penguin Press, 1986; Patel, Raj. *Stuffed and Starved: The Hidden Battle for the World Food System.* London: Portobello Books, 2007; Holtz-Giménez, Eric, ed. *Food movement unite! Strategies to transform our food system.* Oakland: Food First books, 2011; Friedman, Harriet. ,"From Colonialism to Green Capitalism: Social Movements and Emergence of Food Regimes", in Buttel, Frederick H. and Philip McMichael, eds. "New Directions in the Sociology of Global Development". *Research in Rural Sociology and Development* 11 (2005): 227-264.

14 For example: Tsikata Dzodzi and Dede-Esi Amanor-Wilks. "Land, Labour and Gendered Livelihoods". *Feminist Africa* 12 (2009). Available at: www.agi.ac.za/agi/feminist-africa/12.

15 Mahon, Claire. "The right to food: a right for everyone", in Rosin, C., P. Stock, P and H. Campbell, eds. *Food Systems Failure: The global food crisis and the future of agriculture.* Oxon UK: Earthscan/Routledge, 2012. pp. 83-97; Special Rapporteur on the Right to Food. *Human Rights Council Thirty-first session, Agenda item 3 - Promotion and protection of all human rights, civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights, including the right to development.* A/HRC/31/51. 2015. Available at: undocs.org/en/A/HRC/31/51.

16 For example: Shiva, Vandana. *Who really feeds the world?: The failures of agribusiness and the promise of agroecology.* Berkley: North Atlantic Books, 2016. pp. 56-66; and *Staying Alive: Women, Ecology and Development.* London: Zed Books, 1989; Cock, Jacklyn. "A feminist response to the food crisis in contemporary South Africa." *Agenda* 30:1 (2016): 121-132. Available at: www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/10130950.2016.1196983.

17 Merchant, Carolyn. *Ecological Revolutions: Nature, Gender and Science in New England.* Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1989. p. xiii.

18 Federici. *Supra* note 8.

production, and Seibert et al. reject the "predatory model of agrarian capitalism", and validate the deconstruction of oppressive and exploitative systems that women are subjected to. This is akin to the exploitation of nature at the center of ecofeminist perspectives.[19]

Third, in making gender visible in the process of food work and food systems, we seek to make the unfair division of labor apparent and bring to the fore how patriarchal capitalism exploits and extracts labor from women (as well as people of color, non-human animals, nature and other 'others').[20] Feminists have long criticized processes of neoliberal restructuring as "an attempt by capital (and the state) to shift the burden of reproduction and care of the labor force onto the shoulders of women (and girls) whose unpaid labor was (wrongly) assumed to be infinitely elastic, and the functioning of households (also wrongly) considered to be something that could be taken for granted".[21] From the vantage point of rights and livelihoods, it is impossible to separate women's day-to-day knowledges, practices, labor and values around food provisioning and consumption from the conditions required for the effective functioning of global food systems and the environments on which they depend.[22] This has led some feminists[23] to de-emphasize capitalist markets as the 'norm', in order to give more weight to 'diverse economies' in which much of women's work occurs.

POWER AND VIOLENCE

Violence is a "primary form of discrimination, impedes women from engaging in their own right to adequate food and nutrition, and efforts to overcome hunger and malnutrition".[24] Diverse women's experiences in the articles reflect this. This structural, systematic, gender-based violence occurs at the level of families and households, within communities and cultures, and is enacted by corporations and the state. Under patriarchy, violence affects *all* women, but some women are more persecuted than others: Gioia shows that "gender non-conforming people know what multiple discrimination means ...Afro-descendant trans women suffer high levels of violence and discrimination by society and the police". Quoted in Leyesa, Kurdish researcher Salima Tasdemir narrates how "[s]tate-led forced displacement [of Kurds] and deforestation have affected the lives of local people due to loss of livestock and the destruction of fields and orchards, agricultural tools and other assets". Galeano and Sosa highlight state-led violence against women human/environmental rights defenders, and widespread incidences of gender-specific harassment, sexual assault and even death, whereby "the most attacked are women who defend land and the rights of indigenous peoples". They also highlight how six out of every ten women who migrate from Central America to the United States are raped in the journey. Filipina activist Mary Ann Manahan, also quoted in Leyesa, narrates how female activists and journalists face threats of sexual violence online in the Philippines. Woods' article connects racism, immigration laws and the active denial of women's human rights with unequal access to legal justice for women in the UK.

In these examples, prejudice and discrimination are overt and targeted at women. Their experiences of gender inequality related to their identities/social positioning are entwined with attitudes and actions that discriminate, exclude and limit women's right to food and nutrition, right to land and other human rights such as housing, labor, decent work and wages, the right to asylum and justice. Taking this analysis further, the articles show how gender-based violence is also the serious,

19 Merchant, Carolyn. *The Death of Nature: Women, Ecology and the Scientific Revolution.* New York: Harper & Row, 1990; Mies, Maria and Vandana Shiva. *Ecofeminism.* London: Zed Books, 2014; Federici, Silvia. *Revolution at Point Zero.* Oakland: PM Press, 2012.

20 Ruder, Sarah-Louise and Sophia Rose Sanniti. "Transcending the Learned Ignorance of Predatory Ontologies: A Research Agenda for an Ecofeminist-Informed Ecological Economic". *Sustainability* 11(5), (2019):1479. Available at: www.mdpi.com/2071-1050/11/5/1479.

21 Razavi, Shahra. "Engendering the political economy of agrarian change". *Journal of Peasant Studies*, 36: 1 (2009):198.

22 Smith, Kiah. *Ethical trade, gender and sustainable livelihoods: Women, smallholders and ethicality in Kenya*. London: Routledge, 2014.

23 Gibson-Graham, J.K. *The end of capitalism (as we knew it): A feminist critique of political economy*. Oxford: Blackwell, 1996.

24 UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Food. *Supra* note 15.

life-threatening outcome of deepening political authoritarianism, militarization, neo-fascism, extreme nationalism, religious conservatism, trans/homophobia, neoliberalism, corporatization, and modern imperialism. The rise of right wing politics globally plays out on women's access, control and rights to food and nutrition via migrant and refugee policy, racism and xenophobia, and in the patriarchal control of women's food and bodily autonomy. This is perhaps most clearly described by Tasdemir when she says that in Kurdish regions "women are discriminated because of their ethnic identity *and* because they are women. They are targeted by state authorities and oppressed by the patriarchal structures of their own societies."

We wish to add to this perspective a more critical assessment of the role that violence against women plays in relation to food systems: that the active violence enacted against women – albeit differentiated by race, class, ethnicity, sexual orientation or geographical location – is nothing less than the reactionary politics of the powerful to uphold the status quo hierarchy of patriarchy. From an ecofeminist perspective, the violence, discrimination and other injustices against women who seek to feed themselves and others reveal much about patriarchy and the "dominating, exploitative and oppressive relations that validate and maintain the structural inequalities pivotal to capitalism".[25]

Indeed, a long history of feminist analysis has drawn attention to the ways that women, nature and the 'other' are viewed as subordinate to the dominant 'norm' of white, male capitalism.[26] All of the articles in this issue of the *Watch* reveal the complex and problematic processes by which women come to be 'othered' within the global food system, alongside how power and patriarchy reaffirm dominant binaries such as male/female, society/nature, production/reproduction, North/South, local/global, traditional/modern and culture/economy. This domination and violence is played out materially on women's bodies and their access to land and other natural resources, and culturally-politically via the devaluation of women's social reproductive food work and knowledge.

25 Ruder and Sanniti. *Supra* note 20.

26 Mies and Shiva. *Supra* note 19; Gibson-Graham. *Supra* note 23; Mellor. *Supra* note 10; Salleh, Ariel. *Ecofeminism as Politics, Second Edition: Nature, Marx and the Postmodern*; London: Zed Books, 2017; Tsing, Anna. *The mushroom at the end of the world: on the possibility of life in capitalist ruins*. New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2015.

FROM RESISTANCE TO REBELLION

The organization and articulation of feminist struggles in various parts of the world is a critical peg in the struggle for food justice. In the decade that has passed since the world food price crisis of 2007/8, the unprecedented upsurge of civic mobilization and radical resistance to entrenched food politics worldwide has only intensified. This has happened in parallel to movements for climate justice, such as *Extinction Rebellion* and *Fridays for Future*, *Right to Say No*, LGBTTIQ rights, *#MeToo, #FeesMustFall* and related campaigns, like *#BabaeAko* (I am a woman) in the Philippines, and other pro-democracy uprisings, such as the *Arab Spring* and the *Umbrella* movement in Hong Kong.

Women's agency expresses itself in subtle yet powerful daily resistance and in organized social movements. The women at the heart of experiencing food injustice and struggles are in their kitchens, in the market, in the countryside and towns, mounting sustained resistance. Some are warding off land grabs by state and mining companies, often against the backdrop of violence and intimidation. In Brazil, for example, Leyesa observes how "[w]omen who had never participated in organizations before now have the urge to do it, to fight for their rights". Other women are participating in local food councils in their cities, or in international food governance spaces. A case in point is provided by authors Seibert et al., food producers and

activist women negotiating at the UN Committee on World Food Security for new standards on land, forests, fisheries, or food systems and nutrition, where civil society and indigenous peoples act under the banner of '*Nothing about us without us*'.

Others, slowly and steadily, are transforming social relations in quiet ways through feeding themselves from the food they produce or the gardens they plant to feed their communities, such as the women of the free ecological women's village of Rojava in Northern Syria, whose story Tasdemir shares with us. They all remind us that 'small is beautiful', and that subversive politics is a key component in the armaments against the relentless onslaught of patriarchal capitalism. The immense power of women's resistance cannot be understated. As summarized by feminist scholar Federici:

> *we should recognize that the persistence and prevalence of subsistence farming is an astounding fact considering that … capitalist development has been premised on the separation of …women … from the land. Indeed, it can only be explained on the basis of a tremendous struggle that women have made to resist the commercialization of agriculture.*[27]

27 Federici. *Supra* note 8. p.48.

REIMAGINING FOOD SYSTEMS

In every article in this year's issue of the *Watch,* the authors highlight the rage felt by women across the world, and how they organize, mobilize and resist. Women are central protagonists in the struggle for agroecology and food sovereignty (Seibert et al.), in indigenous and non-indigenous solidarity (Galeano and Sosa), and in the rejection of corporatization, violence (Leyesa), and discrimination based on sexism, class and race (Woods). As Gioia writes "a united struggle that challenges gender norms, seeks bodily autonomy and brings down patriarchal, racist and colonial structures can become a counter-threat". Similarly, Brazilian activist Michela Calaça, quoted in Leyesa, calls for building international alliances to resist agri-business and protect and promote "nature, peasant seeds, real food, and agroecology," emphasizing that such a fight "will also benefit the planet that suffers from the consequences of climate change".

Women are, and have always been, central to the creation of radical food politics that have the power to reconnect us with nature, remake social relations and prioritize intersectional justice.[28] Supporting this, with examples from Cuba, India, Rwanda and Mali, Seibert et al. illustrate how women worldwide are advancing agroecological practices that strive for both social and ecological justice. These practices can transform not only our relationship with nature, but also gender relations within communities, strengthening female autonomy, the recognition of women's work and the creation of equal participation spaces. Yet for agroecology to fully achieve this transformative potential, a feminist approach is indispensable. Gioia shares the experience of the Land Dyke Feminist Family farm in Taiwan, whose members are simultaneously bringing gender awareness into agricultural practices and promoting biodiversity through agroecology. The author argues that such experiences can help us rethink and redefine both the concept of family – moving from a monolithic, heteronormative and paternalistic model towards a pluralistic approach – and the way in which agriculture and farms are structured. This is just one way that women are developing alternative forms of power and counter-narratives for food justice and food sovereignty.[29]

28 Andrews and Lewis. *Supra* note 6.

29 Cock, Jacklyn. "A feminist response to the food crisis in contemporary South Africa". *Agenda* 30 (2016): 121-132.

By acknowledging that non-market transactions and unpaid household work constitute up to 50% of economic activities globally, "the discursive violence entailed in speaking of 'capitalist' economies"[30] can be queried. In this year's *Watch*, for example, Seibert et al. point out the need for generating a new economy where productive and reproductive work is made visible and shared. Activities that reflect a different vision of the economy, including women's resistance efforts, can be differently imagined, credited, valued and respected.

We sought to offer an additional perspective: We foreground that food is nature. Our perspective of food is framed within a holistic approach, one that recognizes our deep connection and interconnectedness to the socio-ecological web of life.[31] Food is sustenance: It keeps the body and soul together, its nourishment is life affirming. Food is meaning-making and through it we express our social, cultural and ecological biodiversity. As such, we are reminded that "[u]nderstanding that we are all part of nature in the food we eat, the water we drink and the air we breath means recognizing both our ecological and social interdependence and our shared vulnerability".[32] By bringing to the fore questions of power with regard to race, class, ethnicity, gender and sexuality, and by illustrating who is being denied the right to food and nutrition, we simultaneously expose the structural violence that degrades both people and the environment. Denial of the right to food is the denial of life, nature and self. Making visible how intrinsic food is to our sense of being, self-identity, self-expression, pleasure, well-being and connection is an act of making oneself visible. The act of claiming the inalienable right to body integrity is in itself a form of emancipatory politics. In exposing the denial of rights at the women-violence-nature nexus, we also make space to be collectively enraged with the destruction of the Earth on which we all depend. We only have one home.

30 Gibson-Graham, J.K. "Diverse economies: performative practices for ‚other worlds". *Progress in Human Geography* 32(5) (2008):615.

31 Tsing. *Supra* note 26.

32 Cock, Jacklyn. *Writing the ancestral river: a biography of the Kowie*. Johannesburg: Wits University Press, 2018. p. 12.

IN BRIEF

This framing piece connects the contributions of the five articles of this *Watch* issue through the nexus of women-violence-nature. It shows that in the dominant food system both women and nature are exploited, 'othered' and made invisible, while also demonstrating new ways of being with each other and nature.

KEY CONCEPTS

→ Women's identities, experiences and access to adequate food are shaped not just by gender, but also by race, ethnicity, caste, class, sexual orientation or identity, geographical location, and (dis)ability, among other factors. An intersectional approach is required.

→ Women continue to be disproportionately affected by hunger, and hidden in food systems, despite the pivotal role they play in them.

→ It is crucial to make visible the social reproductive work of women, and the unfair social division of labor, both of which are central to the maintenance of the current global food system.

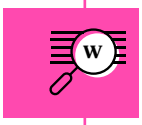
→ The current food system relies on an extractivist model, which causes irrefutable ecological destruction of the commons, which women (and food systems) depend upon.

→ Increasing incidences of state-led violence against women who seek to feed themselves and others are serious and life threatening; they reflect the reactionary politics of the powerful to uphold patriarchy. Inequality and violence limit women's right to food and nutrition.

→ Recognizing ecological and social interdependence also means respecting food as nature, as life itself. By foregrounding power relations and who is being denied the right to food and nutrition, we expose the structural violence that degrades both people and the environment.

→ Women's agency expresses itself in quiet daily resistance and in organized social movements, in international food governance spaces, and through feeding themselves and others.

→ The power of women's rage and resistance (individual and collective) to improve social and ecological relations in the face of multiple crises cannot be understated.



KEY WORDS

→ Ecofeminism
→ Food Systems
→ Capitalist Patriarchy
→ Women-Nature-Violence Nexus
→ Ecological Crisis
→ Resistance

02

WOMEN'S RESISTANCE AGAINST AUTHORITARIANISM IN BRAZIL, THE PHILIPPINES, AND ROJAVA (NORTHERN SYRIA)

*Daryl L. Leyesa**

Daryl L. Leyesa is member-convener of the Pambansang Kongreso ng Kababaihan sa Kanayunan (National Rural Women Congress, PKKK) in the Philippines.

PKKK is a coalition of 326 organizations, representing the agenda of women and girls from the sectors of small farmers, small fishers, rural workers and indigenous peoples.

* The author drafted this article following a participatory methodology, with input from Michela Katiuscia Calaça Alves dos Santos, agronomist and national coordinator of Movimento de Mulheres Camponesas (Movement of Peasant Women, MMC) in Brazil; Salima Tasdemir, a UK-based Kurdish activist and independent researcher; and Mary Ann Manahan, a feminist Filipina activist researcher, member of the World March of Women-Philippines, and volunteer with KATARUNGAN (Justice) and RIGHTS (Rural Poor Institute for Land and Human Rights Services). Their inputs and accounts were gathered via questionnaires and/or teleconferences in February and March 2019.

"[W]omen are at the heart of transforming systems and are asserting their own alternatives. Hence, it is not just about resilience, it is also about resistance to current structures and systems and re-claiming these as their own."

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS |

Special thanks to Joana Rocha Dias (Association for Cooperation and Development, ACTUAR-ACD), Andrea Nuila, and M. Alejandra Morena (FIAN International) for their support in reviewing this article.

PHOTO |

Courtesy of JINWAR Free Women's Village

In 2018, the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women (UN CSW 62) "reaffirm[ed] the right to food and recogniz[ed] the crucial contributions of rural women to local and national economies and to food production and to achieve food security and improved nutrition, in particular in poor and vulnerable households".[1] UN CSW 62 further called on States "to strengthen and build the resilience and adaptive capacity of all rural women and girls to respond to and recover from economic, social and environmental shocks and disasters, humanitarian emergencies and the adverse impacts of climate change".[2] Indeed, the multiple crises of the past decade have shown how images of women as victims have been transformed into images of survivors and responders taking on the task of ensuring household and community safety and survival, especially in securing food.

What has not been sufficiently acknowledged is how these crises are equally affected by the political climate. The rise of populist leaders and authoritarian rulers espousing right-wing politics, nationalist chauvinism and neoliberal policies threatens women and girls, food sovereignty and human rights more broadly.

How can we expect governments to support the resilience of women and girls in rural areas in contexts where right-wing populism and authoritarianism are on the rise? Three women activists discuss this contradiction based on the experiences of women living in Brazil, the Philippines, and Rojava, a region in Northern Syria.[3]

"Women want to build changes", says Michela Katiuscia Calaça Alves dos Santos from Brazil. In order to build these changes, women have "no other choice but to

1 Commission on the Status of Women. *Challenges and Opportunities in achieving gender equality and the empowerment of rural women and girls: Agreed Conclusions.* UN CSW Sixty second session, March 12-23, 2018. para.17.

2 *Ibid.* p. 16, para yy.

3 Rojava refers to Western Kurdistan, which is located in Northern Syria. In 2012, Kurds declared their self-autonomy and implemented Democratic Confederalism, which promotes a non-state system of grassroots democracy, decentralization, gender equality and environmental sustainability. Since 2016 the region has been officially called the Democratic Federation of Northern Syria (DFNS) to reflect the ethnic, religious and cultural diversity of the region.

oppose, expose, propose", says Mary Ann Manahan from the Philippines. Women's narratives of change need to be heard to counter false claims by authoritarian rulers that they are the change that people want. So what do women want? "Kurdish women are trying to assert their autonomy", says Salima Tasdemir, a Kurdish activist. In the latter case, autonomy means institutionalizing Democratic Confederalism,[4] a social paradigm committed to women's liberation and an ecological society, while in the former two cases, women are finding many other ways to challenge the status quo.

While there are significant differences among these three cases, these women deliver one clear common message: women are at the heart of transforming systems and are asserting their own alternatives. Hence, it is not just about resilience, it is also about resistance to current structures and systems and re-claiming these as their own.

RESISTING AUTHORITARIAN REGIMES

Women in these three countries face a common threat, with concrete consequences in the lives of their communities: the rise of both explicit and tacit authoritarianism in their respective countries.

Kurdish people have been subjected to massacres, assimilation and discrimination within the four states (Turkey, Iran, Iraq and Syria) of their homeland. Their identity, culture and language have been suppressed. In Syria, hundreds of thousands of Kurds have been deprived of Syrian citizenship.[5] The Kurdish regions are the most underdeveloped regions due to the states' deliberate policy of neglect. State-led forced displacement and deforestation have affected the lives of local people due to loss of livestock, and the destruction of fields and orchards, agricultural tools and other assets. The Kurds' land and natural resources were burnt down and destroyed by the Turkish and Syrian states as part of a project of 'Turkification' and 'Arabization' of the Kurdish land. Economic deprivation in the Kurdish regions is coupled with socio-cultural deprivation resulting from traditional patriarchal practices, which put the burden of regional underdevelopment disproportionately on the shoulders of women. In Syria, the conditions that emerged with the conflict started in 2011, led the Kurds to declare self-autonomy. Kurds began to implement Democratic Confederalism, which as described above offers an alternative to women. Despite these developments, people in the region still struggle on multiple levels. The economic embargo imposed mainly by Turkey, but experienced from almost all sides,[6] has meant limited access to food and to other means of survival, such as water and electricity. In the context of an ongoing war in the Kurdish regions, women face multiple discrimination: "They are discriminated because of their ethnic identity and because they are women. They are targeted by state authorities and oppressed by the patriarchal structures of their own societies", says Salima.

In the Philippines, President Rodrigo R. Duterte, who came to power in 2016 and was reelected in 2019, has launched a continuous assault on human rights and human rights defenders, liberal democracy and due process. Duterte won by a large majority with a campaign line of 'change is coming' and a promise to launch a war on drugs. Three years later, Duterte was dubbed 'the executioner', with more than 20,000 lives lost in this war.[7] The majority are men who come from urban poor communities and leave behind widows who have to take care of their families on their own.[8] "There is no separation of the three branches of government anymore, and

4 Democratic Confederalism is a non-state social paradigm, which is based on three ideological pillars: radical democracy, gender equality and ecology. For more information, please see: Ocalan, Abdullah. *Democratic Confederalism.* International Initiative Edition, 2011. Available at: www.freeocalan.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/09/Ocalan-Democratic-Confederalism.pdf.

5 For more information on the stateless Kurds in Syria, please see: Human Rights Watch. Syria: *The Silenced Kurds.* October 1996. Available at: www.hrw.org/reports/1996/Syria.htm; Kurd-Watch. *Stateless Kurds in Syria: Illegal invaders or victims of a nationalistic policy?* March 2010; Habitat International Coalition. *Systematic Housing and Land Rights Violations against Syrian Kurds.* Submitted to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights for the twelfth session of the Universal Periodic Review, March 17, 2011. Available at: lib.ohchr.org/HRBodies/UPR/Documents/session12/SY/HIC-HabitatInternationalCoalition-eng.pdf.

6 Ayboga, Ercan. "Total Embargo!" ISKU Informationsstelle Kurdistan, January 29, 2017. Available at: mesopotamia.coop/total-embargo/.

7 As cited by the Human Rights Watch, the government recorded around 4,948 suspected drug users and dealers who died during police operations from July 2016 to September 2018. However, the Philippine National Police also said that around 22,983 similar deaths fall under "homicides under investigation." For more information, please visit: www.hrw.org/world-report/2019/country-chapters/philippines.

Duterte ousted the only Supreme Court Justice who was a woman and replaced her with his own candidate. The UN Special Rapporteur on the independence of judges and lawyers, Diego García-Sayán, has criticized the government, but other international organizations have remained silent", says Mary Ann. Many of Duterte's strongest critics are women – including Senator Leila de Lima and journalist Maria Ressa, both of whom have faced criminal charges; the former is in jail while the latter was released on bail.[9] In the political climate created by Duterte, female journalists and activists also face 'woman shaming' by the President himself and his followers especially online – hateful comments on their appearance, gender, and sexuality – and threats of sexual violence.

In Brazil, Michela describes how the far-right government of Jair Bolsonaro, who took power earlier this year, has "designated us [the left] as enemies." "The military", she adds, "now occupies all the strategic spaces in the government, including the vice-presidency and direct adviser to the President of the Supreme Court." Religious conservatives also occupy influential positions in the government, including the former Ministry of Human Rights, renamed Ministry of Women, the Family and Human Rights. The current government fosters a climate of impunity for hate crimes and represents fear, violence and death for many marginalized groups, including women, the LGBTTIQ,[10] peasants, black people and Indigenous peoples.

RESISTING NEO-LIBERAL PARADIGMS

At the same time as these states display a strong propensity for repression; they loosen control over private corporations. Subscribing to neo-liberalism, their government policies favor market interests under the guise of improving services and broadening economic choices. The privatization of social services burdens women as they cope with the increasing costs of living, and with the lack of social protection and of sexual and reproductive health and rights programs. Trade liberalization policies in agriculture have facilitated the shift from producing food for local consumption to producing food for export,[11] and this sidelines women's roles in various food production activities.

In Brazil, "from the coup in 2016[12] to the current government, we are no longer demanding progressive public policies but defending existing rights and policies. These are governments that bring together two political platforms: the minimum state in social policies and conservatism in values", explains Michela. For example, the Ministry of Agrarian Development (MDA), created by the Workers' Party government to support family agriculture, was downgraded to a Special Secretariat in 2016. And one of Bolsonaro's first decisions was to dismantle the National Council for Food Security and Nutrition (CONSEA), a prime example worldwide of representative food governance structures that focus on groups suffering from food insecurity.[13] It is feared that agribusiness models will be promoted even more under his leadership.

"Free market competition will have a negative impact on women – it will displace them, lower their income and force them to move to other economic sectors", warns Mary Ann as she comments on the recent moves by the Philippine government to intensify neo-liberal and structural adjustment policies. The enactment of the *Rice Tariffication Law*, in February 2019, effectively removed all restrictions on rice imports. The rice sector had retained its quantitative restrictions under the WTO Agreement on Agriculture because it is the country's main agricultural crop and

8 Philippine Human Rights Information Center (PhilRights). "The War on the Poor: Extrajudicial Killings and their Effects on the Urban Poor Families and Communities - Findings of the 2017-2018 Documentation of Extrajudicial Killings (EJKs) committed under the so-called War on Drugs of the Duterte Administration". Quezon City, Philippines, September 2018.

9 Fuertes-Knight, Joanna. "Attacks on the media show Duterte's Philippines is heading for despotism". *The Guardian*, February 15, 2019. Available at: www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2019/feb/15/attacks-media-duterte-philippines-rappler-maria-ressa.

10 Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transsexual, transgender people, transvestites, cross dressers, intersex and gender queer people. For more information on discrimination against the LGBTTIQ community, and how they are organizing, see the article "Coming Out! Gender Diversity in the Food System" in this issue of the *Right to Food and Nutrition Watch.*

11 For a concrete example of the impact of global trade rules on food sovereignty, please see: Rachmi Hertanti. "INSIGHT 8.1 An Experience from Indonesia: Trade Agreement Preys on Peasants and Food Sovereignty". *Right to Food and Nutrition Watch* (2017): 82-83. Available at: www.rightto-foodandnutrition.org/files/R_t_F_a_N_W_2017_ENG_8.pdf.

12 Democratically-elected President Dilma Rousseff was ousted on August 31, 2016 following an impeachment process widely regarded as a 'parliamentary coup'.

13 Civil society organizations collected around 35,000 signatures worldwide through an online petition to demand that Bolsonaro bring back the CONSEA. In a political defeat for the government, Congress recreated the CONSEA, but it is not clear yet what form it will take. FIAN International. "Bolsonaro Shuts Down National Council for Food Security and Nutrition." FIAN International News, June 15, 2019. Available at: www.fian.org/en/news/article/bolsonaro-shuts-down-national-council-for-food-security-and-nutrition-2162.

national staple. However, the 2018 rice price crisis was used as justification to open up the market for more affordable rice. This leaves Filipino rice farmers vulnerable to switching to other crops or land use if they fail to compete with the cheaper rice imports. A compounding problem is that farmers often do not hold title to their land. After thirty years of agrarian reform, 600,000 hectares remain undistributed.[14] Women farmers, whose full rights to land were recognized comprehensively by law only in 2009, now have to deal with issues of land conversion and land grabbing. This can be linked with the World Bank's policy on market-assisted land reform (MARL) that has weakened the role of the state to acquire and distribute land under the same program.[15] "This is not surprising because the administration follows World Bank policies. The President also prioritizes financing from China[16] for large-scale projects in mining and energy", adds Mary Ann.

Regarding the Kurdish lands, Salima similarly expresses her concern on so-called regional development projects that fail to adhere to environmental, social and cultural heritage standards. "Big international companies operate in Turkey, and much of those operating at the national level have international counterparts that support them in 'social development' projects that end up destroying the natural resources where Kurdish people live."[17] Living mostly in rural regions, the Kurdish people have been particularly affected by the construction of dams, forced migration and displacement. This cannot be dissociated from the efforts of the Turkish State to demobilize the Kurdish struggle. Similar policies against Kurdish land and natural resources were implemented by the Syrian state as well.

RESISTING SEXISM

Mary Ann depicts the top leader of the Philippines as the epitome of anti-women: "he is misogynist, objectifies women in his speeches, jokes about rape and upholds gender stereotypes." As early as the 2016 presidential election, women's groups filed a case to denounce Duterte's violation of the Magna Carta of Women (MCW).[18] The MCW was passed to implement the UN Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) and serves as a comprehensive women's human rights law in the country.[19] Technically, the women won the case, but the decision could not be carried out after Duterte won the Presidency and established political control over the three branches of government. The court case did not even dissuade him from making sexist remarks, for example by offering "42 virgins" to investors and visitors[20] and telling soldiers to shoot women rebels in their vaginas because without them "women would be useless".[21] As mentioned earlier, women also suffer the consequences of extrajudicial killings in the war on drugs. Thousands of women have become single parents to children whose fathers have been killed, while illegal warrants of arrest have pushed some women, sometimes very young, to trade their bodies for the release of their partners, husbands or parents, a practice dubbed as 'sex for freedom'. Women live in constant fear and insecurity, and this could become even worse for mothers if the prioritized bill aimed at lowering the Minimum Age of Criminal Responsibility (MACR) from 12 to 9 years old is passed. These varying issues have spurred various forms of resistance and tactical alliances among women and feminist groups, such as the #BabaeAko (I am a woman) social media campaign (inspired by #MeToo movement)[22] and the work of World March of Women-Philippines.

Brazil also has an openly misogynist President. As a federal deputy, he told a woman deputy: "I am not a rapist but, if I were, I wouldn't rape you because you don't de-

14 Manahan, Mary Ann. "Introduction: Part One Thirty Years of Agrarian Reform under CARP/ER Is there Reason to Celebrate?" *Reporman Agraryo at Pagbabago, Narratives of Agrarian Conflicts, Transitions and Transformation.* Quezon City: Focus on the Global South, 2018, p.19.

15 Manahan, Mary Ann. *Banking on the Rural Poor?: Critical Insights and Policy Questions on Foreign Aid and Agrarian Reform in the Philippines.* Focus on Poverty. Available at: www.focusonpoverty.org/download/reports/Banking%20on%20the%20Rural%20Poor.pdf.

16 For more information on the impact of China's interventions, as well as of the activities of Chinese industrial companies, on the right to food and nutrition of local communities, especially fishermen and fisherwomen, in the Philippines, Indonesia and Sri Lanka, please see: FIAN International, People's Movement against Port (PMAPC), and Traditional Fishermen Association (KNTI). *China's Extraterritorial Obligations vis-a-vis the Right to Adequate Food and Nutrition of Fishers in the Philippines, Indonesia, and Sri Lanka - Joint Submission to the UN UPR of China (Third Cycle/31 Session).* November 31, 2018. Available at: www.upr-info.org/sites/default/files/document/china/session_31_-_november_2018/js38_upr31_chn_e_main.pdf.

17 One example is the Ilisu Dam and Hydroelectric Power Plant Project on the river Tigris, planned in the mainly Kurdish populated Southeast of the Turkish state, as a part of the large scale 'Southeastern Anatolia Project' (GAP). This project was supposed to improve the region's socio-economic status through the provision of hydro-electric energy and irrigation. In 2005, German, Swiss and Austrian companies became involved. However, in 2009, due to the failure by Turkey to comply with the required environmental, social and cultural heritage standards, and large international protests, some of the companies withdrew. For more information, please see: Hasankeyf'i Yaşatma Girişimi. *Report on the current status of the Ilisu Dam and Hydroelectric Power Plant Project and the counter campaigns.* May 27, 2019. Available at: www.hasankeyfgirisimi.net/?p=861.

18 Philippine Commission on Women. *Magna Carta of Women. Philippines:* Office of the President. Available at: pcw.gov.ph/sites/default/files/documents/laws/republic_act_9710.pdf.

serve it". According to Michela, religious forces have "legitimized violence against women and LGBTTIQ, the return of women to the domestic sphere, and many other setbacks in the name of god and the family".

Incidence of violence against women increased in recent years. As of 2017 alone, according to the Brazilian Forum on Public Security, there was an 8% increase in rape accounting to 60,018 rapes and about 1,133 femicides.[23] Issues of welfare and access to resources continue to burden women in Brazil, especially in the countryside. As Michela emphasizes, "Women are the first to suffer the impacts of the lack of water and food, because they are the ones who have to look for solutions. They have to travel long distances in search of water for their families. They are also the first to go without food so that their children and husbands can eat."

According to Michela, the water situation has worsened since the 2016 coup, with the end of public programs for semi-arid regions conducted in partnership with civil society, and which prioritized women at all levels (training, access to water, agroecological production, among others). Michela concludes that the State has abandoned rural families and the urban peripheries: "The conservative discourse of the government is nothing more than the expression of less-state economic policy, fewer rights and more responsibilities for women, who should do that work for free as if it were a loving obligation, without sexual rights, and with a strong agenda against sexual and reproductive health." The Bolsonaro government defends the view that the fetus is a subject of rights from the moment of conception. The Minister of Women, Family and Human Rights refuses to debate the reasons why so many women die in clandestine abortions, seeking to criminalize them instead. According to Michela, the type of family that the current government defends is white, urban, and heteronormative.

Salima explains that women have been systematically disempowered by institutionalized forms of patriarchy, from the family to the state. The situation of women is worsened by the ongoing conflicts in the Kurdish regions. Kurdish women have been subjected to sexual and other forms of violence. Some women and girls, for example, are being captured by ISIS and subjected to sexual slavery as a means of warfare. This is why in Rojava, women are taking matters into their own hands and are organizing self-defense and education assemblies. They have created a safe space for women who have experienced violence due to war or other forms of patriarchal oppression.[24]

When Rojava declared its autonomy, they banned 'honor killings', forced marriages, child marriages, polygamy, and other forms of violence against women. It was observed that "before the Rojava Revolution, the prevailing gender system strictly controlled women and restricted their ability to do anything except childrearing and domestic work". This has been changed under the new constitution, effectively replacing the old patriarchal system by affirming women's right to participate in all areas and spheres of life.[25]

DEFENDING FOOD SOVEREIGNTY

It is in these interlocking contexts of authoritarianism, neo-liberalism and sexism that the women's movements from Brazil, Philippines and Rojava display their resistance. In doing so, women are planting seeds of hope as they uproot barriers to food sovereignty.

19 Also known as Republic Act 9710, enacted on August 14, 2009 by the 14th Congress.

20 Al Jazeera News. "Duterte offers 42 virgins to visitors of the Philippines." January 27, 2018. Available at: www.aljazeera.com/news/2018/01/duterte-offers-42-virgins-visitors-philippines-180127074930801.html.

21 Ellis-Petersen, Hannah. "Philippines: Rodrigo Duterte orders soldiers to shoot female rebels 'in the vagina'". *The Guardian*, February 13, 2018. Available at: www.theguardian.com/world/2018/feb/13/philippines-rodrigo-duterte-orders-soldiers-to-shoot-female-rebels-in-the-vagina.

22 Regencia, Ted. ":#BabaeAko: Philippines' Duterte 'intimidated by strong women'". *Al Jazeera News,* May 30, 2018. Available at: www.aljazeera.com/news/2018/05/babaeako-philippines-duterte-intimidated-strong-women-180530131100613.html.

23 DW News. "Brazil Arrests hundreds for violence against women". August 25, 2018. Available at: www.dw.com/en/brazil-arrests-hundreds-for-violence-against-women/a-45218982.

24 For more information, please visit: jinwar.org/de/home-3/.

25 Evans, Rachel. "Revolutionary Rojava: A polyethnic, feminist and anti-capitalist experiment". *Links International Journal of Socialist Renewal.* October 26, 2018. Available at: links.org.au/revolutionary-rojava-polyethnic-feminist-anti-capitalist-experiment.

Resistance, according to Michela, means constructing a food system that is different from what transnational corporations want. This message comes from food sovereignty actors such as agroecology organizations, peasant farmers, La Vía Campesina and rural unions, as well as from urban workers, left political parties, and Black and feminist movements. There is no better way to ensure adequate food for everyone than to strengthen family farmers, peasants and traditional populations. Resistance against agri-businesses, however, is not just a national fight. International solidarity is important, especially coming from other social movements that know the importance of nature, peasant seeds, real food, and agroecology.[26] Michela emphasizes that "this fight will not only undermine authoritarianism and broaden popular participation, it will also benefit the planet that suffers from the consequences of climate change".

26 For more information on the intersection between agroecology and feminism, please see article "Without Feminism, There is No Agroecology" in this issue of the *Right to Food and Nutrition Watch.*

Kurdish women implement autonomous food systems and governing structures that are aligned with Democratic Confederalism.[27] Committed to women's liberation and an ecological and democratic society, Kurdish women secure separate and safe spaces for women, but are not dismissive of shared spaces with men. They build women-only cooperatives that develop their own food system and operate bakeries, restaurants, production sales and farming. Salima reiterates: "women have created women cooperatives and other women-led institutions to ensure women's right to food and nutrition." She acknowledges that this is a process "by the women, for the women."

27 *Supra* note 3.

The Filipino farmers could relate to this vision of autonomy, especially in terms of being able to exercise control over one's space or territory. The urgent demand towards food sovereignty in the Philippines is for peasants and women in rural areas to have control over their lands and coastal resources. This will allow them to promote agroecology, prevent the conversion of farmlands to non-agricultural use and extractive activities, as well as protect coastal resources from exploitative commercial purposes. Mary Ann reminds us that "women demand not just social justice but food, dignified jobs, sustainable sources for their livelihoods, in order to provide for their families". Grassroots women organizations have been defending food sovereignty through initiatives like women-managed coastal zones, women-to-women seed banking and exchange, and organic farming. Apart from promoting these initiatives, the National Rural Women Congress (PKKK), a national rural women coalition and a member of the World March of Women-Philippines, pushes for the continued coverage of agricultural lands under agrarian reform, for the enactment of a protection law for critical watershed areas, and for a policy review to amend or if possible suspend the *Rice Tariffication Law* (2019).

ORGANIZING OUR RESISTANCE

What others perceive as women's resilience is actually born out of resistance. Conversely, what started as women's resistance gathers strength from their resilience through collective organizing.

Kurdish women are organizing on the ground not just to counter the different power structures at multiple levels of decision-making, but also to showcase that alternatives are possible. One such case is the story of *Jinwar* – a word that refers to "woman's space" or "woman's land" in Kurdish. On November 25, 2018, the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women, the village of Jinwar was declared a "free ecological women's village, providing space for women who have lost their husbands and other relatives in the war and do not have a proper place to stay

with their children. It is also a space for women who have experienced violence due to war or other forms of patriarchal oppression. With 30 homes, a school, museum, and medical centre, Jinwar has become a space where women gather, live and work together, based on the vision of a free and communal life", conveys Salima.

Salima refers to Jinwar as born out of women's consciousness about their oppression. This is reflected from Jinwar's self-description:

> *Reconstructing our homes as havens of peace is a significant act of resistance in the face of violence and war. But far from being simply a collection of houses, the village will also provide an alternative way of life. Building onto the rich cultural heritage and historic knowledge of women, JINWAR aims to create a way of life in which every woman can reach her full potential free of the constraints of the oppressive power structures of patriarchy and capitalism.*[28]

Indeed, critical consciousness nurtured by a growing number of organizations can build a strong movement. In Brazil, the *Marcha das Margaridas* (March of the Daisies) has been held since 2000 and reflects a sustained agenda against hunger, poverty and gender-based violence. The march is held every August 14 and is considered to be the most massive action of the working women of the countryside, forest and the waters against the agribusiness violence that have spelled death for peasant family farms and their environment. The march is composed of several feminist organizations from both rural and urban areas.[29]

As Michela observes, "Women who had never participated in organizations before now have the urge to do it, to fight for their rights." This is also Mary Ann's experience with the growing anti-misogyny movement and the protests against extrajudicial killings in the Philippines, where women who used to keep silent find themselves joining and speaking in rallies, and where alliances are built between middle and upper-class feminists and mass-based women organizations.

Women's groups are as diverse as their struggles and political backgrounds. It is but logical that women's groups do not agree on everything. What needs celebrating is that amidst multi-dimensional conflicts, there are tactical alliances and inter-sectoral actions that help women, including young women and girls, find a common voice. As Michela puts it: "a revolution is when a woman makes time in her day to day to do politics".

28 For more information about JINWAR, please visit: jinwar.org/about/.

29 For more information about the March of the Daisies 2019, please visit: fetase.org.br/mobilizacoes/marcha-das-margaridas/.

IN BRIEF

No amount of recognition for women in their food production roles can translate to food sovereignty and the right to food and nutrition, so long as there are threats to their freedom, structural barriers to social equality, and gender discrimination. This is best illustrated by the experiences of women and girls living in the rural areas of Rojava (Northern Syria), Brazil and the Philippines, where they face authoritarian rule, both explicit and tacit, espousing right-wing politics, nationalist chauvinism and neoliberal policies.

Three women activists – Salima Tasdemir (UK-based Kurd), Mary Ann Manahan (Philippines), Michela Calaça (Brazil), shared how these authoritarian regimes have persecuted peoples and communities, abused women and girls, favored corporations over community-based food systems in their respective countries/regions. In response, women display not just their resilience during crises but more so their resistance through collective organizing.

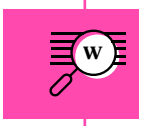
The women's imperatives are to defend food sovereignty, resist sexism and counter neoliberal policies in various organized ways. One example is to create safe and autonomous spaces by and for Kurdish women under the Democratic Confederalism framework of women's liberation and ecological society. They have established women-only cooperatives engaged in food production activities and other spaces for women affected by war and violence. In the case of Brazil and the Philippines, women's groups are first to protest in the streets and build tactical and inter-sectoral alliances to combat increasing violence against women, LGBTTIQ, and other marginalized sectors. There are grassroots initiatives as well that push for the recognition of the right to land and territory to fully secure agroecology and food sovereignty practices.

KEY CONCEPTS

→ Authoritarian rule in countries/regions like Rojava (Northern Syria), Brazil and the Philippines implement sexist and neoliberal policies that threaten women and girls, their basic freedoms, and food sovereignty. These countries/regions witness increased incidence of violence against women, both as direct and indirect targets of the state violence and impunity.

→ Neoliberal policies allow commercial big plantations, construction of dams, extractive activities and other import-export oriented policies that displaced community-based food systems and push women in the rural areas to look for other means of livelihood. Privatization policies have exploited women's social reproduction roles and have burdened them further with their care work.

→ More than resilience, women's resistance is necessary to 'expose' structural issues, 'oppose' human rights violations, and 'propose' alternatives for building a better society. Women are exercising their political agency from the household to the community to the state to achieve real changes and autonomy.



KEY WORDS

→ Authoritarianism
→ Sexism
→ Neoliberalism
→ Women's Resistance
→ Food Sovereignty

03

INVISIBLE WOMEN: HUNGER, POVERTY, RACISM AND GENDER IN THE UK

Deirdre Woods

Deirdre Woods is a disabled, decolonial, Black feminist, social justice actionist and community food practitioner. She is the Co-Chair of the Independent Food Aid Network (IFAN), which is based in the United Kingdom (UK).

IFAN supports and connects a range of independent frontline food aid organizations while advocating on their behalf at a national level. Its vision is of a country that does not need emergency food aid, and in which good food is accessible to all.

"The rekindling of Black feminism and Black women organizing in the UK offers new hope in all areas of life – from food security, community and health, to academia, politics and policy."

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS |
Special thanks to Juana Camacho S. (Colombian Institute of Anthropology and History, ICAHN), Christina Schiavoni (International Institute of Social Studies, ISS), and Emily Mattheisen (FIAN International) for their support in reviewing this article.

The United Kingdom (UK) is in the midst of a crisis: a widening gap between the haves and have-nots, austerity, a deepening of racism, islamophobia, homophobia and xenophobia, increasing far right extremism, entrenchment of corporate power, and neoliberal politics are an everyday reality. Brexit has plunged the UK into a crisis of uncertainty. The UK is mired in a poverty crisis, a welfare crisis, a housing crisis, a hunger crisis, and a human rights crisis. Amid these multiple crises, the impact on women of color remains invisible.

The government is legally required under the *International Covenant on Economic*, Social and Cultural Rights (Article 11) to secure the human right to adequate food and nutrition for everyone in the UK. But in recent years the country has seen large increases in the levels of malnutrition, hunger, food bank usage and food aid,[1] all of which are indicative of the UK's regression in complying with its obligations to respect, protect, and fulfill international human rights, including the right to food and nutrition.

Social inequity, discrimination and state violence underlies this food crisis in the fifth richest economy in the world.

INEQUALITIES & DISCRIMINATION

In May 2019, the UN Special Rapporteur on extreme poverty and human rights, Professor Philip Alston, released his report on his visit to the UK in November 2018.

1 The Guardian Letters. "Food banks are no solution to poverty". The Guardian, March 24, 2019. Available at: www.theguardian.com/society/2019/mar/24/food-banks-are-no-solution-to-poverty; and Butler, Patrick. "Food bank network hands out record 1.6m food parcels in a year". The Guardian, April 25, 2019. Available at: www.theguardian.com/society/2019/apr/25/food-bank-network-hands-out-record-16m-food-parcels-in-a-year.

The report condemned the UK government for its program of austerity policies, and the deliberate cuts to public services and the social welfare security net, implemented since 2010. This has driven 14 million people, a fifth of the population, into poverty. More people are forced to choose between heating or eating, growing numbers of children are arriving at school hungry, and there is an increased use of food banks.[2]

The report is damning of the systemic inequalities and the disadvantages that women, children, the elderly, people with disabilities, and ethnic minorities face. Alston states that:

> *ethnic minorities are at a higher risk of becoming homeless, have poorer access to health care and experience higher rates of infant mortality. Black people and people from a South Asian background are the most likely to live in poverty and deprivation, yet as a result of changes to taxes, benefits and public spending from 2010 to 2020, Black and Asian households in the lowest fifth of incomes will experience the largest average drop in living standards, about 20%. In England and Scotland, changes to public spending from 2010–2011 to 2021–2022 will fall the hardest on Black households.*[3]

For women in these communities, the situation is even more acute. Changes in benefits and social policies have reduced support for women far more than for men. Reductions in social care also means that there is a heavier burden on primary caregivers, who are usually women. The report also shares that life expectancy of women in disadvantaged communities has stalled, and for the poorest 20%, it has actually fallen.

Alongside austerity, the UK has seen the development of a hostile political environment since 2012,[4] where policy and legislation are designed to make it difficult for undocumented migrants to remain in the UK. This has had devastating impacts on asylum seekers and refugees, and diaspora communities from former colonies. Asylum seekers are denied their basic human rights to shelter, healthcare, work and food, and rely on charity to survive. The so-called 'Windrush generation' – British subjects arriving in the UK between 1948 and 1971 from Caribbean countries[5] – and their children, many of whom were born in the UK, have had their British citizenship questioned. Without documentary proof, they have had their basic human rights withdrawn in recent years. These persons arrived under immigration policies linked to British colonies which allowed them the legal right to settle in the UK as British citizens. They neither needed nor were given any documents upon entry to the UK. A series of discriminatory acts by successive governments saw changes to immigration laws beginning as early as 1965,[6] and landing cards later destroyed in 2010.[7] Recently, many persons have been denied entry back into the UK, lost benefits, or have been deported back to countries that they have no connection to, having spent all or most of their lives in the UK.[8]

These measures can only be seen as modern British imperialism, where the overarching political, social and economic systems of domination are white, normative and/or supremacist.[9] Race, ethnicity, gender and 'othering' are the tools of colonizing bodies, and ways of being and knowing. Black women, other women of color, migrant and refugee women – combined an estimated 6.5% of the UK population[10]– are marginalized, excluded and underrepresented. The voices of Black women are too often silenced, subjected to state, domestic and public violence.

2 Alston, Philip. Visit to the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland - Report of the Special Rapporteur on extreme poverty and human rights. United Nations General Assembly. A/HRC/41/39/Add.1. April 23, 2019. Available at: https://undocs.org/pdf?symbol=en/A/HRC/41/39/Add.%201.

3 *Supra* note, 2.

4 Global Justice Now. "The hostile environment for immigrants - How Theresa May has created an underclass in the UK". *Supporter briefing*, February 2018. Available at: http://www.globaljustice.org.uk/resources/hostile-environment-immigrants.

5 This term is "a reference to the ship MV Empire Windrush, which arrived at Tilbury Docks, Essex, on 22 June 1948, bringing workers from Jamaica, Trinidad and Tobago and other islands, as a response to post-war labour shortages in the UK." The ship carried 492 passengers - many of them children. BBC News. "Windrush generation: Who are they and why are they facing problems?" *BBC*, April 18, 2018. Available at: www.bbc.com/news/uk-43782241.

6 Eddo-Lodge, Reni. *Why I'm No Longer Talking To White People About Race.* London: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2017.

7 Gentleman, Amelia. "Home Office destroyed Windrush landing cards, says ex-staffer". *The Guardian*, April 17, 2018 Available at: www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2018/apr/17/home-office-destroyed-windrush-landing-cards-says-ex-staffer.

8 Perkins Anne, and Amelia Gentleman. "The Government knew for years that Windrush generation hurt by 'hostile environment'. *The Guardian*, April 23, 2018. Available at: www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2018/apr/22/government-aware-for-years-that-hostile-environment-hurt-windrush-generation.

9 Diangelo, Robin. *White Fragility: Why It's So Hard for White People to Talk About Racism*. Boston: Beacon Press, 2018.

10 For more information, please see: GOV.UK. "Ethnicity facts and Figures, UK population by ethnicity -Male and female population". August 1, 2018. Available at: www.ethnicity-facts-figures.service.gov.uk/uk-population-by-ethnicity/demographics/male-and-female-populations/latest#by-ethnicity; and GOV.UK. "Ethnicity facts and Figures, UK population by ethnicity- Population of England and

In this scenario, access to food, health, housing, education, decent work, and other economic, social, and cultural rights are deeply compromised for women of color. These women are invisible in policies, data, and research, contributing to further marginalization.

ERASURE AND BLINDNESS IN DATA COLLECTION ANALYSIS

The UK government is turning a blind eye to the scale of national poverty and its impacts, particularly as it relates to hunger and marginalized groups, and the specific impacts on women. Such invisibility and erasure have been described as "everyday mechanisms of white ignorance"[11] – in other words, a world view of white normativity.[12] Additionally, "[a] very basic reality is that the forces of structural racism and sexism are always shifting, creating new forms of othering".[13] Such attitudes and practices, and in particular color blindness, are also reproduced and reinforced in academia. There is a huge gap in analysis and research on intersectional[14] dimensions of gender, class, race and discrimination within the study of food insecurity, landlessness, or development globally (across the Global South and Global North).

A study on the impact of austerity on Black and minority ethnic women in the UK, led by women from communities in Coventry and Manchester, showed that women of color were more likely to live in poor households – amounting to 40% of African/Caribbean, 46% of Pakistani and 50% of Bangladeshi women.[15] It is clear that women of color face higher levels of discrimination, but the analysis, including from within our own organizations, fails to address it.

Other economic analyses have also missed an opportunity to measure the percentage of women of color using food aid, and to provide an intersectional analysis on household food insecurity.

The author of this article found only two studies that address food insecurity, race and gender in the UK. One was limited to food bank users in inner London. That particular study showed that about 55.9% of food bank users in the UK are women,[16] with the majority being Black and Asian women. It failed, however, to explore the relationship between race, gender and reliance on welfare. The second study, carried out by Independent Food Aid Network (IFAN) Co-Chair Dr Madeleine Power, looked at experiences of Asian and White women with food banks in North East England.[17] It was the first of its kind but still did not explore structural racism and gender, and instead it looked at cultural difference.

There is also no research about women of color who are food producers or food workers, or of Black queer women and non-binary people,[18] and their right to food and nutrition in the UK.

In addition to the lack of data and analysis on the impacts of food insecurity and poverty on women of color, there is no research on these issues led by women of color themselves. Less than 1% of university professors are Black women; there are only 25 Black women professors in the UK, and they have had "to overcome bullying, stereotyping and institutional neglect in order to win promotion".[19] This institutionalized patriarchy, violence and racism further marginalizes and oppresses Black women, and suppresses and devalues the production of knowledge.

These gaps in research, analysis, and representation reduce the capacity to advocate not only by mainstream organizations, but also by policy makers and politicians,

Wales". August 1, 2018. Available at: www.ethnicity-facts-figures.service.gov.uk/uk-population-by-ethnicity/national-and-regional-populations/population-of-england-and-wales/latest.

11 Mills, Charles W. "Global white ignorance". *In Routledge International Handbook of Ignorance Studies,* 217-227. Taylor and Francis Inc., 2015.

12 Mueller, Jennifer C. "Producing Colorblindness: Everyday Mechanisms of White Ignorance". *Social Problems,* 64:2 (2017):219–238. Available at: academic.oup.com/socpro/article-abstract/64/2/219/3058571?redirectedFrom=fulltext.

13 Mirza, Heidi. "Black British feminism then and now". *Media Diversified,* March 13, 2014. Available at: mediadiversified.org/2014/03/23/black-british-feminism-then-and-now/.

14 Intersectionality is a concept used to describe how persons, or groups of people, are disadvantaged by multiple sources of prejudice and discrimination, due to their overlapping identities and experiences, e.g. race, class, gender identity, sexual orientation, religion, etc. This is further discussed below in the section "Black Feminist Advocacy: Intersectionality and Social Change".

15 Hall, Sarah-Marie et al. Intersecting *Inequalities: The Impact of Austerity on Black and Minority Ethnic Women in the UK*. Women's Budget Group and Runnymede Trust, 2017. P. 10. Available at: www.intersecting-inequalities.com.

16 Prayogo, Edwina et al. "Who uses foodbanks and why? Exploring the impact of financial strain and adverse life events on food insecurity". *Journal of Public Health* 40:4 (2018): 676–683.

17 Power, Maddy, Neil Small, and Kate E. Pickett. "Hidden hunger? Experiences of food insecurity amongst Pakistani and white British women". *British Food Journal* 120:11 (2018): 2716–2732. Available at: www.emeraldinsight.com/doi/full/10.1108/BFJ-06-2018-0342.

18 Non-binary, also known as genderqueer, is a spectrum of gender identities that are not exclusively masculine or feminine, i.e. gender identities and/or gender expressions that fall somewhere in between man and woman, or as wholly different from these terms. For more information on terminology, please see: www.glaad.org/reference/transgender.

Black women and Black-led organizations. Promoting an intersectional analysis for the right to food and other human rights issues faced by communities of color in the UK, and ensuring space for advocacy led by women of color, are fundamental to developing public policies and programs that can actually address the multiple forms of discrimination and rights violations they face.

BLACK FEMINIST ADVOCACY: INTERSECTIONALITY AND SOCIAL CHANGE

Black feminist theories claim that the experience of a double burden of racial and gender discrimination gives rise to different understandings and expressions of their position in relation to sexism, class oppression, and racism.[20]

Intersectionality, a theory developed by African American Black feminist lawyer Kimberlé Crenshaw, is a tool for practice and a framework for analyzing the intersections of race and gender within the complexity of power, systemic racism and other structural oppressions, such as class, age, sexual orientation, and disability.[21] In a recent talk given by Crenshaw in London, she emphasized the importance of race in intersectional analysis: "centering black and brown experiences in the failures and inadequacies of capitalist, patriarchal, white normative structures", she reiterated, "without race, it is not intersectionality".[22]

Across Europe, race is being depoliticized through the erasure of race in intersectionality – i.e. looking at the intersections of gender, class, disability and other oppressions, but not race. This is due to far-right Eurocentrism in German and French politics, as well as by white feminists,[23] often masked by liberal multiculturalism. However, this has not done away with racism.[24] In the European context, this uncritical reproduction of racism by some feminists is an "erasure both of contemporary realities of intersectional subjects and of the history of racial categories and racializing processes across the whole of Europe".[25]

The Intersectional Approach Model for Policy and Social Change, developed by Dr. C. Nicole Mason, to contribute to ending the invisibility of women of color in public policy, offers a tool for analyzing and developing strategies for addressing food, hunger, race and gender issues. It analyzes macro and micro causes of inequality and examines differing intersectionalities – structural, political, economic, representative and institutional. This model seeks to better address root causes of inequalities and "challenges single-issue organizing agendas, policy frameworks and models".[26]

Addressing violations of the right to food and nutrition requires a holistic analysis into structural issues and factors which contribute to a violation, existing across sectoral policies and organizing. Food insecurity for women of color in the UK is a result of inadequate social policies across many issues. Addressing just one area neglects the multiple forms of violence where poverty, marginalization, and discrimination have impact on people and communities.

HUNGER, POVERTY AND THE STRUGGLE FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE

Whilst the UK government dismisses the Alston report in a display of imperialistic arrogance, Alston's recommendation to "[r]eview and remedy the systematic disadvantage inflicted by current policies on women, as well as on children, persons with disabilities, older persons and ethnic minorities"[27] is quite weak without a stronger body of research and evidence. However, more importantly, the political will is missing to dismantle deeply entrenched institutions of oppression.

19 Adams Richard, and David Batty. "Black female professors must deal with bullying to win promotion, report finds". *The Guardian*, February 3, 2019. Available at: www.theguardian.com/education/2019/feb/04/black-female-professors-report.

20 For more information on Black feminism, please see: Code, Lorraine, ed. *Encyclopedia of Feminist Theories. Routlege*, 2000. Collins, Patricia H. *Black Feminist Thought: Knowledge, Consciousness, and the Politics of Empowerment.* New York: Routledge, 1990.

21 Crenshaw, Kimberlé. "Dermarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex: A Black Feminist Critique of Antidiscrimination Doctrine, Feminist Theory, and Antiracist Politics". *University of Chicago Legal Forum* (1989):139–197.

22 Crenshaw, Kimberlé. "Mythbusting Intersectionality: UK" at The African American Policy Forum, University of Westminster, London, May 28, 2019. Available at: aapf.org.

23 Roig, Emilia. "Intersectionality in Europe: a depoliticized concept?" *Völkerrechtsblog*, March 6, 2018. Available at: voelkerrechtsblog.org/intersectionality-in-europe-a-depoliticized-concept.

24 Lentin, Alana. "Racism in a post-racial Europe". *Eurozine*, November 24, 2011. Available at: www.eurozine.com/racism-in-a-post-racial-europe.

25 Lewis, Gail. "Unsafe Travel: Experiencing Intersectionality and Feminist Displacements". *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society* 38(4) (2013): 869–892. Available at: oro.open.ac.uk/32373/8/Lewis_669609_Final_published_PDF.pdf.

26 Mason, C. Nicole. "Leading at the Intersections: An Introduction to the Intersectional Approach Model for Policy & Social Change". *Women of Color Policy Network*, n.d. Available at: www.intergroupresources.com/rc/Intersectionality%20primer%20%20Women%20of%20Color%20Policy%20Network.pdf.

27 Alston. *Supra* note 2.

In the fight for economic equity, and racial and gender justice, enshrining the right to food and nutrition into UK legislation will help to tackle deep-rooted social and economic inequalities, and is a prerequisite for long-term structural change. The emerging 'food justice'[28] paradigm in the UK draws on an intersectional approach to the right to food and nutrition, with some leadership by Black women. Food justice calls for critical considerations of working towards fair, sustainable and just food systems and highlights the need to develop understandings within an intersectional social justice framing shaped by diverse communities in the context of gender, race and class power dynamics.[29]

There is a need to articulate different narratives in our analysis and advocacy including critical race theory,[30] the coloniality of power,[31] and decolonial theories,[32] as well as frameworks such as intersectionality, all of which offer illumination. As emancipatory frameworks they open up pluralistic knowledge systems and praxes that go beyond the patriarchal Cartesian duality of the academy. There is also a need to increase the visibility of Black women, and to build advocacy and capacity informed by diverse ways of being, doing and knowing.

For women of color:

> *issues of power, exclusion and marginalization should inform our activism. This has to be in terms of prioritization of issues, whose realities we address and representation. When we do this, we move towards a more holistic vision of ensuring all are being carried forward by a movement purported to be universal in nature.*[33]

Rising food insecurity in communities of color is a clear indication of exclusion and marginalization, and is a clear call for rethinking our advocacy strategies and representation of leaders and voices within the right to food and food sovereignty movements.

The rekindling of Black feminism and Black women organizing in the UK offers new hope in all areas of life – from food security, community and health, to academia, politics and policy. New movements and organizations like KIN are picking up the mantle left by UK Black feminists in the 70s and 80s and nurtured by the resilience and resistance of women of color in British society to continue the struggle. KIN, through a series of talks and events, brings Black activists and organizers of all ages, class and gender together, across borders and struggles for mutual support, collaboration and to build strategies for liberation.[34]

The right to food and nutrition cannot be met without the leadership of those who are most oppressed in the global food and economic system, and those who are most at risk of regressive state social policies. Black women are stepping into leadership roles, building the capacity of other Black women and non-binary people, building alliances and solidarity with other struggles, and making Black women both visible and heard.

28 Alkon, Alison H., and Agyeman, Julian. *Cultivating Food Justice: Race, Class, and Sustainability.* Chicago: MIT Press, 2011.

29 Kneafsey, Moya et al. "Capacity Building for Food Justice in England: The Contribution of Charity-Led Community Food Initiatives". *Local Environment* 0 (0) (2016): 1–14. Available at: www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/13549839.2016.1245717; and Moragues-Faus, Ana. "Problematising Justice Definitions in Public Food Security - Debates: Towards Global and Participative Food Justices". *Geoforum* 84 (2017): 95–106.

30 Critical race theory (CRT) is a theoretical framework in the social sciences that uses critical theory to examine society and culture as they relate to categorizations of race, law, and power. For more information, please see: en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Critical_race_theory.

31 Coloniality of power is a concept interrelating the practices and legacies of European colonialism in social orders and forms of knowledge, advanced in postcolonial studies, decoloniality, and Latin American subaltern studies, most prominently by Anibal Quijano. It identifies and describes the living legacy of colonialism in contemporary societies in the form of social discrimination that outlived formal colonialism and became integrated in succeeding social orders. For more information, please see: en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Coloniality_of_power; and Maldonado-Torres, Nelson. "Outline of Ten Theses on Coloniality and Decoloniality". Fondation Frantz Fanon, 2016.

32 Decolonial theories emerge from Decoloniality or colonialism, a term used principally by an emerging Latin American movement which focuses on understanding modernity in the context of a form of critical theory applied to ethnic studies and, increasingly, gender and area studies as well. For more information, please see: en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Decoloniality.

33 Sudhanagarajan, Chitra. "Enough talk about intersectionality. let's get on with it". *Chitra Nagarjan*, February 26, 2014. Available at: chitrasudhanagarajan.wordpress.com/2014/02/26/enough-talk-about-intersectionality-lets-get-on-with-it/.

34 For more information, please see: www.kinfolknetwork.com.

IN BRIEF

Food insecurity amongst communities of color, particularly Black women in the UK, is a result of inadequate social policies across many issues, and a clear indication of exclusion and marginalization.

Addressing just one area neglects the multiple forms of state violence, as poverty, marginalization, and discrimination have an impact on people and communities. It is a clear call for rethinking our advocacy strategies and representation of leaders and voices within the right to food and food sovereignty movements.

Gaps in research, analysis, and representation reduces the capacity to advocate not only by mainstream organizations, but also by policy makers and politicians, Black women and Black led organizations.

An intersectional social justice framing – shaped by diverse communities in the context of gender, race and class power dynamics – is emancipatory and illuminating for Black women.

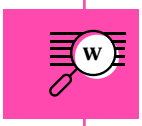
Promoting intersectional analysis for right to food and other human rights issues faced by communities of color in the UK ensures space for advocacy.

KEY CONCEPTS

- → Intersectionality is a tool for practice, and a framework for analyzing the intersections of race and gender within the complexity of power, systemic racism and other structural oppressions.

- → Food justice recognizes the influence of race and class on the production, distribution and consumption of food in the food system. It seeks to address the structural causes and disparities by drawing from established social and environmental theoretical frameworks to effect policy change and practical solutions.

- → Black feminist theories claim that the experiences of black women gives rise to a particular understanding of their position in relation to sexism, class oppression, and racism.



KEY WORDS

- → Gender and Women's Rights
- → Intersectionality
- → Monitoring and Accountability
- → Social Protection
- → Race

04 COMING OUT! GENDER DIVERSITY IN THE FOOD SYSTEM

Paula Gioia

Paula Gioia is a farmer and beekeeper in a community farm that is a member of Arbeitsgemeinschaft bäuerliche Landwirtschaft (AbL), the German organization affiliated to La Vía Campesina. Paula is currently in the Coordination Committee of the European Coordination Vía Campesina (ECVC), and is actively bringing to light issues related to the discrimination of LGBTTIQ people in agriculture and in the food sovereignty movement.

ECVC is a European grassroots organization that currently gathers 31 farmers', farm workers' and rural organizations based in 21 European countries. It is the regional member of La Vía Campesina, the largest international grassroots peasant movement.

"[E]nding discrimination based on gender and sexuality is not any less important than the struggle for fair prices for agriculture products or for land. Instead, the rights of LGBTTIQ persons are also part of the struggle for justice and dignity."

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS |
Special thanks to Sophie von Redecker (Kassel University) and Emily Mattheisen (FIAN International) for their support in reviewing this article.

In the current global context, discrimination is used as a tool to preserve and support authoritarian and far-right political movements. Immigrants and refugees are denied their legal right to asylum, human rights defenders are murdered, and civil society is criminalized with complete impunity. The increased corporate capture of public policy spaces, and the unfettered destruction and grabbing of natural resources – land, water, and seeds – indicates the devastating influence of an economic elite, leading to global inequalities. In this context, the body, and sexual and gender identities are targeted. The right wing and conservative forces which shape these realities are often the same ones that deny human rights, especially the rights of women,[1] and non-heteronormative people, perpetuating misogynist,[2] homophobic, and transphobic discourses, which are allied to "extreme nationalism and xenophobia, cultural and race supremacy".[3]

UN agencies are increasingly becoming active global players on sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression and sex characteristics issues.[4] In recent years, at country level, laws have been reformed in favor of gender non-conforming people.[5] However, LGBTTIQ[6] individuals remain marginalized, and are denied their human rights overall. Indeed, as structural discrimination leads many of them to suffer from social exclusion, their rights to food, housing and life are not guaranteed.

Today, authorities at different levels still promote an anti-LGBTTIQ national heteronormative identity. In this context, LGBTTIQ communities and sexual rights activists who defend their many rights are targeted for violations. And yet they too, amongst other movements, discriminate against and judge others,[7] thus replicat-

1 For more information on how women are at the forefront of resistance against authoritarianism, please see article "Women's Resistance against Authoritarianism in Brazil, the Philippines, and Rojava (Northern Syria)" in this issue of the *Right to Food and Nutrition Watch.*

2 Misogyny is the dislike of, contempt for, or deep-seated prejudice against women.

3 International Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and Intersex Association (ILGA). *State-Sponsored Homophobia 2019,* edited by Lucas Ramon Mendos. Geneva, March 2019: 24. Available at: ilga.org/downloads/ILGA_State_Sponsored_Homophobia_2019_light.pdf.

ing existing tensions in society around race, gender, class, and North-South dynamics. As this article demonstrates, even whilst defending a feminist agenda amongst small-scale food producers, the rights-based food sovereignty movement is not spared from the reproduction of sexist patterns. Moreover, the naturalization of gender roles in agriculture, and the non-mention in key declarations of persons who do not fit into heteronormative patterns, not only make them invisible, but also makes "an intersectional[8] perspective that would allow the analysis of multiple discrimination more difficult."[9]

This article analyzes how the struggle for the rights of LGBTTIQ persons is largely silenced in the broader human rights movement, and in the struggle for food sovereignty and the human right to adequate food and nutrition. It argues that leaving out these persons is a denial of the multiple forms of discrimination they face. It aims to foster a dialogue between the feminist, queer-feminist and food sovereignty movements, thereby strengthening the potential for understanding and collaboration. Finally, it calls for all these movements to join forces and embrace convergence in the collective struggle for human dignity and human rights.

THE SELF-PERPETUATING CYCLE OF GENDER DISCRIMINATION AND FOOD INSECURITY

In urban areas of the USA, gender non-conforming people know what multiple discrimination means. Specifically, poor LGBTTIQ ethnic minorities are targeted for violations. Different organizations have reported that Afro-descendant trans women suffer high levels of violence and discrimination by society and the police.[10] Harassment or mistreatment at work related to their gender identity is also a common reality.[11] With increased workplace harassment and lack of job retention, these people have fewer means to ensure access to basic needs,[12] affecting their ability to feed themselves and to access housing. In order to survive, many of them turn to prostitution. Against the backdrop of a failing systemic structure where transphobia and misogyny intersect, trans feminine sex workers of color are also victims of discrimination, not only by individuals, but by the very social programs that are put in place to help them.[13] For example, they face discrimination in accessing emergency facilities, which provide shelter and food. Considering that the majority of homeless shelters in the United States are organized by sex, incorrect assumptions about gender identity result in failure to access services. Discriminatory behavior is also encountered in public servants, their affiliated organizations, and business-like charities that engage in 'philanthrocapitalism'.[14] In this context, the criminalization of black and brown people, the criminalization and stigmatization of sex workers, the marginalization of trans-identifying individuals in emergency housing services, and more specifically their intersectionality, leads to systematic human rights violations, including the access to adequate food and nutrition.[15]

Indigenous LGBTTIQ[16] individuals in the Americas also have to deal with discrimination within and outside their communities. European colonization left a legacy of prejudice that to this day negatively impacts the ancestral sexualities and spiritualities of indigenous peoples.[17] Different mechanisms were used to colonize indigenous sexuality, imposing European social and religious conceptions of same-gender relationships and *trans*-identities. However, there is ample documentation that prior to colonization there were other conceptions to express gender and sexual diversity among several indigenous communities, such as the *muxe* sexuality in the Zapotec cultures in southern Mexico, or the 'two-spirit' sexuality among Native Americans.[18] The 'two-spirits' traditionally played a sacred role in community rituals and ceremonies, as they were able to access male and female qualities.[19]

4 In 2016, the UN Human Rights Council took a major step forward by appointing an independent expert on the protection from violence and discrimination against lesbians, gays, bisexuals and trans people. This expert was mandated to assess the implementation of existing international human rights instruments related to overcoming violence and discrimination against persons on the basis of their sexual orientation or gender identity, and to identify and address the root causes of violence and discrimination. For more information, please see www.ohchr.org/EN/Issues/SexualOrientationGender/Pages/Index.aspx.

5 For more information, please see: OHCHR. *Discrimination and violence against individuals based on their sexual orientation and gender identity.* A/HRC/29/23. May 4, 2015. Available at: www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/HRC/29/23&referer=/english/&Lang=E; and ILGA. *Supra* note 3.

6 The acronym LGBTTIQ stands for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transsexual, transgender people, transvestites, cross dressers, intersex and gender queer people, but does not always adequately refer to gender non-conforming people in all contexts. In this article the term LGBTTIQ is used with some variations, in order to reflect the specific contexts, and in some cases, to respect the original in references.

7 ILGA. *Supra* note 3: 25.

8 Intersectionality is a concept used to describe how persons, or groups of people, are disadvantaged by multiple sources of prejudice and discrimination, due to their overlapping identities and experiences, e.g. race, class, gender identity, sexual orientation, religion, etc.

9 Gioia, Paula and Sophie von Redecker. "Queerfeldein. Queer-feministische Perspektiven auf die Bewegung für Ernährungssouveränität". Class & Care, June 2018. Available in German at: www.zeitschrift-luxemburg.de/queerfeldein/.

10 Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR). *Violence against Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and Intersex Persons in the Americas.* Organization of American States, 2015: 194-195. Available at: www.oas.org/en/iachr/reports/pdfs/ViolenceLGBTIPersons.pdf.

Through policies of inter-ethnic marriage, schooling, dress codes, naming, or cutting the hair of indigenous people,[20] colonization caused immense cultural losses, with worrying consequences among native communities.[21] Indigenous homosexuality, if viewed from this angle, "is not a sign of 'cultural loss', but rather its invisibility and subordination are the result of colonial dynamics that are still in progress."[22]

Throughout the Americas, young LGBTTIQ indigenous people face enormous challenges: non-acceptance, the risk of being expelled from the community, a life of sexual clandestinity, covert harassment and violations, and migration to urban areas.[23] Many of them are still teenagers when they abandon the community,[24] and most likely end up doing sex work in order to survive. They too face intersectional discrimination. According to the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR), indigenous communities see "themselves as a collective unit in which each individual views their independent spiritual and cultural survival as dependent on their continued connection with the collective identity of the community and its ancestral lands."[25] It is from their community land that they traditionally get food and other natural resources for subsistence. Therefore, LGBTTIQ individuals who are rejected by the community, or who take the initiative to abandon the ancestral land, often face a deep loss of identity. Challenging this reality, some young LGBT(-TIQ) indigenous people are working to re-open the mind of their elders.[26] In doing so, indigenous LGBT(TIQ) subvert twice: ethnically and sexually.

BREAKING THE CYCLE: COLORFUL FOOD PRODUCTION

In rural areas, especially in agriculture, gender discrimination is an undeniable reality. Food production is interlinked with 'nature' and what are perceived to be 'natural conditions'. In this sense, a dichotomous division of society based on a binary gender model (woman and man) is regularly reproduced, thereby pre-defining – according to one's biological body constitution – the tasks and roles that each individual is supposed to carry out and fulfill. Even progressive feminist discourses coming from the food sovereignty movement tend to essentialize gender roles in agriculture, often reproducing an understanding of gender along binary lines. Additionally, the movement has so far been working with a concept of 'nature' that is constructed to support a heteronormative and patriarchal narrative and social order.

From a queer point of view, this is an instrumentalization of 'nature',[27] to make 'nature' fit into the hegemonic gender binary. It is high time to deepen the critical agenda of the food sovereignty movement by adding a queer-feminist perspective[28]. The following cases show how LGBTTIQ rural actors in three different continents are actively developing strategies to open up this binary vision, and to fight the patriarchal heterosexual norm within agricultural realities.

The Land Dyke Feminist Family Farm[29] is a community farm in Taiwan, which stands for a new understanding of the concept of family. While promoting biodiversity through agroecology, they bring gender awareness into farming practices. They produce rice and vegetables, and at the same time pursue "equal cooperation between people and the earth, workers and farmers, migrants and locals, cities and villages".[30] In doing so, they "create a family that is based in the collective strength that propels society toward change, not established through private inheritance, blood ties, and gender stereotypes."[31] The Land Dyke is not the only example; similar initiatives can be found worldwide. In the launching year of the UN Decade on Family Farming (2019),[32] these experiences can inspire us to rethink the way agri-

11 For more information, please see: Sears, Brad and Christy Mallory. *Documented evidence of employment discrimination its effects of LGBT people.* The Williams Institute, July 2011. Available at: williamsinstitute.law.ucla.edu/wp-content/uploads/Sears-Mallory-Discrimination-July-20111.pdf.

12 Fry, B. *Body Politics: Transmisogyny and the Right to Adequate Food and Nutrition for Trans Sex Workers of Color.* (2019): 7. Unpublished manuscript.

13 *Ibid*: 6

14 The term "philanthrocapitalism" was coined to describe charitable organizations that harness the power of the market by investing in social programs, which yield return on investment in the long term.

15 *Supra* note 12.

16 The author notes that non-heteronormative indigenous people might not necessarily identify with the concept of LGBTTIQ.

17 IACHR. *Supra* note 10: 152.

18 *Ibid*: 26.

19 *Ibid*; and Fernandes, Estevão Rafael. "Being native and being gay: weaving a thesis on indigenous homosexuality in Brazil". In Etnográfica. *Revista do Centro em Rede de Investigação em Antropologia.* Vol. 21 (3), 2017. Available in Portuguese at: journals.openedition.org/etnografica/5090.

20 Fernandes. *Supra* note 19.

21 For more information, please see: IACHR. *Supra* note 10: 151-152.

22 Fernandes. *Supra* note 19.

23 Gamboa, Fatima. "¿Dónde estamos las mujeres indígenas lesbianas?". *Pikara online Magazine*, October 2017. Available in Spanish at: www.pikaramagazine.com/2017/10/donde-estamos-las-mujeres-indigenas-lesbianas/.

24 For more information, please see: www.univision.com/noticias/america-latina/wera-pa-mujer-falsa-asi-viven-las-indigenas-transgenero-en-colombia.

25 IACHR. *Supra* note 10: 153.

26 Amaral, Sofia. "Jovens indígenas debatem tema LGBT e querem 'abrir mente' dos mais velhos...". January 30, 2018. Available in Portuguese at: noticias.uol.com.br/cotidiano/ultimas-noticias/2018/01/30/jovens-indigenas-debatem-tema-lgbt-e-querem-abrir-mente-dos-mais-velhos.htm.

culture and farms are structured, and to redefine the concept of family, since the 'family farm' does not necessarily need to be associated to a monolithic heteronormative and paternalistic model. Instead it can also be seen plurally, considering not only LGBTTIQ families, but also members of any family or kinship structure that fall outside the traditional model of 'the family'.[33]

The European Coordination Vía Campesina (ECVC) is also engaged in changing patriarchal social patterns in the European agricultural sector and within its own membership. In 2018 ECVC organized its first LGTBIQ Forum,[34] highlighting that ending discrimination based on gender and sexuality is not any less important than the struggle for fair prices for agriculture products or for land. Instead, the rights of LGBTTIQ persons are also part of the struggle for justice and dignity. Sexuality, affection, and emotionality are fundamental characteristics of strong individuals, who strive to carry the common struggle towards a just society with food sovereignty as a lived reality. In a context where the peasant system and economy have been decimated by machines, agro-chemicals and agribusiness, it is fundamental to embrace new entrants, who are willing to rebuild a human- and nature-based agriculture system, regardless of their sexual orientation and gender identities.

At the national level, Brazil is an example of further resistance. The recently elected right wing government continues to openly attack existing policies directed at supporting gender and ethno-racial minorities, and to incite social hatred against LGBTTIQ persons. Brazil has one of the highest rates of homo/lesbo/transphobia-motivated murders in the world.[35] In 2017 there were 445 such killings, and another 420 in 2018.[36] Nevertheless, rural LGBTTIQ-communities continue to struggle for recognition, and to defend their achieved rights. The Landless Movement (MST) is one of the organizations actively working on that agenda, since rural patriarchy normalizes the heterosexual pattern.[37] Through political trainings, dialogue with urban LGBTTIQ movements, and cultural and political interventions, the organization's continuous commitment to this cause has contributed not only to self-empowerment of landless LGBT individuals, but also to strengthening both struggles: for agrarian reform and for LGBTTIQ rights.

UNITE: JOIN FORCES – ACHIEVE CHANGE!

For all the reasons described in this article, sexual identity can neither be seen in isolation, nor as merely a private issue of LGBTTIQ individuals themselves. Sexuality plays a key role in the physical and mental development of human beings, and influences their relation to others, to the environment and to their socio-economic contexts. As explained above, the political, economic and social discriminations LGBTTIQ people face in different contexts have considerable impacts on their ability to access adequate (culturally acceptable) and nutritious food.[38] This is a result of the systemic heteronormative and patriarchal order we are all embedded in.

Whilst the situation of vulnerability described further above elucidates how gender-based discrimination, aggravated by intersectionality, can lead to food insecurity, other cases show that resistance exists and that LGBTTIQ actors are organizing to seek visibility, recognition and equality not only in their communities and movements, but in society as a whole. What's more, just like their heteronormative colleagues, LGBTTIQ actors in agriculture also contribute to local food production, and several of them are highly committed to the food sovereignty agenda. The struggle for their visibility, acceptance and guaranteed human rights needs to go beyond the private sphere. It needs to become a collective struggle for dignity and

27 Gioia and von Redecker. Supra note 6, referring to: Bagemihl, Bruce. *Biological exuberance. Animal homosexuality and natural diversity.* New York, 1999; and to Barad, Karen. "Nature's queer performativity". In "Kvinder, Køn og forskning/ Women, Gender and Research". *Feminist Materialisms* 1-2 (2012): 25-53.

28 The queer-feminist perspective provides a new direction to the feminist project, in order to overcome the gender binaries embedded within it. Nevertheless, the queer-feminist perspective is deeply connected to the feminist project, as it also addresses patriarchal power relations, and the empowerment of women.

29 For more information, please see: www.facebook.com/landdykecsa.

30 Land Dyke Feminist Family Farm. "Land Dyke Manifesto". Unpublished manifesto.

31 *Ibid.*

32 For more information, please see: www.fao.org/family-farming/decade/en/.

33 ILGA. *Supra* note 3: 29.

34 For more information, please visit: www.eurovia.org/ecvc-1st-lgtbiq-meeting-building-spaces-for-sexual-and-gender-diversity-in-european-agricultural-trade-unionism/; *Fouce – Periódico labrego de información técnica e sindical.* Number 323, November-December 2018: 18-19. Available in Galician at: www.sindicatolabrego.com/index.php?s=18.

35 ILGA. *Supra* note 3: 106.

36 Grupo Gay da Bahia. *Relatório 2017: Pessoas LGBT mortas no Brasil.* Available in Portuguese at: pt.calameo.com/read/004650218f3258a331907; and homofobiamata.files.wordpress.com/2019/01/mortes-po-anos.jpg.

37 CartaCapital. "A vida dos LGBTs na zona rural". Available in Portuguese at: www.cartacapital.com.br/diversidade/a-vida-dos-lgbts-na-zona-rural.

38 FIAN. "LGBTIQA community – The Right to Feed Off Inclusion". In *Series Struggle for the Right to Food and Nutrition*, Issue 8, February 2017. Available at: www.fian.org/en/publication/article/the-right-to-feed-off-equality-1941.

solidarity, specially considering that this is also a struggle for the promotion of the right to food and nutrition of all human beings who depend on the food produced by their hands and hearts.

Neo-fascist trends across the globe are currently a growing threat to democracies, to minorities and to human rights at the global level. But a united struggle that challenges gender norms, seeks bodily autonomy, and brings down patriarchal (and related racist and colonial) structures, can become a counter-threat to conservative elites. In this regard, progressive sectors need to unite and develop collective strategies towards gender and ethnic equality, land rights, housing and food sovereignty, always bearing in mind the implementation of Article 1 of the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*:[39] "All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights". This is not the time to divide, but to unite: Social justice advocates and human rights defenders, LGBTTIQ or heterosexuals, we must stand together and work in partnership, we must be in solidarity with each other, and we must be bold.

39 Available at: www.ohchr.org/EN/UDHR/Documents/UDHR_Translations/eng.pdf.

IN BRIEF

This article analyzes how the rights of LGBTTIQ persons are largely silenced in the broader human rights movement, in the struggle for food sovereignty and for the realization of the right to adequate food and nutrition. It demonstrates that, even whilst defending a feminist agenda within the food system, the rights-based food sovereignty movement is not spared from the reproduction of sexist patterns – reinforcing patriarchy. The author argues that marginalizing LGBTTIQ persons in those struggles reflects the multiple forms of discrimination they face, stemming from their overlapping identities and experiences (race, class, gender identity, sexual orientation).

This piece aims to foster a dialogue between the feminist, queer-feminist and food sovereignty movements, thereby strengthening the potential for understanding and collaboration. Finally, the author calls for all these movements to join forces and embrace convergence in the collective struggle for human dignity and human rights within the different sectors of the food system.

KEY CONCEPTS

→ Worldwide, LGBTTIQ individuals are marginalized and denied their human rights, leading many of them to suffer from social exclusion. Their rights to food, housing and life are not guaranteed.

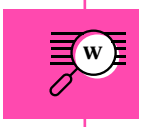
→ Even whilst defending a feminist agenda, the food sovereignty movement replicates sexist patterns and social tensions around race, gender, class, and North-South dynamics.

→ The struggle for the rights of LGBTTIQ persons is largely silenced in the broader human rights movement, and in the struggle for food sovereignty and the human right to adequate food and nutrition.

→ In agriculture, gender discrimination is a reality and food production is often interlinked with a binary understanding of 'nature'. However, this is a concept of 'nature' that is constructed to support a heteronormative and patriarchal narrative and social order.

→ Discrimination faced by LGBTTIQ individuals must not be considered a private issue. The political, economic and social discrimination they face has considerable impact on their ability to access adequate, culturally acceptable, and nutritious food.

→ Progressive sectors need to jointly challenge gender norms, seek bodily autonomy, and bring down patriarchal structures, whilst developing collective strategies towards gender and ethnic equality, land rights, housing and food sovereignty.



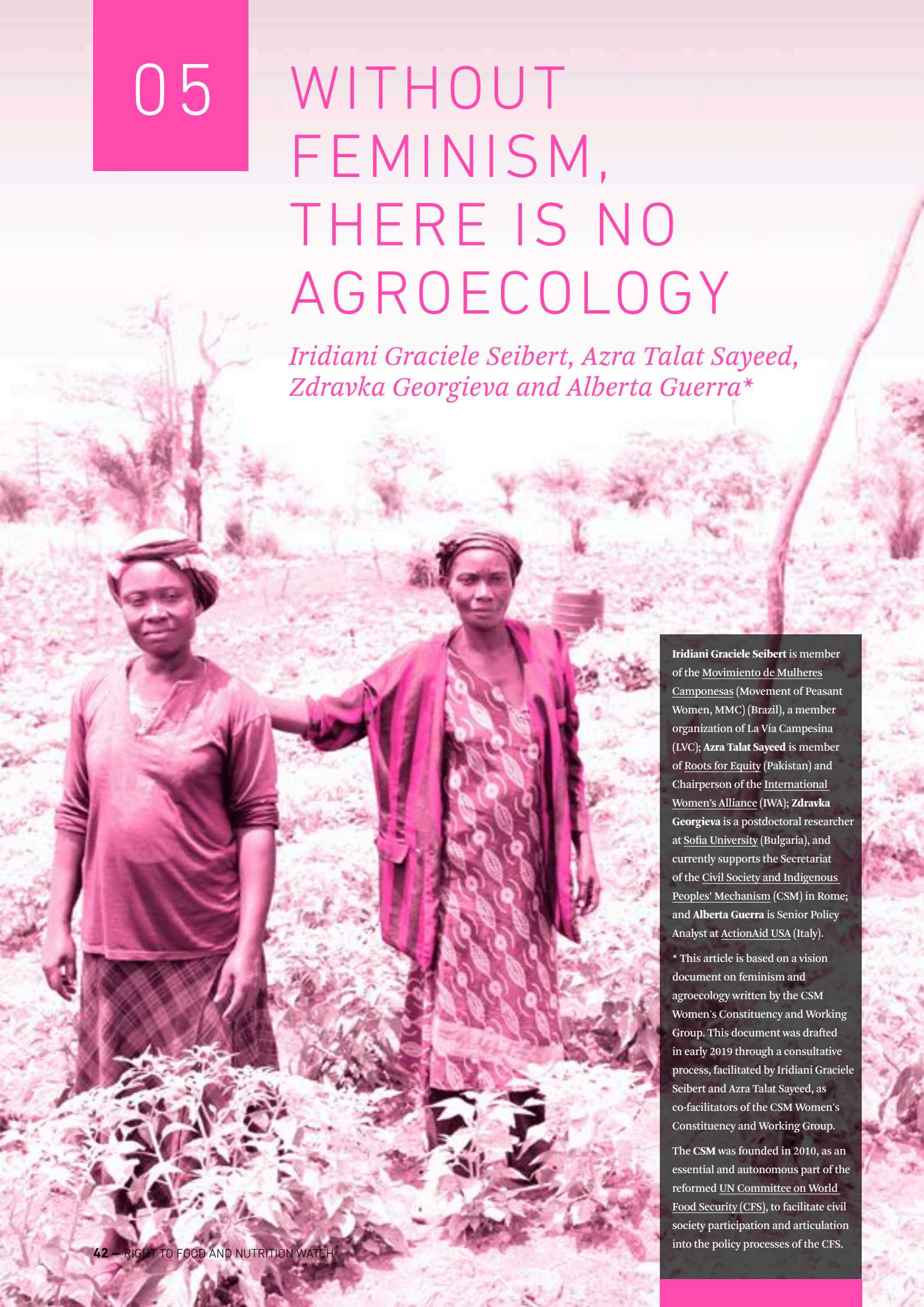
KEY WORDS

- → LGBTTIQ
- → Food Sovereignty
- → Food Systems
- → Gender and Women's Rights
- → Social Protection
- → Gender Diversity
- → Indigenous Peoples
- → Urban Food Insecure

05

WITHOUT FEMINISM, THERE IS NO AGROECOLOGY

*Iridiani Graciele Seibert, Azra Talat Sayeed, Zdravka Georgieva and Alberta Guerra**



Iridiani Graciele Seibert is member of the Movimiento de Mulheres Camponesas (Movement of Peasant Women, MMC) (Brazil), a member organization of La Vía Campesina (LVC); **Azra Talat Sayeed** is member of Roots for Equity (Pakistan) and Chairperson of the International Women's Alliance (IWA); **Zdravka Georgieva** is a postdoctoral researcher at Sofia University (Bulgaria), and currently supports the Secretariat of the Civil Society and Indigenous Peoples' Mechanism (CSM) in Rome; and **Alberta Guerra** is Senior Policy Analyst at ActionAid USA (Italy).

* This article is based on a vision document on feminism and agroecology written by the CSM Women's Constituency and Working Group. This document was drafted in early 2019 through a consultative process, facilitated by Iridiani Graciele Seibert and Azra Talat Sayeed, as co-facilitators of the CSM Women's Constituency and Working Group.

The **CSM** was founded in 2010, as an essential and autonomous part of the reformed UN Committee on World Food Security (CFS), to facilitate civil society participation and articulation into the policy processes of the CFS.

"Feminism in food crisis struggles finds its best representation in the agroecology and food sovereignty paradigm, applying the practices of solidarity by collective actions that challenge gender roles as well as paradigms of inequality, oppression and exploitation."

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS |

Special thanks to Ruchi Tripathi (ActionAid International), Nettie Wiebe (La Vía Campesina), Sarojeni Rengam (Pan Asian Pacific for a just and pesticide-free future, PANAP), Isabel Álvarez Vispo (URGENCI), Teresa Maisano (CSM Secretariat), Christina Schiavoni (International Institute of Social Studies, ISS) and M. Alejandra Morena (FIAN International) for their support in drafting and reviewing this article.

Our planet is on the brink of environmental collapse, and hunger is on the rise. According to the 2018 State of Food Security and Nutrition (SOFI) report, the number of people affected by malnourishment and chronic deprivation is climbing for the third consecutive year: 821 million persons suffered from undernourishment in 2017, an increase from 784 million in 2015.[1] In the face of such realities, it is critical to give special attention to the role of women, who are disproportionately impacted by hunger and food insecurity, as well as by climate change, despite being a crucial part of the solution to these issues. This article sets out to demonstrate that the role of women is of particular importance in the advancement of agroecology, as a key pillar of food sovereignty, and that there are inextricable linkages between the struggles for feminism and agroecology. It underscores the importance of taking a feminist approach to the promotion of agroecology and the realization of the human right to adequate food and nutrition as the way towards securing just and sustainable food systems.

WOMEN AND FOOD (IN)SECURITY

Women represent around 43% of the agriculture labor force in developing countries, despite lacking equal access to the productive resources necessary for farming.[2] Families run about nine out of ten farms globally, and 80% of the world's food is produced by family farms and small-scale food producers. Women play a key role in all stages of food production, including seed collection,[3] land preparation, weeding, livestock rearing, fishing and net weaving, harvesting and storage, as well as in food processing, packaging and trading.[4] Women in rural areas are also traditionally responsible for household and care activities, spending up to 10 hours a day car-

1 FAO, IFAD, UNICEF, WFP and WHO. *The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World 2018. Building climate resilience for food security and nutrition.* Rome: FAO, 2018. Available at: www.fao.org/state-of-food-security-nutrition/en.

2 SOFI 2018. *Supra* note, 1.

3 For more information on the role of women as guardians of seeds, illustrated by the example of Africa, please see: Pschorn-Strauss, Elfrieda. "African Food Sovereignty: Valuing Women and the Seed They Keep", *Right to Food and Nutrition Watch* (2016):49-51. Available at: www.righttofoodandnutrition.org/african-food-sovereignty.

ing for family and community members (the young, the old and the sick), cleaning and cooking, fetching water, fodder and fuel.[5]

However, despite their key role, women in rural areas face gender discrimination and a host of social, legal and cultural constraints. First, they have more limited access than men to land, productive and financial resources, education, health, rural extension, markets, climate adaptation initiatives and employment opportunities.[6] Second, they are subject to social exclusion from decision-making and labor markets, as well as to sexual exploitation, and domestic violence.[7] The current increase of climate shocks, extreme climate events and climate-related disasters worsen further the status of women.

Patriarchal, feudal (particularly in the Asian context) and capitalist relations of power, along with the current sexual division of labor and 'gender blind' agricultural policies, are among the root causes of gender inequalities, discrimination and marginalization of women, especially in the rural areas. The recognition, fulfillment and protection of women's human rights, through the implementation of international political instruments is a key element towards the de-construction of the above-mentioned asymmetry of power relations.[8] Women are largely invisible, and their work is merely seen as an aid to male work or as a 'female obligation'. The traditional and indigenous knowledge of women is disregarded in commercial industrial agriculture: women are among the most vulnerable groups to land, ocean and resource grabbing by investors and private interests, as well as subject of criminalization in their attempt to defend their communities, natural resources and bodies.[9]

Despite the marginalization they face, and due to patriarchy, food provisioning by women receives no support. Women often employ traditional knowledge to ensure the quality of their families' diets while maintaining biodiversity. Additionally, due to their gender-ascribed roles in care, their responsibilities are crucial in addressing their own food security and that of their communities. While such activities do not necessarily generate money, they are fundamental for survival and reproduction. Policy frameworks must acknowledge this and focus on the redistribution, recognition and representation of women's productive and reproductive work and realization of their human rights.

AGROECOLOGY: THE WAY FORWARD

Agroecology – a science, practice and social movement that promote agricultural practices that are environmentally sustainable and socially just[10] – is of interest to resource-poor rural communities not only because it is an accessible and affordable grassroots solution, but also because it challenges the power dynamics in the current exploitative and oppressive agri-food regime. Integrating social, biological and agricultural science with traditional knowledge and culture, agroecology is context-specific and locally adaptive, and refined through participatory on-farm experimentation.

Agroecology can create better opportunities for women on multiple levels. First, it creates meaningful work by integrating diverse work tasks and specific forms of knowledge, providing a diversified role for women in the household economy while challenging patriarchal structures inside the family unit. Second, as farmer-to-farmer sharing and learning are at the heart of agroecology, the pursuit of agroecological methods requires the spaces and opportunities for such exchanges and builds social cohesion. This includes women-only spaces, which are of high im-

4 FIAN International. "Fishing for Gender Justice on Women's Day". *FIAN International News*, March 8, 2019. Available at: www.fian.org/en/news/article/fishing-for-gender-justice-on-womens-day-2165.

5 Wijeratna, Alex. *Agroecology: Scaling-up, scaling-out.* Johannesburg: ActionAid, 2018.

6 SOFI 2018. *Supra* note, 1.

7 SOFI 2018. *Supra* note, 1.

8 One of the key instruments is General Recommendation 34 on the rights of rural women, adopted after a consultative process in 2016 by the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW Committee). OHCHR. *General recommendation No. 34*. OHCHR, Sixty-third Session, 2016. Available at: www.ohchr.org/en/hrbodies/cedaw/pages/recommendations.aspx. The newly adopted UN Peasants' Rights Declaration also contains provisions on the rights of women in rural areas, particularly under article 4. UN General Assembly. *Declaration on the Rights of Peasants and Other People Working in Rural Areas.* A/C.3/73/L.30. October 30, 2018. Available at: undocs.org/en/A/C.3/73/L.30.

9 For more information on the criminalization of women, and Honduras as an example, please see article "Migrating for Survival: A Conversation between Women from Guatemala, Honduras and Mexico" in this issue of the *Right to Food and Nutrition Watch.*

10 For a definition of agroecology from the perspective of social movements, please see: Declaration of the International Forum for Agroecology. Nyéleni, Mali, February 27, 2015. Available at: www.foodsovereignty.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/Download-declaration-Agroecology-Nyeleni-2015.pdf.

portance for achieving gender equality, building solidarity, autonomy and strengthening women's creative and collective work towards self-determination. Third, agroecology fosters better economic opportunities for women. Characterized by low start- up and production costs, simple and effective production techniques and yields that are stable over time, agroecology is less risky and more affordable and accessible for women. Fourth, agroecology supports the health of both agriculture workers and consumers by eliminating harmful synthetical chemicals, which have a disproportionate negative impact on women's health.[11] Furthermore, diversified crops, fruits and livestock enrich diets and improve household self sufficiency alleviating women's care work burden. Finally, agroecology supports biodiversity and traditional knowledge, affirming the crucial role of women as traditional keepers of seeds and indigenous knowledge. Last but not least, in its political dimension, agroecology seeks to achieve a more just system, therefore its implementation can deconstruct and render all forms of injustice more visible, including the inequalities that women face and suffer. It is not enough to simply include women in the implementation of actions: if the process is to be truly inclusive, women need to be there from the outset, designing them. It is not about increasing women's options within the recognized economy, but rather about generating a new economy where productive and reproductive work is made visible and shared.

The much-needed transition to locally-based, diverse, environmentally sustainable and climate resilient approaches is realized through the implementation of agroecology, as demonstrated by numerous case studies. In Cuba, a study conducted by La Vía Campesina and the National Association of Small Farmers (ANAP) demonstrated that the conversion from monoculture-based agriculture to agroecology improved traditional gender roles and power relations inside peasant families. In India, the Deccan Development Society also demonstrated positive experiences in agroecology, involving the collective reclamation of fallow land by community-based women-only groups and the revival of around 80 traditional crop varieties in partnership with a Dalit (low caste) women-run network of community gene banks in 60 villages.[12] Other case studies from India include: 1. the Tamil Nadu Women's Collective, through which marginalized women in rural areas have started new collective farms and seed banks, thereby addressing women's lack of access to productive resources,[13] and 2. the Manipur's Rural Women's Upliftment Society, which demonstrated agroecology's potential for women's empowerment even in societies living under military occupation.

Additionally, a study by ActionAid in Africa and Asia also confirmed that agroecology can provide holistic solutions for women living in rural communities, whose unpaid care work (5-10 hours each day for women vs. 1.5 hours for men) limits their engagement in productive agriculture. In Rwanda, the Abishyizehamwe women's smallholder farmers' cooperative established an agroecological alternative to help women to become more fully integrated in agricultural production and community life. Through a wide array of actions, from the establishment of community seed banks and an early childhood development center to harvesting rainwater, they managed to save women's time, prevent soil erosion, ensure climate resilience, and improve women's productivity and economic and decision-making capacities.[14] In Mali, women agroecological peasants who are part of the COFERSA cooperative (Convergence of Rural Women for Food Sovereignty), have raised awareness about the nutritional benefits of local foods (for example, fonio, millet and sorghum), and have encouraged consumers to switch from imported foods with low nutritional value, such as white bread, to their local products. Women have thereby improved

11 Mrema, Ezra et al. "Pesticide Exposure and Health Problems Among Female Horticulture Workers in Tanzania". *Environmental Health Insights* 11 (2017). Available at: www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5484550/; London, Leslie et al. "Pesticide Usage and Health Consequences for Women in Developing Countries: Out of Sight, Out of Mind?" *International journal of occupational and environmental health* 8 (2002): 46-59. Available at: www.environment.gov.za/sites/default/files/docs/pesticides_usage_health_consequencesfor_women_0.pdf; For more information, please also visit: www.pan-uk.org/effects-pesticides-women-children/.

12 Wijeratna. *Supra* note 5.

13 Khadse, Ashlesha. *Women, Agroecology & Gender Equality.* New Delhi: Focus on the Global South, 2017.

14 Wijeratna. *Supra* note 5.

their access to the market. Interestingly, "[p]ride in local biodiversity, based on traditional knowledge and culture and manifested in local cuisines, is a driving force of their work."[15]

These cases and others highlight the potential of agroecology to realize women's rights in the agricultural sector, to enrich feminist perspectives, and further strengthen political will to reframe gender roles and responsibilities. In this sense, agroecology provides a strong foundation for alternative rural movements striving for social justice that includes gender equality and the full recognition and participation of women as political subjects and agents of change in the struggle.

INTERSECTIONAL FEMINISM AS A POLITICAL STRUGGLE

Feminism is a political struggle to overcome patriarchal structural and systematic discrimination and oppression due to unequal social, political and economic dynamics affecting the position of women within families, communities and society at large. In order to achieve this goal, feminism must stand on its own two feet, as well as be part of the larger struggle to eradicate race, caste, class and gender domination in all its forms. For example, it is necessary to understand that patriarchal domination shares its ideological foundation with racism, sexism and capitalism as well as other structural forms of oppression.[16] Overcoming gender inequalities requires working together with people across the gender spectrum[17] to challenge binary conceptions of femininity and masculinity. Intersectional feminism[18] sheds light on how some people are impacted more than others. For example, pesticides impact landless rural women workers more due to their multiple identities; a *dalit* female-headed household might struggle to get access to land or extension support; and elderly women in the community might be greater repositories of indigenous knowledge around soils, seeds and farming practices, but face multiple discrimination due to their gender, age and ethnicity.

Feminism in food crisis struggles finds its best representation in the agroecology and food sovereignty paradigm, applying the practices of solidarity by collective actions that challenge gender roles as well as paradigms of inequality, oppression and exploitation.[19] The right to food and nutrition, food security and food sovereignty of women will be achieved only by achieving their human rights. The recognition of women's role as political subjects, citizens, organizers, facilitators and coordinators on different initiatives and movements, agents of their own change and development as well as knowledge bearers, will enable their self-determination, autonomy and decision-making power in all aspects of their life, including producing and consuming food.[20]

Putting the invisibility of women's labor at the center of the political debate, and recognizing their role as active subjects and protagonists in their own lives, families, communities, social movements and societies, is a step towards the fulfillment of the right to safe, nutritious and sufficient food for all women, and all people.

AGROECOLOGY AND FEMINISM: PROMOTING WOMEN'S RIGHTS

From a feminist perspective, agroecology is and must be a political proposal that recognizes and promotes the historical and social practices of women, from the domestication of agriculture and the production of healthy and quality food to the eradication of hunger, food insecurity and malnutrition. It is urgent to recognize that women are building agroecology in their everyday practices: resisting the predatory model of agrarian capitalism; preserving and multiplying native seeds; pro-

15 Bezner Kerr, Rachel. "Agroecology and Nutrition: Transformative Possibilities and Challenges". In Burlingame, Barbara, and Dernini Sandro, eds. *Sustainable Diets: Linking Nutrition and Food Systems*. CAB International, 2019. Page 58.

16 Cock, Jacklyn. "A feminist response to the food crisis in contemporary South Africa". *Agenda Empowering women for gender equity* 30:1 (2016). Available at: www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/10130950.2016.1196983.

17 For more information on food systems and the LGBTTIQ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transsexual, transgender people, transvestites, cross dressers, intersex and gender queer) individuals, please see article "Coming Out! Gender Diversity in the Food System" in this issue of the *Right to Food and Nutrition Watch.*

18 For more information on intersectionality of race, class and gender, illustrated with the position and organizing of Black women in the United Kingdom, please see article "Invisible Women: Hunger, Poverty, Racism and Gender in the UK" in this issue of the *Right to Food and Nutrition Watch.*

19 For example, in Taiwan, the Land Dyke Feminist Family Farm promotes biodiversity through agroecology, while standing for a new understanding of the concept of family and bringing gender awareness into farming practices. Supra note 17.

20 For more information, please see: CSM. "CFS Forum on Women's Empowerment in the Context of Food Security and Nutrition - Chair's Summary with Draft Outcomes". *CSM Updates and News*, September 30, 2017. Available at: www.csm4cfs.org/cfs-forum-womens-empowerment/.

21 According to organizations such as WABA (World Alliance for Breastfeeding Action), a member of the Global Network for the Right to Food and Nutrition, "[w]omen who *wish* [emphasis added] to breastfeed [sic] their babies but cannot - because of inadequate support from family or health workers, constraints in the workplace, or misinformation from the infant food industry - are oppressed and exploited". Therefore, for many, "breastfeeding is an important women's issue, human rights issue, and feminist issue." Van Esterik, Penny. "Breastfeeding: A Feminist Issue". WABA Activity Sheet 4. May 19, 2001. Available at: www.waba.org.my/resources/activitysheet/acsh4.htm. More importantly,

ducing healthy, diverse food without agrochemicals; raising local and indigenous livestock breeds; promoting the preservation of local biodiversity; and carrying out artisanal fishing while protecting rivers, lakes and seas. Besides women producers, all women, in their role as care givers rooted in the unequal sexual division of labor, are the ones feeding the world. From breastfeeding[21] – perceived by many as the "first act of food sovereignty"[22] –to the preparation and cooking of food in daily life, women in many cultures are the custodians of healthy food practices and promoters of just food and nutrition systems.

Additionally, as a model that transforms established relations between human beings, and those with nature, incorporating respect, care and solidarity, agroecology is explicitly related to the issue of female autonomy and to the construction of spaces of equal participation between men and women. In this sense, women's causes such as equal speech and participation, equal income, shared power and the fights against gender violence and sexism are of critical importance to the movement for agroecology.[23]

At the intersection of agroecology and feminism, women construct a collective identity as subjects of rights that were historically denied to them. This process transforms the social relations of production and reproduction in the rural and urban worlds.[24] Women, in particular young women, become active protagonists in the construction of agroecology: they exchange their experiences and knowledge with others; they become responsible for the management of the financial resources generated from their productive work; and they acquire economic and political autonomy. By introducing new dynamics into social and family relations, women's work becomes valued and their participation in decisions about production gains equal footing with that of other family members.[25] In this respect, it is simply necessary for women to create both feminist and non-mixed spaces overall. Otherwise, we risk having the opposite effect by adding to our productive workload, allowing the reproductive inertia to remain unchanged. Coming home with an extra income does not necessarily lead to a deconstruction of gender roles, and it can actually mean that we have less time for rest and self-care.

Agroecology allows the overcoming of many of the dichotomies that reinforce the sexual division of labor throughout the food system and make women's work invisible. It shows that there is no incoherence between caring for nature and achieving good production. Experiences even show that women can improve production at the same time that they reduce their quantity of work. As care work is vital for both human life and the planet, it must be shared as a responsibility of all: individuals (of all genders) and states. Agroecology will advance and strengthen its position as soon as the shared responsibility of care work and the recognition of women's rights are consolidated. With this in mind, it is key that women self-organize and support each other in these transitions, in order to shed light on their oppression.

AGROECOLOGY AND FEMINISM: ACHIEVING FOOD SOVEREIGNTY

Given the successful stories confirming the positive impact of agroecology on women's self-determination, it is fundamental that governments support further adoption and implementation of public policies promoting production and consumption of agroecological food in order to, on the one hand, confront the situation of food and nutritional insecurity of millions of women in the world assuring their right to food and nutrition, and on the other, to assure the recovery and preservation of nature, given the intensity of the climate crisis that the planet is facing.

breastfeeding can bring women to the "centre of decision making on feeding of infants, rather than the infant formula companies and market institutions". Linnecar, Alison. *Formula for Disaster Weighing the Impact of Formula Feeding vs Breastfeeding on Environment.* BPNI and IBFAN-Asia, 2014. Available at: www.bpni.org/docments/FormulaForDisaster.pdf.

22 For more information please see the following document by civil society organizations, including several members of the Global Network for the Right to Food and Nutrition: *Public Interest Civil Society Organizations' and Social Movements' Forum Declaration to the Second International Conference on Nutrition (ICN 2).* November 21, 2014. Available at: www.fao.org/fileadmin/user_upload/faoweb/ICN2/documents/CS_Declaration_to_ICN2_-_English_-_21_Nov_14.pdf.

23 Lima, Marcia Maria, and Vanessa Brito de Jesus. "Questions on gender and technology in the construction of agroecology". *Scientiae Studia* 15: 73 10 (2017)

24 In the urban world, it is challenging to change consumption habits, and to ensure the right to food and nutrition due to the triple burden and multiple roles women have when they engage in productive and reproductive work, as well as activism. The lack of time together and the lack of access to healthy food are the main disenabling factors for many women to realize their right to food and nutrition in urban environments. In this sense, it is essential to build bridges, and place the spotlight on the common inequalities that rural and urban women face. For more information, please see: Molero Cortés, J. et al., eds. *Salud y Derecho a la Alimentación. Bienestar, equidad y sostenibilidad a través de políticas alimentarias locales.* Valladolid, España: Fundación Entretantos y Red de Ciudades por la Agroecología, 2018. Available in Spanish at: www.ciudades-agroecologicas.eu/wp-content/uploads/2018/12/InformeSalud_Definitivo_Web.pdf.

25 Lopes, Ana Paula and Emilia Jomalinis. *Feminist Perspectives towards Transforming Economic Power - Agroecology: Exploring opportunities for women's empowerment based on experiences from Brazil.* Association for Women's Rights in Development (AWID), 2011. Available at: www.awid.org/sites/default/files/atoms/files/feminist_perspectives_agroecology.pdf.

These policies must guarantee the inclusion and active participation of rural and urban women, small-scale food producers, artisanal fisherwomen, pastoralists, indigenous women, consumers, agricultural and food workers, peasants, landless women and NGO activists.

It is necessary that agroecology imbibe the feminist perspective in its totality. Being a social movement and a set of practices that question social injustices (e.g. women's land rights, land grabbing, looting of territories, privatization of water and biodiversity), agroecology should acknowledge and openly discuss the inequalities to which women are subjected. There cannot be struggle for agroecology, agroecological practices and policies without the participation of women as central protagonists. The agroecological movement should make a more concrete effort to recruit and train women activists, especially as coordinators and leaders. In this sense, it is critical that women have appropriate spaces to grow, lead, exchange, learn and earn in the framework of agroecology.[26]

The feminist and agroecological struggles are fundamental elements for the realization of the right to food and nutrition and the promotion of food and nutritional security and food sovereignty. General Recommendation 34[27] – an authoritative interpretation on the rights of women living in rural areas adopted in 2016 by the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW Committee) – recognizes food sovereignty as the paradigm under which women's rights can be ensured, providing them the authority to manage and control their natural resources. Only transitions that are made from a systemic perspective, and which deconstruct an oppressive model, are valid here. In this sense we need to distinguish the 'false solutions' that perpetuate a model built on inequality, and we must avoid co-optation.[28]

As human rights holders, women should have equal participation in the decision-making over their territories, their production and their lives. Only through the paradigm of food sovereignty and agroecology will women be able to achieve recognition and validation of their productive work and care; guarantee food for all; socialize the tasks of care; retake collective responsibilities without distinction of gender; and promote relations of respect and equality among all people regardless of gender. If the current model of neoliberalism in food and agriculture continues, peasants of all genders will continue to be commodified and exploited. In this oppressive paradigm, women's labor will be doubly exploited and the violence that women face will continue to be encouraged, tolerated and naturalized.

The relationship between agroecology and feminism is a dialectical construction that manifests in everyday practices. The fundamental task for all of us in our social organizations, local authorities, academic institutions, NGOs and spaces for political convergence is to promote food and nutritional security and sovereignty, ensuring the complete integration of feminist perspectives in agroecology.

Governments in particular must support women's struggles for their human right to adequate food and nutrition, autonomy and equal participation in decision making at all levels.

26 Khadse. *Supra* note 13

27 OHCHR. *Supra* note 8.

28 Due to the risk of co-optation, "food sovereignty activists are wary of terms such as 'climate smart agriculture' (CSA), which they see as intentionally vague, allowing policy makers and private corporations to borrow selectively from the repertoire of agroecology, while leaving the door open for conventional practices couched in green packaging. From the food sovereignty perspective, approaches such as CSA fail to embrace the more transformative elements of agroecology and food sovereignty, such as justice, which are central to their framing". For more information, please see: Murphy, Sophia and Christina M. Schiavoni. "Spotlight Ten Years After the World Food Crisis: Taking up the Challenge of the Right to Food". *Right to Food and Nutrition Watch* (2017): 16-27. Available at: www.righttofoodandnutrition.org/files/R_t_F_a_N_W_2017_ENG_1.pdf.

IN BRIEF

From a feminist perspective, agroecology is and must be a political proposal that recognizes and promotes the historical and social practices of women, from the domestication of agriculture and the production of healthy and quality food to the eradication of hunger, food insecurity and malnutrition. The important role of women in the advancement of agroecology is a key pillar of food sovereignty, and highlights the inextricable linkages between the struggles for feminism and agroecology. This article explores such issues, underscoring the importance of taking a feminist approach to the promotion of agroecology and the realization of the human right to adequate food and nutrition as the way towards securing just and sustainable food systems. Patriarchal, feudal (particularly in the Asian context) and capitalist relations of power, along with the current sexual division of labor and 'gender blind' agricultural policies, are among the root causes of gender inequalities, discrimination and marginalization of women, especially in the rural areas. Agroecology has the potential to challenge the power dynamics in the current exploitative and oppressive agri-food regime, to realize women's rights in the agricultural sector, to enrich feminist perspectives, and further strengthen political will to reframe gender roles and responsibilities. Feminism in food crisis struggles is best reflected in the agroecology and food sovereignty paradigm, applying the practices of solidarity by collective actions that challenge gender roles as well as paradigms of inequality, oppression and exploitation.

KEY CONCEPTS

→ Women represent around 43% of the agriculture labor force in developing countries, and they play a key role in all stages of food production.

→ Additionally, due to gender roles, women in rural areas are traditionally responsible for household and care activities cleaning and cooking, fetching water, fodder and fuel.

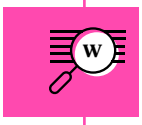
→ However, despite their key role, women in rural areas face gender discrimination and a host of social, legal and cultural constraints.

→ The human right to adequate food and nutrition, food security and food sovereignty of women will be achieved only by achieving their human rights.

→ As a model that transforms established relations between human beings, and those with nature, incorporating respect, care and solidarity, agroecology is explicitly related to the issue of female autonomy and to the construction of spaces of equal participation between men and women.

→ Agroecology allows the overcoming of many of the dichotomies that reinforce the sexual division of labor throughout the food system and make women's work invisible.

→ The feminist and agroecological struggles are fundamental elements for the realization of the right to food and nutrition and the promotion of food and nutritional security and food sovereignty.



KEY WORDS

→ Agroecology
→ Feminism
→ Women
→ Nutrition
→ Food Sovereignty

06

MIGRATING FOR SURVIVAL: A CONVERSATION BETWEEN WOMEN FROM GUATEMALA, HONDURAS AND MEXICO

*Andrea Dominique Galeano Colindres and Vanessa Albertina Sosa López**

Andrea Dominique Galeano Colindres, from Honduras, is a student of Communication Sciences at University of Buenos Aires.

Vanessa Albertina Sosa López, from Guatemala, is an environmental engineer, and has a Masters in Rural Development from the Metropolitan Autonomous University, Xochimilco, Mexico City.

* The authors drafted this article following a participatory methodology, with input from Mercedes Leticia Correa Miranda, director of FIAN Mexico, Sayda Tábora, territorial facilitator of FIAN Honduras, and Anna Isern Sabrià, consultant in rural development and food sovereignty at the LAJUJ IX Collective in Guatemala. Their inputs and accounts were gathered via questionnaires and teleconferences.

"Whether they stay, or are in transit, or have managed to reach their destination, women pay the price for holding a certain place in society. But they are always active political actors and agents of change."

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS |

Special thanks to Teresa Maisano (Secretariat of the Civil Society and Indigenous Peoples' Mechanism for Relations with the UN Committee on World Food Security), Marcos Arana Cedeño (International Baby Food Action Network, IBFAN), Andrea Nuila, and M. Alejandra Morena (FIAN International) for their support in drafting and reviewing this article.

PHOTO |

David Ludwig / CC BY-SA 2.0.

When we talk about migrant women, the first challenge is to render them visible, understand their motives, the risks they face, and their circumstances. If we wish to fully understand the situation that migrant women from Mexico, Guatemala and Honduras confront, the first obstacle we need to face is the lack of gender-disaggregated data. However, through a systematic analysis of the factors which have led to a rise in migration in the region, we can identify several causes that go from socio-economic situations, and threats to security and physical integrity, to adverse climate conditions. All of these cases have something in common: the persons who decide to migrate endure living conditions in their place of origin that are too harsh for them to have sustainable access to adequate food.[1]

This article sets out to address the challenges faced by both migrant women, and women who choose to stay, and to show that these women are beacons of daily resistance, and in many cases, of organized resistance. The first objective is to discuss the structural causes that affect migrants overall, and in particular, those that negatively impact women. Second, the article analyzes the challenges faced by women who decide to stay, and how they cope in their lives when the family head migrates. Third, specific risks of transit and migration abroad are highlighted, including when the migrants finally settle down in their country of arrival. Lastly, the article demonstrates how migration has a harmful impact on women's food and nutrition in each stage and place, which limits their possibilities to enjoy diverse, healthy and sustainable diets.

1 United Nations World Food Programme (WFP). *Food Security and Emigration. Why people flee and the impact on family members left behind in El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras.* Rome: WFP, 2017. Available in Spanish at: es1.wfp.org/publicaciones/seguridad-alimentaria-y-emigracion-por-que-la-gente-huye-y-el-impacto-que-esto-tiene.

2 Sassen, Saskia. *Contrageografías de la globalización.* Género y ciudadanía en los circuitos transfronterizos. Madrid: Traficantes de sueños, 2003. p. 62.

THE FEMINIZATION OF MIGRATION

Mass media stigmatizes migrants, and yet silences the reasons why they have to migrate. The reality is that free trade agreements have destroyed local economies, and the structural adjustment programs and loans that were launched by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank (WB) in the 80s and 90s, negatively impacted state programs, especially those targeting women and children, and the political economy overall.[2] Added to this, extractive policies, expansion of monocultures that leads to the loss of crops that feed families, dispossession of land by multinationals and capital, and corporate concentration of land ownership, have all been harmful.[3] For example, in Guatemala, 92% of small-scale producers utilize 22% of land, whilst 2% of commercial producers use 57%.[4]

The causes of migration are closely linked to the prevailing socio-economic model, and to different forms of violence. In Guatemala, according to the Migrant Commission, 97.4% of migrants leave for the USA. They leave because there is neither state investment nor public policies in their home region that generate decent work. Additionally, the minimum wage does not cover the cost of a basic food basket.[5] In Honduras, land dispossession from peasant, indigenous and Garifuna communities results from of a food and agricultural legal and policy framework that facilitates the privatization of the commons for the extractive industry (mining, energy, and monocultures). This destroys agrifood systems such as small-scale family farming, forcing women and girls to live in poverty and exclusion.[6]

In this context, the region is currently witnessing the feminization of both poverty and migration. Women in Mexico, Honduras and Guatemala find themselves having to leave alone, or with their children. According to the 2017 Mexican Yearbook of Migration and Remittances, most foreigners at migrant detention centers are from Guatemala, Honduras and El Salvador. Although the data are not gender-disaggregated, given the feminization of migration, it is inferred that it includes women from Central America. Indeed, the yearbook confirms that there has been an increase in migrant Mexican women over the last ten years.[7]

In most statistics on migration, the specific motives and features of the female migrant population remain invisible. And yet there is no doubt that women see gender-based violence as one of the main reasons for migrating, along with the disenabling socio-economic model. In Mexico, the National Survey on the Dynamics of Domestic Relations (Endireh) demonstrated that 43.9% of teenagers over 15 years of age and women have been victims of violence by their partners at some point of their current or past relationships.[8] In cases like these, fleeing is often the only option they have to protect their lives.[9]

In all three countries, daily cases of femicide, reports of gender-based violence, and intrafamily violence reflect patriarchal societies that women find themselves having to escape. As Marcela Lagarde says, patriarchy is historically a space of masculine power that becomes embedded in the most diverse of social formations,[10] where gender-based violence and corporate- and state-led structural violence clearly interact. Women therefore are constrained when it comes to producing, accessing means of production, and controlling food production.[11]

In reality, the situation described above is mirrored in the legal frameworks of some countries: Under criminal law, women are punished and denied their autonomy to control and decide over their bodies. This negatively affects women's sexual and re-

3 FAO. *Latin America and the Caribbean is the region with the greatest inequality in the distribution of land.* Santiago de Chile, April 5, 2017. Available at: www.fao.org/americas/noticias/ver/en/c/878998/.

4 Guereña, Arantxa. *Desterrados: Tierra, poder y desigualdad en América Latina.* Oxfam, 2016. p. 29. Available in Spanish at: 209.177.156.169/libreria_cm/archivos/pdf_1485.pdf.

5 Bornschein, Dick. *Antecedentes: el caso de las migraciones en Guatemala, causas y cifras.* FLACSO, 2017. Available in Spanish at: www.flacso.edu.gt/dialogo/?p=1826.

6 Information from Sayda Tábora, territorial facilitator of FIAN Honduras, February 18 and March 7, 2019.

7 BBVA Bancomer Foundation, A.C. and National Population Secretariat. *Anuario de Migración y Remesas México*. Mexico: Fundación BBVA Bancomer, A.C. and SEGOB, 2018. Available in Spanish at: www.bbvaresearch.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/1809_AnuarioMigracionRemesas_2018.pdf.

8 National Institute of Statistics and Geography (INEGI). *Encuesta Nacional sobre la Dinámica de Relaciones en los Hogares. Principales Resultados.* Mexico: INEGI, 2016. Available in Spanish at: www.beta.inegi.org.mx/contenidos/programas/endireh/2016/doc/endireh2016_presentacion_ejecutiva.pdf.

9 According to the UNHCR, the North Triangle region and Mexico are the most violent regions for women: Most report that they have been victims of extortion, sexual harassment, and rape. UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). *Mujeres en Fuga. Relatos de primera mano de refugiados que huyen de Guatemala, México, El Salvador y Honduras.* 2015. Available in Spanish at: www.acnur.org/fileadmin/Documentos/BDL/2016/10666.pdf.

10 International Development Research Centre (IDRC). *Violencia contra las mujeres en contexto de migración.* 2016. p.13. Available in Spanish at: //idl-bnc-idrc.dspacedirect.org/bitstream/handle/10625/55953/IDL-55953.pdf.

11 Haiven, Max. "Silvia Federici, On capitalism, colonialism, women and food politics". *Politics and Culture,* November 3, 2009. Available at: politicsandculture.org/2009/11/03/silvia-federici-on-capitalism-colonialism-women-and-food-politics/; and Asakura, Hiroko. *Migración femenina centroamericana y violencia de género: pesadilla sin límites.* 2014. Available in Spanish at:

productive health, as well as their nutritional wellbeing. Worth noting are the high levels of teenage pregnancies, bans on the contraceptive pill, and the criminalization of abortion. Often, girls and teenagers suffer from stunted growth as a result of undernutrition, and in turn, their babies also suffer the same effect.[12] And yet, ideas and practices that subjugate women usually place them in positions of responsibility for the social reproduction of work, which includes taking care of household chores, caring for and feeding their families and dependents.[13]

THE FACE OF RURAL AND URBAN MIGRATION

When the subject of migration comes up, the role of women who are left behind – and usually bear the responsibility of providing and caring for their families – is habitually forgotten.[14] It is worth highlighting that for every man that migrates, there is at least one woman who assumes the work and social role of the migrant.[15] The women who stay behind have to guarantee their own food, as well as that of their daughters and sons. The migrant, it should be recalled, is in transit, and whilst the woman waits for the first remittance, she must maintain the family. Should the remittance not arrive and/or the migrant not contact them, the situation is even more precarious. According to the Mexican Yearbook of Migration and Remittances,[16] only about 5% of migrants send remittances to their families. What's more, many families take the risk of selling their land and become indebted in order to obtain the money that will enable them to migrate.[17] This is why those who stay behind are not able to continue growing their own food. The burden they carry is not only social and economic in nature; the women who are left behind also suffer from the emotional and psychological consequences from separation, and the uncertainty of knowing whether the departing relative will achieve his objectives.

On many occasions, the women who stay behind take up the struggle, and create movements to counteract the structural causes of migration.[18] They become agents of change and political actors vigorously defending food sovereignty, the human right to adequate food and nutrition, and other human rights. Though this aspect is positive, and their struggles are crucial, these women human rights defenders – from Mexico,[19] Honduras, and Guatemala[20] – face the difficulty of combining their struggles with traditional gender roles, as well as threats, attacks and other menaces for raising their voices. Women are also targets for gender-specific attacks, such as sexual violence and harassment. According to the United Nations Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders, in Honduras a total of 2,137 assaults against women defenders were reported between 2016 and 2017, including serious attacks against life and physical integrity, a large amount of smear campaigns, discrediting, and criminalization, as well as numerous threats and intimidating acts. The most attacked are women who defend land and the rights of indigenous peoples. Furthermore, women's rights defenders who accompany victims of domestic violence in complaints procedures and judicial processes in Honduras are regularly threatened with death and sexual violence.[21]

Statistical data is scarce, and they are not disaggregated, but it can be affirmed that internal migrants in Mexico,[22] Guatemala and Honduras mostly come from rural areas and live under the poverty line or in extreme poverty. They migrate with the hope of improving their living conditions, and they move to the cities with the most rapid economic growth.[23] Both men and women become *maquila* workers, farm workers, and service workers. If they don't get a job, the only other option for them to get by is to become underemployed in the informal economy.[24] In the case of rural, indigenous and peasant women, the large majority moves to the cities to take

web.isanet.org/Web/Conferences/FLACSO-ISA%20BuenosAires%202014/Archive/dc40cf25-a495-4a32-8b27-c78581d77584.pdf.

12 In Guatemala, official data from the Food Security Secretariat (SESAN) indicate chronic malnutrition in 46.5% of children aged between 0 and 5 years of age. Civil society calculates that the percentage stands at 60-70% in largely indigenous municipalities (Quiché, Totonicapán y Huehuetenango). See map of chronic malnutrition in each department, prepared by SESAN. Available in Spanish at: www.siinsan.gob.gt/siinsan/ensmi/#.

13 Córdova Montes, Denisse, and Flavio Luiz Schieck Valente. "Interdependent and Indivisible: The Right to Adequate Food and Nutrition and Women's Sexual and Reproductive Rights". *Right to Food and Nutrition Watch* (2014):32. Available at: www.righttofoodandnutrition.org/files/R_t_F_a_N_Watch_2014_eng.pdf.

14 These women, girls and teenagers stay behind and allow for the mother, head of the household, to migrate. For more information, please see: Asier, Vera. "Historias de las mujeres del éxodo centroamericano". *Revista La Cuerda Guatemala,* No 208, August-September, 2018. Available in Spanish at: www.lacuerdaguatemala.org/archivo-pdf.

15 Information from Marcos Arana Cedeño. Email exchange on his "Reflections on migration and the right to food and nutrition", February 1, 2019.

16 BBVA Bancomer Foundation, A.C. and National Population Secretariat. Supra note 7.

17 Bornschein. *Supra* note 5.

18 For more information, please see: Gutiérrez Escobar, Laura and German Vélez. "The Struggles for Peoples' Free Seeds in Latin America: Experiences from Brazil, Ecuador, Colombia, Honduras and Guatemala". *Right to Food and Nutrition Watch* (2016): 78. Available at: www.righttofoodandnutrition.org/watch-2016.

19 UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR). *Expertos de la ONU piden a México contrarrestar la campaña de desprestigio y respaldar a los defensores de derechos humanos.* OHCHR, 2016. Available in Spanish at: www.ohchr.org/SP/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=19784&LangID=S.

on badly paid or non-remunerated jobs in care, thus maintaining the gender roles assigned to them.[25] Women migrating internally play an essential role in enabling urban women to access the labor market jointly with men, as they carry out the domestic work and care that would otherwise limit their employer's access to work.

BODIES IN MOVEMENT

In this context, we are assisting not only a surge in migration and its feminization, but also emerging new forms of migrating from Mexico, Guatemala and Honduras. One of the most striking – and a turning point – is the migrant caravans from Central America to the USA. They started leaving Honduras in October 2018, and are an ongoing reality in 2019. One of the reasons why migrants decide to travel in groups is to potentially lower the dangers of organized crime, which beleaguered migrants travelling alone or in small groups.

Nevertheless, over the last few months there have been reports of missing migrants who were travelling in a caravan to the USA. In one case, according to the media, 22 persons travelling by bus disappeared.[26] In another similar case, 25 persons disappeared. There are no specific data on how many women disappeared. Nonetheless, Central American women who migrate face enormous risks on the road. They are frequently victims of theft, extortion, and because of their gender, sexual abuse. Six out of every ten women are raped, which is why some women take contraceptives weeks before they leave in order to avoid getting pregnant.[27]

On the journey north, women tend to assume the classic roles of care. They continue being mothers, they cook and look for food, as well as a place to sleep for them and their children.[28] Access to food and drinks is generally limited, and women usually eat less in order to put their children first. It is not only those who stay or are in transit that face insurmountable hurdles to guarantee their right to food and nutrition, and their other human rights. When they reach their destiny, some women take on the 'appropriate' gender roles and care jobs, whilst others find employment in agriculture or factories. Support networks for migrants, networks of relatives or 'fellow countrywomen' are just as important as getting a job. For instance, indigenous communities from Guatemala tend to move to 'neighborhoods' or cities where they know for sure that they will find members from their communities back home.[29] This is how different ethnic groups can come together in their new homes. This can be observed all the more so amongst indigenous communities than in non-indigenous ethnic groups, because when they arrive they often face the barrier of not speaking Spanish or English.

These networks are the first in helping women and men migrants to access food whilst they seek employment. The realization of the human rights, including the right to food and nutrition, of those who migrate without any support networks is much harder.

'TELL ME WHERE YOU MIGRATE TO, AND I'LL TELL YOU WHAT YOU EAT'

The migration phenomenon has numerous impacts on diets. When people migrate from rural to urban areas, the rapid pace of life and the cost of living in the city forces them to spend their income on ultra-processed, instant soups, canned food, fried food, ready-made meals, and soda. On their regular visits to their communities, they take with them these new consumption patterns, which are perceived to be a sign of success, leading thereby to a devaluing of local and traditional foods.

20 For more information, please see: "Tendencia devastadora de crímenes contra defensores de derechos humanos en Guatemala: 18 este año, indica organización WOLA". Available in Spanish at: elperiodico.com.gt/nacion/2018/08/01/tendencia-devastadora-de-crimenes-contra-defensores-de-derechos-humanos-en-guatemala-18-este-ano-indica-organizacion-wola/.

21 UN Special rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders. *Visita a Honduras.* January 11, 2019. pp. 10-13. Available in Spanish at: www.refworld.org.es/pdfid/5c63170d4.pdf.

22 According to the Yearbook of Migration and Remittances of Mexico: 5.2% of Mexicans who migrate to the USA – of which 3.2% are women – work in the primary sector (agriculture). 33.2% – 15,1% are women – work in the secondary sector (industry and manufacturing). The majority, 61.5% – of which 81,7% are women – work in the tertiary sector.See BBVA Bancomer Foundation, A.C. and National Population Secretariat. *Supra* Note 16.

23 In Honduras 48.7% are men and 51.3% are women, according to municipal and departmental population projections by the National Institute of Statistics (2014), and a study on internal displacement by the Interinstitutional Comission for the protection of persons displaced by violence.

24 Information from Sayda Tabora.* *Supra* note 6.

25 Information from Anna Isern Sabrià.* February 18 and March 7, 2019.

26 Urrutia, Alonso and Néstor Jiménez. "Ya van dos autobuses secuestrados como el de Tamaulipas: AMLO". *La Jornada*, May 13, 2019. Available in Spanish at: www.jornada.com.mx/ultimas/2019/03/12/se-indaga-caso-de-autobus-de-tamaulipas-con-eu-y-centroamerica-amlo-5261.html.

27 Information from Anna Isern Sabrià.* *Supra* note 25.

28 Information from Marcos Arana Cedeño.* *Supra* note 15.

29 Information from Anna Isern Sabrià.* *Supra* note 25.

30 Information from Anna Isern Sabrià.* *Supra* note 25..

31 Mexican women who live in the United States of America are prone to developing cardiovascular disease, linked to several risk factors, such as: a high intake of saturated

Those who migrate to large highly populated cities in North America become fully immersed in a new food context, where it is more common to frequent fast food establishments,[30] to eat only one meal a day, and to buy low-cost food items in order to be able to send monthly remittances back home. Several studies affirm that migrants' health deteriorates due to ultra-processed foods that are high in sugar and chemical additives. The most common health problems amongst migrants who have settled in the USA are cardiovascular disease,[31] diabetes, and obesity.[32]

The impact of migration on dietary patterns can be felt at the individual and family level. Some studies point out that remittances improve the standard of living of some families back in the home country,[33] but many other families stop working the land and growing their own food once they have enough purchasing power to buy foods considered a sign of 'prestige'. Thus, they go from suffering from hunger[34] to suffering from malnutrition,[35] as they increasingly consume ultra-processed foods, such as fortified cereals with vitamins and iron, but high in sugar. In this context, what seems to matter is the quantity, and the advertised added vitamins.

With higher incomes, families are increasingly exposed to services and technology; and the more technology there is, the more they are bombarded by the media.[36] According to several authors, this aspect is directly linked to eating habits,[37] especially amongst children, due to their daily exposure to advertising.

In this complex process that includes a higher purchasing power, the so-called 'palate-hijacking',[38] its repercussions,[39] and the bombardment with advertisements,[40] diet is more closely linked to the advertising industry,[41] and to free trade agreements,[42] than to the nutritional value of food. Adequate food and nutrition stop being a human right, and simply become a mere meaningless act of eating the advertised food.

Nevertheless, there are also acts of resistance to preserve the 'flavors from home' at the place of destination, despite the fact that migrants, be it in their own countries or abroad, change their eating habits in accordance to their income and support networks, and despite the fact that their new environment pushes them to eat industrially produced food. In many cases, migrant women abroad are nostalgic for their own food, from their land, and they are the ones who try to replicate them.[43] Both men and women who live in a foreign country agree that what they miss the most, after their families, is their traditional food. After all, food is a fundamental part of identity.

Regarding the impacts on families, several organizational initiatives are raising awareness and warning about the effects of a poor diet, and reclaiming the right to adequate food and nutrition.[44] Meanwhile, in the homes of families with migrant members – in their private sphere and everyday lives – women are generally the ones who are at the front line of all efforts towards good nutrition and food, and they are the ones resisting.

WE MIGRATE IN SPECIFIC CONDITIONS; WE MIGRATE AS WOMEN

Many women migrate in order to be able to guarantee their right to a life free of violence, to realize the right to food and nutrition for themselves and their families. Women migrants want to be recognized as such (women who migrate),[45] seeking to achieve the rights that the neoliberal system denies them, and that states do not

fats, hypertension and diabetes, amongst others. This is due to the intake of energy-dense foods (concentrated sugars and fat). See Arenas-Monreal, Luz et al. "Cambios alimenticios en mujeres morelenses migrantes a Estados Unidos". *Salud Pública de México* v. 55 n. 1 (2013): 35-42. Available in Spanish at: www.saludpublica.mx/index.php/spm/article/view/7186/9341.

32 Migrants need medical attention mainly for physical pain and queasiness, headaches, recurring migraine, stomach ache, intestinal discomfort, hypertension, vomiting, muscular pain, amenorrhea, ulcers, dermatitis, hair loss, chronic fatigue. Other food-related health problems are diabetes and obesity. See Ceja Fernández, et al. "Salud y enfermedad en los migrantes internacionales México-Estados Unidos". *Ra Ximhai,* 10. January-June 2014. Available in Spanish at: redalyc.org/articulo.oa?id=46129579013.

33 Domínguez, Ana Sofía, Eduardo Olmedo, and Mariano Rayo. "Migración y Remesas. Incidencia en las condiciones de vida en cuatro departamentos: San Marcos, Huehuetenango, Quetzaltenango y Zacapa. Aproximación cuantitativa y cualitativa de la incidencia del uso de remesas familiares en los hogares receptores". *Konrad Adenauer Stiftung, ASIES, Iniciativa Think Thank,* Guatemala (2018). Available in Spanish at: s3.amazonaws.com/asies-books/books/2018_%20Migracion_y_Remesas.pdf; and Canales Cerón and I. Alejandro. "Remesas y desarrollo en América Latina: Una relación en busca de teoría". *Revista electrónica Migración y Desarrollo* 1 (2018): 5-30. Available in Spanish at: http://www.scielo.org.mx/scielo.php?script=sci_arttext&pid=S1870-75992008000200001&lng=es&tlng=es.

34 According to the 2018 Global Hunger Index, which measures hunger and undernutrition, Honduras is in position 59 and Guatemala in position 70 out of 119 countries. Available at: www.globalhungerindex.org/results/.

35 See Global Hunger Index. *The inequalities of hunger.* International Food Policy Research Institute, Concern Worldwide, Welthungerhilfe. Washington, DC / Dublin / Bonn, 2017. Available at: www.globalhungerindex.org/pdf/en/2017.pdf.

36 See Reyes Pedraza, María Eugenia, Janet García González and María Téllez Castilla. "Impacto de la publicidad en los hábitos alimenticios en los niños". *Revista Española de Comunicación en Salud*, Vol. 9 2 (2018): 116-126. Available

protect. Migration is a way of resisting the multiple forms of violence that they are subjected to in their countries of origin.

Whether they stay, or are in transit, or have managed to reach their destination, women pay the price for holding a certain place in society. But they are always active political actors and agents of change. There is evidence of the different forms of resistance of Central American and Mexican women: they reorganize the household economic structure after the migration of a family head; they find ways to survive the dangerous journey to the USA, and the gender-based violence that torments them throughout.

Migration is, and has always been, a historical element of change in dietary patterns, which influences both the places of origin and of destination. Food is still linked to women's health and to their very identity. More statistical data and studies are necessary to analyze the specific conditions of women migrants: data need to be gathered and studied so as to gain a better understanding of the phenomenon overall. To this end, an exhaustive analysis must take into account the links between women's human rights, food sovereignty, the right to food and nutrition, and migration in the context of globalization, and must use a gender lens that allows for an intersectional and structural study of this issue.

at: www.researchgate.net/publication/329778897_Impacto_de_la_publicidad_en_los_habitos_alimenticios_en_los_ninos_Impact_of_advertising_on_children's_eating_habits.

37 Menéndez García, R. A. and F. J. Franco Díez. "Publicidad y alimentación: influencia de los anuncios gráficos en las pautas alimentarias de infancia y adolescencia". *Nutrición Hospitalaria,* Vol.24 3, Madrid, May-June 2009. Available in Spanish at: scielo.isciii.es/scielo.php?script=sci_arttext&pid=S0212-16112009000300009.

38 "Comida procesada engaña al paladar; distorsiona la saciedad: OPS." Available in Spanish at: www.excelsior.com.mx/nacional/2016/02/18/1075896.

39 "¿Qué es el paladar "secuestrado" y cuáles son sus repercusiones?" Available in Spanish at: xepl.com.mx/completa1.php?i=103035.

40 Fernández, Belén. *Los tratados de libre comercio y la alimentación: un maridaje agridulce.* 2016. Available in Spanish at: ecosfron.org/los-tratados-de-libre-comercio-y-la-alimentacion-un-maridaje-agridulce/.

41 "Publicidad, expendios, programas públicos. Un sistema alimentario perverso que nos enferma". 2013. Available in Spanish at: www.jornada.com.mx/2013/02/16/cam-publicidad.html.

42 "This situation has been exacerbated over the last 20 years by the entry into force of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA). This allows huge imports of ultra-processed foods with a high content of sugar, fat and salt, and low in fiber." Arana Cedeño, Marcos and Xavier Cabada. "Nutrition Policies Taken Hostage by Multinationals and Conflicts of Interest: The Obesity and Diabetes Epidemic In Mexico". *Right to Food and Nutrition Watch* (2015). Available at: www.righttofoodandnutrition.org/peoples-nutrition-not-business.

43 For more information, please see: Medina Luque, Francesc Xavier (Ed.). *Alimentación y migraciones en Iberoamérica. Capítulo I. Introducción. Alimentación y migraciones en Iberoamérica: nuevas perspectivas sobre eternos temas.* Primera edición. Barcelona: Editorial UOC, 2014. pp. 19-30.

44 Examples include: Latin American Coordination of Rural Organizations (CLOC-Vía Campesina); Semillas de Vida; Sin Maíz no Hay País; and Central American Network of Rural, Indigenous and Peasant Women (RECMURIC), amongst many others.

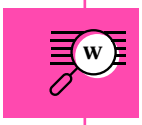
45 On November 4, 2018, at Centro Cultural Tlatelolco, Mexico City, within the framework of the 8th World Social Forum on Migration, a Global Assembly for Women in Migration was founded. See Declaration. Available at: www.facebook.com/FSMM2018/photos/a.418757008555125/604920423272115/?type=3&theater .

IN BRIEF

This article sets out to render visible the reality of a growing female population who migrates from Honduras, Guatemala and Mexico to the USA, and the relation between the feminization of migration, and the violation of the human right to adequate food and nutrition. It analyzes the specific conditions in which women migrate, and why. For women, gender-based violence is another fundamental reason to migrate, as well as the socio-economic model and structural violence. In this context, it is an uphill battle for women to access land and control food production. If the man migrates and the woman stays behind, she must guarantee food for herself and the family, in addition to assuming his social and family roles, and suffer the emotional and psychological impacts. If, on the contrary, the woman decides to migrate, she faces theft, extortion and sexual abuse on the road. Six out of every ten women who migrate are raped. Despite all these risks, women frequently assume the classic roles of care on the journey north; they fulfill their roles as mothers, cook, and seek food and a place to sleep with the children. Whether they stay or migrate, women are the first to feel the consequences of their rights being violated, including their right to food and nutrition. For this reason, it is often women who, in their private sphere and daily lives, are on the frontline of all efforts and acts of resistance for good food and nutrition.

KEY CONCEPTS

- → The feminization of migration is related to both the socio-economic model and gender-based violence.
- → The human right to adequate food and nutrition is affected by an increase in purchasing power in the homes of migrant families, and the bombardment with advertisements.
- → Migration is a historical element of dietary change.
- → Migration, food and nutrition are part of human rights.
- → Women's resistance for a right to migrate and to feed themselves.



KEY WORDS

- → Migration
- → Women
- → Food
- → Migrant caravans
- → Honduras
- → Guatemala
- → Mexico
- → USA

In the heart of Northern Syria, rising from the ruins, there is an ecological village built by and for women. They build their schools, and their farms, with their bare hands, creating a peaceful home for themselves and their children. They seek to be free from the oppression of patriarchy, and to live in respect with nature. This story of women's resistance is one of several captured in this issue of the Watch*, and builds upon the many accounts by women activists in previous issues. From Guatemala, where Mayan indigenous women protect biodiversity and their native seeds, to Tanzania, where Maasai pastoralist women defend their right to land, to India, where tea plantation workers go on strike to defend their health and maternity rights, the* Watch *continues to be a portal for women to share their experiences of struggle and resistance.*

Contributors to this year's issue of the *Watch* build on the vision that women's rights are an inalienable component of the human right to adequate food and nutrition, and place women at the epicenter of food struggles.

The focus on women's fight for food sovereignty is timely, given the recent upsurges of violence against women - and communities - who challenge the rise of right-wing governments and increased corporate power, backed by rampant neoliberalism. Patriarchy and capitalism reinforce the current ecological crisis, and women who dare to imagine different models are on the front line of the battle for the right to food and nutrition.

In every article in this year's issue of the *Watch*, the authors highlight the rage felt by women across the world, and how they organize, mobilize and resist. In exposing the denial of rights at the women-violence-nature nexus, we also make space to be collectively enraged with the destruction of the Earth on which we all depend.

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