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20 YEARS OF UN RIGHT TO FOOD GUIDELINES: TIME FOR A WORLD FREE FROM HUNGER AND HUMAN-MADE STARVATION



FIAN
INTERNATIONAL

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PHOTOS

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DESIGN

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On the 20th anniversary of the adoption of the [UN Right to Food Guidelines](#), FIAN International affirms its commitment to fight for systemic change in food systems.

With our national [FIAN Sections](#) and our close allies around the world including the [Global Network for the Right to Food and Nutrition \(GNRTFN\)](#) which we coordinate, we strive to overcome violence, exploitation and oppression in food systems and realize the human right to adequate food and nutrition (RtFN) for all.

The meaningful participation of rights holders and democratization of decision-making at all levels is a crucial part of ensuring this fundamental right. Hunger is human-made and can be ended.

Our focus is on supporting six main struggles:

➤ **STRUGGLE 1:**

FOR peace, justice and self-determination.

AGAINST violence in food systems, criminalization and the use of food as a weapon of war.

➤ **STRUGGLE 2:**

FOR gender justice, women's rights and care in food systems.

AGAINST discrimination, gender violence and patriarchy.

➤ **STRUGGLE 3:**

FOR a just transition to agroecology.

AGAINST ecological and climate destruction and the financialization of nature.

➤ **STRUGGLE 4:**

FOR people's right to land and natural resources and control over their territories.

AGAINST inequality, extractivism, and land grabbing.

➤ **STRUGGLE 5:**

FOR food justice, adequate food and healthy people.

AGAINST the corporate, industrial food system.

➤ **STRUGGLE 6:**

FOR freedom from exploitation, corporate accountability and food democracy.

AGAINST corporate impunity and capture of governance.



STRUGGLE 1:

FOR PEACE, JUSTICE AND SELF-DETERMINATION.

AGAINST VIOLENCE IN FOOD SYSTEMS, CRIMINALIZATION AND THE USE OF FOOD AS A WEAPON OF WAR.

When people advocate for their RtFN and related rights such as the right to land, they often face violent repression and criminalization. Structural injustice leads to armed conflict, which is one of the main causes of global hunger and there are many examples of food being used as a weapon of war around the world.

The RtFN is inseparable from the principles of food sovereignty and other interconnected struggles, encompassing struggles for racial, climate, intra and intergenerational, decolonial and gender justice.

FIAN International supports affected people and communities resisting different forms of violence in situations of crises, including their capacity to autonomously organize, document and expose violations and demand bottom-up accountability.

FOOD JUSTICE IN PALESTINE

The basis of settler colonialism is land theft. It entails the elimination and forced-displacement of the indigenous population, replacing them with settlers. The Israeli occupation's deliberate and calculated targeting of Palestinian food systems is systemically ingrained in this logic of settler colonialism, aiming to deny the indigenous Palestinian population sustenance, livelihoods and ultimately land.

The Union of Agricultural Work Committees (UAWC) works for food sovereignty in the face of the Israeli occupation and its dispossession of Palestinian land and natural resources. UAWC speaks of “food sovereignty” and not “food security” because if Palestinians had sovereignty over their land and natural resources, Palestine would be food secure. The Israeli occupation and its use of food as a genocidal weapon is subjecting Gaza's 2.3 million population – over half of whom are children – to starvation.

FIAN works with UAWC and other organizations and movements in Palestine to advocate for the right to food and against the food sovereignty impacts of occupation and genocide on the Palestinian people. This work includes facilitating participation in UN processes and human rights spaces, and supporting advocacy efforts.



STRUGGLE 2:

FOR GENDER JUSTICE, WOMEN'S RIGHTS AND CARE IN FOOD SYSTEMS.

AGAINST DISCRIMINATION, GENDER VIOLENCE AND PATRIARCHY.

Patriarchal structures and power relations in food systems undermine women, girls, minors and LGBTIQ+ people's RtFN and related human rights.

Women, girls and LGBTIQ+ people encounter multiple inequalities, violence and oppression. Despite being overrepresented in food production, women have very little access to land on their own and often face the worst malnutrition. Food preparation is an act of revolutionary love, because it is based on care. We envision a RtFN based on the right to care.

FIAN International works with allies around the world to build alternative, decolonial models of relationships, production, exchange, consumption and access to food based on feminism, solidarity, equality, autonomy, care and respect.

FOOD CARE IN COLOMBIA

In Colombia, state policies on care do not include the food dimension, despite food-related care work being a major activity, according to national statistics on the amount of time spent on care.

Looking at care from a RtFN perspective involves a recognition that the work of food care should be dignified, redistributed, recognized and represented politically and economically.

Women in the Afrocolombian Kilombo Niara Sharay have been rallying to this agenda. Female leaders look after the community's health through food, taking care at the same time of people's bodies and the soil, rivers, plants and animals. Women take care of the mangroves while fishing and singing for the harmony of the earth. As peasants, fishers and gatherers they want to be recognized for their care work to nature. At the same time, caregivers need to be cared for as well. High workloads and lack of recognition of their work affect their health.

FIAN Colombia is collectively building, together with diverse women in different territories, the concept and political claim of food care from different perspectives. The goal is to position this claim in the agenda of civil society organisations, as well as in the broader public discussion to promote policies that integrate this approach.



STRUGGLE 3:

FOR A JUST TRANSITION TO AGROECOLOGY.

AGAINST ECOLOGICAL AND CLIMATE DESTRUCTION AND THE FINANCIALIZATION OF NATURE.

Safeguarding the RtFN requires a holistic approach, which acknowledges the inseparable ties between humans, all other living beings and the planet. Agriculture is responsible for nearly 40 percent of global greenhouse gas emissions, almost 90 percent of deforestation and 80 percent of biodiversity loss, the bulk of which can be attributed to industrial agriculture.

Agroecology strengthens the agency of small-scale food producers and their ability to act as stewards of ecosystems and delink food production from the reliance of fossil fuels and extractivism through grassroots action.

FIAN International supports grassroots groups and networks advocating for a just and fair transition to agroecology, including redistributive reforms for social, climate and gender justice which recognize that marginalized groups are disproportionately impacted by the environmental and climate crises.

FACING THE DROUGHT IN ZAMBIA

Zambia is facing a severe drought which endangers the RtFN of millions.

It affects 84 districts, damaging critical sectors like agriculture, water, and energy. With a million hectares of maize destroyed, over a million farming households struggle to afford adequate nutritious food. Additionally, water scarcity has intensified human-animal conflicts and disease risks, compounding the country's existing challenges.

The crisis has led to extreme hunger, loss of seed resources, and drying of water wells, undermining human dignity and livelihoods. Some communities are calling for a shift from maize dependency to climate-resilient crops such as sorghum, millet, and cassava and advocate for a transformation of food systems to safeguard the RtFN.

FIAN Zambia engages policy makers and uses media to highlight these calls and push for effective climate response strategies.



STRUGGLE 4:

FOR PEOPLE’S RIGHT TO LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES AND CONTROL OVER THEIR TERRITORIES.

AGAINST INEQUALITY, EXTRACTIVISM, AND LAND GRABBING.

Land and natural resources are often grabbed by giant corporations, in many cases backed by states, who flout national and international law – dispossessing communities, polluting the environment and claiming intellectual property over food sources in pursuit of profit.

A handful of agribusinesses control more than 70 percent of the world’s farmland while smallholder famers, fisherfolk, pastoralists and Indigenous Peoples feed 70 percent of the world’s population with just 10 percent of global farmland.

FIAN International supports communities fighting for greater control over natural resources. This includes advocating for a more just distribution of natural wealth and for respect, protection and support for the autonomous ways people and communities govern and manage their territories, including customary and collective tenure and management systems.



RIGHT TO LAND IN PHILIPPINES

In the Philippines, land concentration is causing food insecurity and malnutrition, despite the fact that the right of tillers to own the land they till is enshrined in the country’s constitution. For landless peasants however it has proven very difficult to have this right respected.

Filippino peasants regularly face serious human rights violations including killings, forced evictions and criminalization for advocating for land redistribution and agrarian reform. The lack of state protection from these attacks has a chilling effect on the active participation of many peasants.

FIAN International works with KATARUNGAN – a grassroots peasant movement and member of the Global Network for the RtFN which demands agrarian reform in the Philippines – to help exert pressure on the government and internationalize their struggle, including raising the issue at the UN.



STRUGGLE 5:

FOR FOOD JUSTICE, ADEQUATE FOOD AND HEALTHY PEOPLE.

AGAINST THE CORPORATE, INDUSTRIAL FOOD SYSTEM.

Transnational corporations disrupt local and national patterns of food production, markets and economies and promote unhealthy ultra-processed food products which contribute to rising levels of obesity worldwide. Corporations increasingly position themselves as supporters of food charity with donations to food banks.

The agroecology and food sovereignty movement seeks to protect water, real food and territories free from junk food while promoting diverse diets based on real food and local food cultures. Access to adequate food is a fundamental right and should not be treated as charity.

FIAN International advocates for a radical transformation of the corporate-controlled industrial food system, towards territorial and human rights-based food systems based on public interest, with people, not corporations, at its center.

FOOD & CARE IN BELGIUM

In Belgium, people have access mainly to calorific and animal-based foods. These foods are easy to process and trade and have managed to subjugate people's taste.

FIAN Belgium is advocating for a regulation to help reduce consumption of junk food and support developing local, sustainable and fresh food production with an emphasis on fruits and vegetables.

The Social Security for Food (SSF) is a specific policy that could articulate these two dimensions. Following the principle of the Belgian Food Security system, the SSF proposes to create a common pot based on contributions from the state, businesses and citizens. The fund would be redistributed equally among citizens to buy agreed-upon quality food through an electronic cart with a monthly allowance.

This would help secure incomes for peasants and reinforce their market share. As a social scheme, it would increase the food budget of low-income households and allow everyone to access healthy, tasty, local and sustainable food.



STRUGGLE 6:

FOR FREEDOM FROM EXPLOITATION, CORPORATE ACCOUNTABILITY AND FOOD DEMOCRACY.

AGAINST CORPORATE IMPUNITY AND CAPTURE OF GOVERNANCE.

Governments have relinquished the capacity and formal authority to shape the limits of transnational business practices associated with land concentration and territorial dispossession, the deterioration of food quality and the erratic behavior of international markets. Working alongside global financial and multilateral institutions, transnational corporations increasingly monopolize public spaces of food governance.

FIAN international is actively engaged in exposing this and advocating for robust, binding mechanisms to regulate the activities of transnational corporations, ensuring access to justice for those affected and pushing states to uphold their extraterritorial obligations in the context of business activities.



HOLDING CORPORATIONS ACCOUNTABLE

Large corporations are responsible for many violations of the RtFN and often enjoy impunity as there are few effective legal mechanisms to hold them liable for human rights and environmental harm – particularly in transnational settings.

FIAN International pressures states to assert regulatory powers over businesses, to correct power imbalances and develop instruments of corporate accountability that provide prevention, access to justice and remedy for the affected communities. This includes participating in UN negotiations for a Binding Treaty on Transnational Companies and other Businesses with regards to Human Rights and in the development of national corporate accountability laws. FIAN also researches and exposes undue corporate influence in public decision making, corporate greenwashing, corporate capture and efforts to entrench undemocratic multistakeholderism.


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