

ANNUAL REPORT

2021

LA VIA CAMPESINA





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2021

March, 2022

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A EXECUTIVE SUMMARY | 2021: A YEAR IN REVIEW

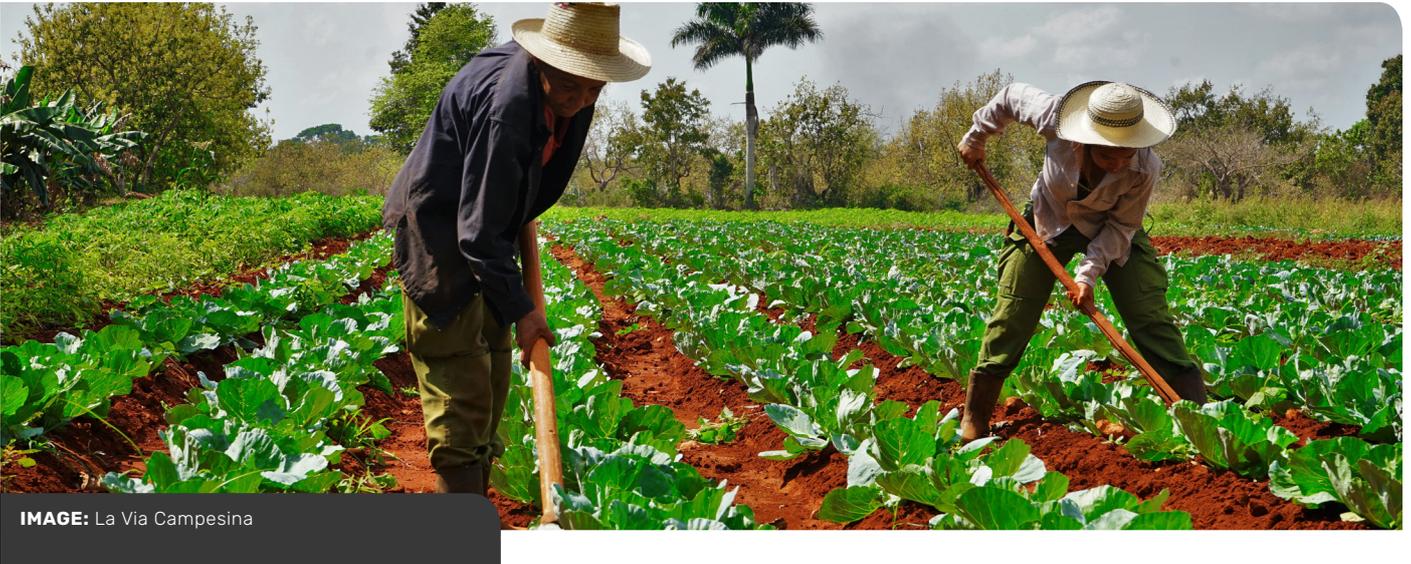


IMAGE: La Via Campesina

2021 marked a quarter-century since La Via Campesina put forth the vision of 'Food Sovereignty as a framework for developing and executing public policies on food and agriculture. At the 1996 World Food Summit, in a debate about organizing our global food systems, La Via Campesina coined food sovereignty. It insisted upon the centrality of the small-scale food producers, the accumulated wisdom of generations, the autonomy and diversity of rural and urban communities and solidarity between peoples as essential components for crafting policies around food and agriculture.

As we marked 25 years of this collective struggle, our rallying call of "No Future Without Food Sovereignty" once again brought together the global food sovereignty movement members. This solidarity is vital as Big Corporations gain a larger foothold inside institutional spaces to influence policymaking. The UN Food Systems Summit of 2021 (UNFSS) was a classical case in point that saw mainstream philanthropists organizations and the lobbyists of Agribusiness Corporations trying to formulate the "future of the food systems" by excluding and marginalizing food producers' movements. The COP26 in Glasgow was yet another moment when the corporate capture of global policymaking was on full display.

In response, La Via Campesina joined several social movements and allies in creating a counter-narrative by co-organizing social media campaigns (#NotInOurNames and #FoodSystems4People) with other members of the Civil Society and publishing several op-eds in leading news outlets.

All the thematic collectives of La Via Campesina organized a series of workshops, forums, and training sessions – targeting women and youth on the different pillars of Food Sovereignty throughout the year. These spaces provided a platform to delve deeper into specific topics such as – the relevance of the UN Declaration on Rights of Peasants (UNDROP); the impending threat posed by monopolistic control over digitalization of agriculture; the facade of 'nature-based solutions' pushed by corporate lobbies; the role of youth and women in promoting peasant agroecology; and the urgent need to develop a global solidarity pact for migrants and refugee peoples.

During the year, La Via Campesina also released training modules and graphic illustrations meant to aid formation and training processes on UNDROP, Peasant Seeds and Popular Peasant Feminism.

As part of its work to promote public policies that respect peasant's rights, La Via Campesina ensured its active participation within the Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO), the Committee on World Food Security (CFS), the Civil Society and Indigenous Peoples' Mechanism (CSM), the UN Decade of Family Farming (UNDIFF) and scores of other national and regional spaces of these institutions. In September, La Via Campesina took on the second vice-chair position in the International Steering Committee (ISC) of the UN Decade of Family Farming (UNDIFF). In addition to this, throughout the year, nominated delegates on behalf of La Via Campesina spoke at different forums, such as the High-Level Special Event by CFS in February, a panel on scaling up sustainable agri-food systems (May), the Global Conference on "Family Farming at the core of Sustainable Food Systems" (November) and a series of preparatory meetings of the Steering Committee of the UN Decade (UNDIFF). La Via Campesina was present at the International Opening Plenary of the COP26 People's Summit or 'Digital Rally for Climate Justice. LVC intervened for the first time in the Official Opening Plenary of COP26 and insisted on the need for inclusive public policies that dignify life in the countryside and recognize the role that rural communities play in taking forward climate solutions.

While the work progressed on many fronts, 2021 presented numerous difficulties and disruptions in the lives of peasants, workers and indigenous peoples worldwide. By the end of the year, the pandemic had already taken over two million lives globally and impacted the livelihoods of millions of workers worldwide. Inequity in access and availability to vaccines have crippled all efforts to rebuild and recover, especially in the poorest countries of Africa, Asia and Latin America. As La Via Campesina, we demanded the right to public and free health care for all peoples as defined in Article 23 of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Peasants (UNDRP), including prevention processes, vaccination,, and long-term treatment. Vaccines should not be patented, neither should they be left under the control and profit of large transnational corporations.

Geopolitical tensions and trade disputes between advanced economies also created major disruptions that affected the global supply chains. It impacted the global food prices and the prices for globally traded farm inputs such as fertilizers, pesticides and even fuels. The FAO Food Price Index* (FFPI) averaged 140.7 points in February 2022, up 5.3 points (3.9 per

cent) from January and as much as 24.1 points (20.7 per cent) above its level a year ago. This increase in food prices also coincides with Global Hunger, steadily on the rise since 2015. The hunger crisis is worsened by the pandemic situation and the conflicts, famine, climate vagaries – also exposing the inability of the global agri-food system, dominated by transnational corporations, to step up to challenges faced by humanity.

However, 2021 all was not gloom and doom either. The pushback from people and indigenous communities also found its place in the year. India witnessed one of the world's largest peasant mobilizations in recent history, directed at a set of market reforms that the national government pushed through with little consultation with farmers' organizations. The massive agitation, which lasted for more than a year, displayed the resilience and unity of social movements. The uproar finally forced the Indian government to withdraw the three controversial laws. It promised to set up a consultative process to define a legally guaranteed and viable support produce for crops. The Indian mobilization and their victory inspired peasant movements worldwide, with several members of La Via Campesina expressing solidarity through the year under the hashtags of #ShineOnIndiasFarmers and #SaluteToIndiasFarmers.

2021 also marked a moment of transition in the life and growth of La Via Campesina. On 30th November, La Via Campesina's International Operative Secretariat (IOS) officially moved to Bagnolet, France, to be hosted by Confederation Paysanne on behalf of the European Coordination Via Campesina (ECVC), the coordination of LVC member organizations in Europe.

This move keeps up with the global movement's tradition of rotating its IOS every few years. Founded in 1993, La Via Campesina (LVC) – the international movement of peasants now comprising 182 member organizations in 81 countries – has had its IOS located at Brussels (1993-1996), Tegucigalpa, Honduras (1996-2005), Jakarta (2005-2013) and Harare (2013 – 2021). Morgan Ody, a small-scale vegetable grower from Brittany, France, was named the General Coordinator of La Via Campesina, previously held by Elizabeth Mpofu of ZIMSOFF, Zimbabwe (2013-2021). Morgan is also a dynamic leader of Confederation Paysanne, La Via Campesina's member organization in France. She is also a member of the International Coordination Committee of LVC (representing Europe) and a leader of the European Coordination Via Campesina.

With this move to Europe, the global movement has completed the first full circle of its rotation, bringing a rich history of peasant mobilizations, struggles, and victories. Over the three decades, La Via Campesina has worked with allies and unions worldwide to build a collective vision, plan and platform to bring food sovereignty to all territories. The movement's insistence on Agrarian Reform, Social Peace and Peasant Feminism as an essential pre-condition to achieve this goal now finds resonance among all progressive societies. The transition to Europe allows the movement to bring this rich history and experiences right to the doors of global governance institutions based in this continent.

The International Operative Secretariat (IOS) in Europe will continue to receive its mandate from the International Coordination Committee (ICC) of La Via Campesina. The ICC is a collective of 22 elected peasant and indigenous leaders from Asia, Africa, Europe and the Americas. It seeks to implement the decisions taken at the International Conference that La Via Campesina held every four years.

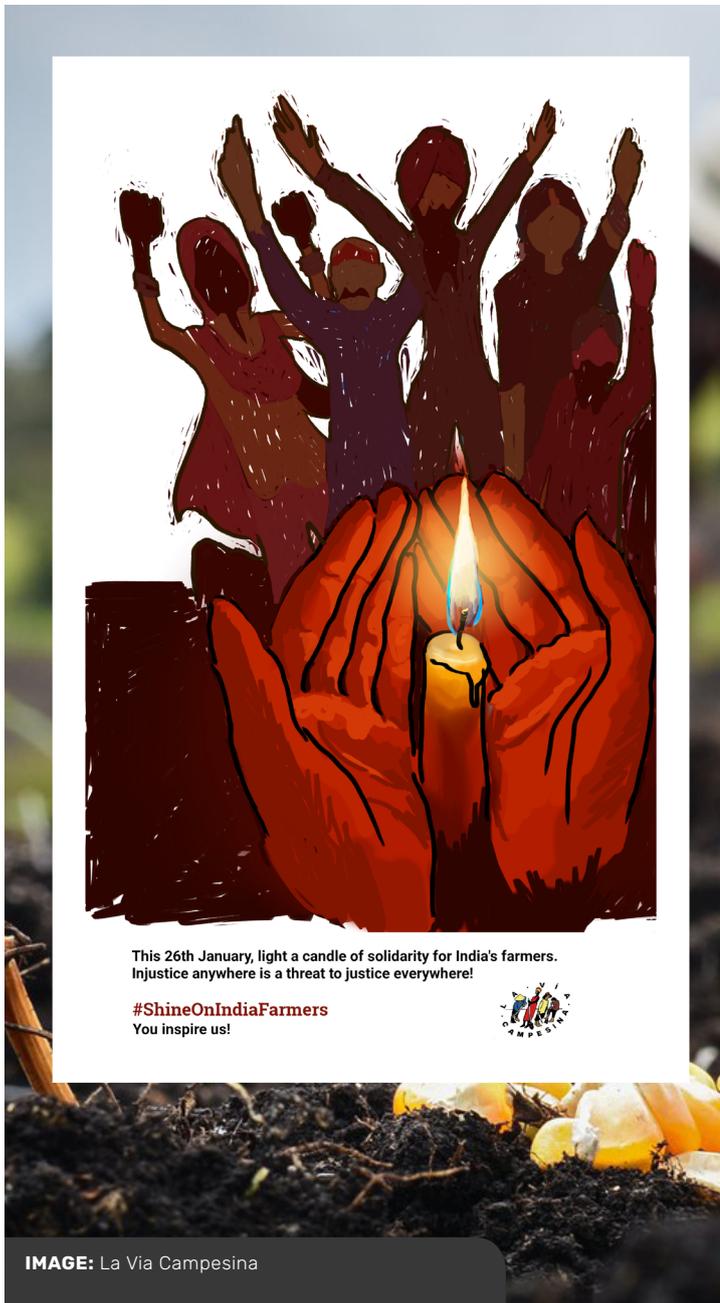


IMAGE: La Via Campesina

B BROAD AXES OF WORK IN LA VIA CAMPESINA IN 2021



IMAGE: La Via Campesina

What are Working Collectives and Articulations in La Via Campesina?

La Via Campesina recognizes that the struggles for Food Sovereignty have several dimensions to it and that each of them demands special attention and strategic thinking. The movement has developed Thematic Working Collectives, comprising members from Asia, Africa, Europe, South America, Central and Northern America. These thematic collectives are namely; the Collective on Agroecology, Seeds & Biodiversity, the Collective on Land, Water and Territories, the Collective for the Rights of Peasants, the Collective for Climate Justice, the Collective for the Rights of Migrant Workers, the Collective for Public Policies, the Collective to resist Transnational Agribusiness and the Collective against WTO and Free Trade Agreements.

La Via Campesina also recognizes and attach the highest importance to the rights of peasant women and youth in all the decision making and working spaces of the movement. The movement has created two spaces: "Women Articulation" and "Youth Articulation", each comprising members from all the regions, to articulate the principles of popular peasant feminism and the visions and aspirations of peasant youth. Members of these two Articulations are also part of the different Working Collectives, thus enabling diverse insights and ideas into our work plans.

In addition to this, the movement also celebrates the rich diversity of our members. It has also created three Working Collectives meant to build and exchange knowledge, build autonomy and enable strategic thinking around communication. These Internal Working Collectives are namely; the Collective on Formation and Movement Building, Collective for Building Financial Autonomy and the Collective for Communication - playing a central and instrumental part in bringing our diverse members to strengthen the global struggles for food sovereignty.

25 Years of Food Sovereignty Struggles!

As already cited in the executive summary, 2021 also marked a quarter-century of our collective struggles to bring food sovereignty into all territories. What started as a peasant-led vision of the future of our food systems is now also a public policy framework that has found resonance among peasant movements, the Constitutional principles of progressive governments, and the policy frameworks prepared by International Institutions such as the FAO. La Via Campesina and its allies in the IPC¹ and elsewhere have consistently fought for this vision that defends people's autonomy in building a self-reliant food system that respects local and territorial diversities, cultures, climate, tastes, and, quite crucially, the health of local economies. So in 2021, this overarching theme of '25 years of Food Sovereignty Struggles' found its echo in all the movement's work and actions.

A communique that La Via Campesina launched while marking the International Day of Peasants' Struggles (17 April) reminded the world of our journey thus far

¹ The International Planning Committee for Food Sovereignty (IPC) is an autonomous and self-organized global platform of small-scale food producers and rural workers organizations and grassroots/community-based social movements to advance the Food Sovereignty agenda at the global and regional level.

and called upon our members and allies to re-shape the struggles for the next 25 years. Under the unifying message of #NoFutureWithoutFoodSovereignty, several solidarity actions, webinars, study sessions and events took place during the year, with activities peaking in October while marking the International Day of Action (16 October)

for Food Sovereignty and Against Transnational Agribusinesses. The latter part of this report will reveal how each working Collective of La Via Campesina lapped up this call to unify the food sovereignty struggles in its actions.

B.1 AGROECOLOGY, PEASANT SEEDS AND BIO-DIVERSITY: HIGHLIGHTS OF 2021



IMAGE: La Via Campesina

B. 1.1 – Policy, Alliances and Advocacy Work

La Via Campesina's delegates, through the Civil Society and Indigenous Peoples' Mechanism (CSM), were involved this year in the negotiations that framed the policy recommendations on agroecological and other innovative approaches for sustainable agriculture and food systems, anchored by the Committee on World Food Security (CFS).

However, much to the dismay of social movements and other CSM members, the policy recommendations finalized by the CFS seem to normalize status quo arrangements of power and resources. The interests of a handful of influential agri-food commodity players and dominant agricultural exporting countries are well protected, with small-scale food producers and low-income food-deficit countries left behind. La Via Campesina signed a [dissent note](#) published by the CSM in this regard.

The online modality of the negotiations and the time pressure to reach consensus led to inequitable

outcomes, with discussions being cut off prematurely and inequalities in terms of participation not addressed adequately. The fact that the optimization of pesticide use is part of the recommendations undermines our collective struggles for food sovereignty and contradicts existing United Nations agreements, policy frameworks and agreed guidelines on pesticide and chemical management.

Later in the year, the "Friends of Agroecology" at the FAO invited members of the Collective to participate in two workshops on the "Agroecological Performance Assessment Tool" or TAPE, held on 12 and 15 November 2021.

B. 1.2 – Global meetings and Collaborations

Within the framework of the 25 Years of Food Sovereignty, in October 2021, the Collective, in convergence with the International Youth Articulation, held a large 'Virtual International Forum' entitled "Agroecology and Youth in La Via Campesina: 25 Years Sowing Food Sovereignty". The forum facilitated more than three hours of exchange of agroecological experiences and practises between the four continents, almost all of which were led by young people and women of La Via Campesina. In addition to providing a space to explain different local agroecological practices, the forum also emphasized the role of trained, protagonist, conscious and committed youth in the pedagogical struggles necessary to build Food Sovereignty.

B. 1.3 – Global Solidarity Actions

In December 2021, La Via Campesina joined its allies in a Global Week of Action against the International Union for the Protection of New Varieties of Plants (UPOV). UPOV was initiated in 1961 by a few European countries to allow plant breeders to impose patent-like

intellectual property rights over seeds. This regime is called plant variety protection. Free trade agreements often require countries to adopt or mimic UPOV's rules. The joint action by civil society drew attention to the role that UPOV plays in privatizing seeds and threatening food sovereignty. It also highlighted examples of pro-peasant seed legislation and exposed the part of free trade agreements in pushing seed laws all over the planet.

B. 1.4 – Regional Initiatives

In Mali, CNOP coordinates a “National Platform for Peasant Agroecology” alongside other civil society organizations to advocate policies favourable to peasant agroecology and coherent joint activities and training.

In West Africa, the region organized from 06 to 09 October 2021 a training for women and youth on agricultural entrepreneurship.

CLOC, the Latin American Coordination of Via Campesina, organized three workshops between October and December 2021; to analyze the digitalization of agriculture and dematerialization; the role of UNDROP in promoting agroecological practices.

In the month of April alone, the MST had already exceeded 100 tons of donated food and more than 16 thousand lunch boxes to poor communities across the country. The solidarity actions were carried out between 10 April and 21 April, during the National Campaign of Struggles in defense of Agrarian Reform in April, in memory of the 25th anniversary of the Eldorado Carajás Massacre.

In South Asia, a prominent magazine ran a feature story on the work done by the Karnataka Rajya Raitha Sangha and the peasant agroecology school Amritabhoomi in promoting Natural Farming practices.

It explored how women-led collectives have been instrumental in spreading the principles of agroecological farming from village to village.

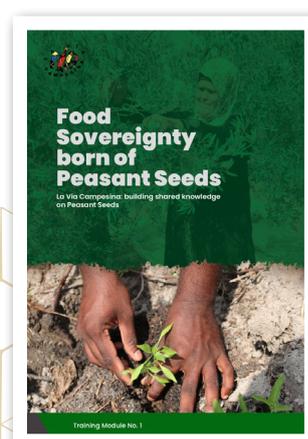
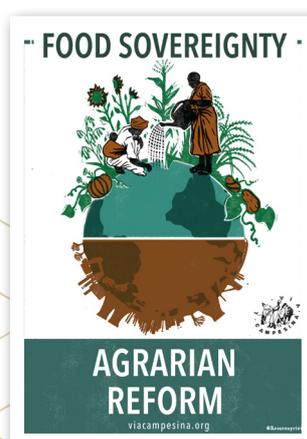
In Europe, ECVC is among 12 European partners working to develop a framework for a European network of agroecological living labs, research infrastructure and learning spaces for farmers, research and civil society actors.

B. 1.5 – Publications and Key Documents in 2021

Also, within the framework of 25 years of struggle for Food Sovereignty - but initiated years ago - the Collective celebrated the publication of the first training module, “Common Content on Peasant Seeds”, at the end of the year. These five pedagogical documents seek to deepen the study of the global struggle for peasant seeds, their situation and context, and their connection with other struggles for Food Sovereignty. The first module in this five-part monthly series, “Food Sovereignty born of Peasant Seeds”, was released in December 2021 and is available in English, Spanish and French. (See Annex for links).

B. 1.6 – Videos and Podcasts

ATC Nicaragua released a video about the long struggle of the Gloria Quintanilla Women’s Cooperative in the community of Santa Julia (south of capital city Managua). Set up in 2008, the cooperative, supported by the Rural Workers Association (ATC), has transformed the lives of the whole community through its commitment to food sovereignty, agroecology, gender equality, and land rights.



B.2 IN DEFENSE OF LAND, WATER AND TERRITORIES & AGAINST TRANSNATIONAL AGRIBUSINESSES: HIGHLIGHTS OF 2021



IMAGE: La Via Campesina West African Caravan 2021

B. 2.1 – Policy, Alliances and Advocacy Work

La Via Campesina continued its involvement at the IPC's Working Group on Land, Forest, Water and Territories, to jointly push for the implementation of the Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests, officially endorsed by the Committee on World Food Security in 2012.

In 2021, the Collective also advanced to build the future World Forum of Struggle for Land and Natural Resources with ROPPA and the Global Convergence for Land and Water Struggles. LVC made a written contribution to implementing the Declaration of Peasant Rights (UNDROP), including concrete linguistic proposals and amendments on the Draft General Comment related to land and economic, social and cultural rights, with the Geneva Academy and the Europe-Third World Center (CETIM).

La Via Campesina also continued its involvement with the negotiations for a Legally Binding Treaty to stop human rights violations by Transnational Corporations. In October 2021, the *Global Campaign* group, representing 260 million people globally affected by Transnational Corporations, participated directly in the negotiations, partially resuming the physical presence that last year was not possible due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Earlier in the year, La Via Campesina had joined other members of the *Global Campaign* in highlighting the shortcomings of the

'Third Revised Draft' of the Treaty that was tabled during the negotiations. The Campaign highlighted the draft's inability to regulate the activities of transnational corporations within the framework of international human rights law and to ensure effective and comprehensive access to justice for affected peoples, individuals and communities.

B. 2.2 – Global meetings and Collaborations

LVC organized three virtual meetings of the Collective this year to advance policy work and alliance building, as cited earlier. In addition to this, members of the Collective also took part in several thematic webinars and virtual dialogues. In June, members attended the discussion hosted by FIAN and allies on how Capitalism is re-inventing itself in a pandemic-stricken world. The second virtual exchange hosted by allies in December 2021 analyzed how big businesses and global finance use the ecological crisis to maximize profits. The goal of the conversation was to understand what is happening and collectively develop strategies to oppose the dispossession and destruction of territories in the name of false solutions to climate change and biodiversity loss. There was also a discussion on expanding the rights of people and communities and sustainable management practices as real solutions.

B. 2.3 – Global Solidarity Actions

The Global Convergence of Struggles for Land and Water (CGLTE-OA) organized from 20 November to 09 December 2021, the 3rd edition of the "West African Caravan on the Right to Land, Water and Peasant Agroecology: a common struggle!". More than 300 participants from 15 countries in Africa and elsewhere made the journey, and The social movements mobilized about 15,000 people along the route. The 16 activity stops along the way were punctuated by popular conferences, debates on themes, marches, film screenings and exchange meetings with representatives of grassroots communities, parliamentarians, elected officials, administrative and customary authorities.

B.3 FOR THE RIGHTS OF PEASANTS AND OTHER PEOPLE WORKING IN RURAL AREAS: HIGHLIGHTS OF 2021



Illustration: Sophie Holin/La Via Campesina

B. 3.1 – Policy Alliances and Advocacy Work

Implementing the UN Declaration on Rights of Peasants and Other People Working in Rural Areas (UNDROP) remains a top priority for La Via Campesina.

In 2021, efforts were made to highlight this aspect at all the institutional spaces globally and regionally. The Collective maintained its good relations with UN Special Rapporteurs, especially the Special Rapporteurs on the right to food (via Right to Food conversations, input to his office's reports), the Special Rapporteurs on the environment (participation to event). As cited earlier, under section B.2.1, La Via Campesina also provided General Comment on Land and Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, linking it to the UNDROP.

The Collective also maintained its communication with the Bolivian government, with the Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Plurinational State of Bolivia, Mr Freddy Mamani Machaca. Contact ensued with the Ambassador of Bolivia to the United Nations in Geneva, Ms Maira Mariela Macdonal Alvarez, and the UN Human Rights Council (UN HRC) to create special procedures for implementing UNDROP.

The Collective also proactively worked in mainstreaming UNDROP as a crucial tool during negotiations inside the Committee on World Food Security, UN Decade of Family Farming, COP 26 and other International Fora.

B. 3.2 – Global meetings and Collaborations

During the year, La Via Campesina and CETIM co-hosted three formation sessions (training sessions) on different aspects of the UNDROP for our members in Asia, Latin America, Africa, ArNA, Europe and Northern American regions. These sessions, via video-conferencing in June, was attended by over 70 participants. They dove deep into the history and adoption process of the Declaration, the 28 articles that come to define UNDROP. They also highlighted the ongoing case violations where members and other social movements use this instrument. The formation sessions are now meant to percolate further to the grassroots, with participants promising to replicate the same in national organizations.

B. 3.3 – Global Solidarity Actions

All the global days of Solidarity Action that La Via Campesina marks emphasize the implementation of UNDROP. During the year, the public communique of La Via Campesina highlighted different aspects and features of UNDROP as a central message.

B. 3.4 – Regional Initiatives

In South-East and East Asia, the Korean Peasant League and Korean Peasant Women's Association now play a central role in the country's UNDROP FORUM set up within the Presidential Committee on Agriculture, Fisheries, and Rural Policy. The forum in April 2021 will help implement and promote the UN Declaration on Rights of Peasants and Other People Working in Rural Areas (UNDROP) at the national level.

The South East and East Asia region, in December 2021, also hosted an International Dialogue to mark the third anniversary of UNDROP's adoption. Hosted by Serikat Petan Indonesia, this webinar was widely attended by different members of La Via Campesina.

In South Asia, the historic protest by India's farmers also became a space where the unions invoked UNDROP in its negotiations with the Indian government.

Translation of UNDROP into regional and local languages continued in 2021. The Southern and Eastern African region of La Via Campesina translated the

Declaration into nine local African languages. LVC also initiated more such translations in the South Asia region. In Europe, LVC members are calling for the inclusion of UNDROP in the EU Farm to Fork Strategy and the Common Agricultural Policy Action Plans. Switzerland now has a national alliance that is working for the implementation of UNDROP through public policies. In the Americas, the CLOC conducted a training session in 2021 (also cited in section B 1.4), and several members in the region also published media articles and op-eds citing UNDROP.

B. 3.5 – Publications and Key Documents in 2021

LVC launched a series of popular education and training materials on UNDROP in 2021. Working with FIAN and made possible with the support from Rosa Luxemburg Foundation, and thanks to the contributions from our friends at IITC, La Via Campesina released the introductory booklet in this series in December 2021.

The introductory booklet is crucial to reconnect the UNDROP to the small-scale food producers worldwide – the same people who inspired its content, who worked on its development and whose Rights to dignified lives and livelihoods continues to be violated.

This training toolkit will help us to effectively use the UNDROP in our struggles to assert and advance our collective and individual rights. The purpose of this toolkit is to create broader awareness, promote deeper understanding and enhance capacities (through training) of rural people's movements. This booklet is a foundational tool to ensure that the UNDROP will be respected, implemented and promoted at all levels, from local to international, from community customs to policymaking mechanisms. This booklet, available in EN, ES, FR, has attracted 7090 visits in 2021 (cumulative) and downloaded over 600 times.

B.4 FOR THE RIGHTS OF MIGRANT WORKERS: HIGHLIGHTS OF 2021



Illustration: Sophie Holin/La Via Campesina

B. 4.1 – Policy Alliances and Advocacy Work

The affected communities of migrant and refugee peoples, together with the movements, networks, and organizations involved in the Permanent Peoples Tribunal (PPT), have proposed a Global Pact of Solidarity for the Rights of Migrants and Refugee peoples. This year, La Via Campesina advanced to develop this Global Solidarity Pact that would recognize and defend the rights of migrants and refugee peoples.

It is a joint effort of numerous civil society organizations, workers' unions and social movements. In December, the members of the Collective attended and actively contributed during a civil society meeting that further strategized on this aspect.

B. 4.2 – Global meetings and Collaborations

In June, the International Working Collective had convened a virtual meeting of its members. Twelve leaders from Asia, Africa, Europe and the Americas attended this meeting, insisting on an urgent need to highlight the plight of migrant workers, now worsened by the pandemic.

Later on 18 December 2021, on the International Day of Migrants, La Via Campesina (LVC) and allied international organizations held a Virtual Forum on "The Rights of Migrants are Human Rights". The meeting brought together activists from different parts of the world currently working on demanding respect for the rights and lives of migrants and refugee people.

The event had the purpose of consolidating a Global Solidarity Pact as a popular response to the *Pact on Migration and Asylum*, recently presented by the European Union and to the UN Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration. Social movements have opposed this pact for criminalizing the free transit of people and representing a step backwards concerning human rights and the protection of migrants and their families. It contradicts the previous international conventions approved by the United Nations and other institutions such as the International Labor Organization (ILO). Peasants and rural workers supported this denunciation from regions such as Africa, the Arab and North Africa, the Americas, Asia and Europe, whose territorial reality is changing according to war, human trafficking, and land grabbing, among other harsh conditions.

B. 4.3 – Regional Initiatives

La Via Campesina continued to highlight the violations and exploitation faced by migrant farmworkers in Europe. In a position paper published by the European Coordination Via Campesina (ECVC) in 2021,

the movement called for the inclusion of social conditionality in the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) and called upon the EU to stop supporting farms that violated the rights of migrant workers.

In February 2021, Nearly 400 farmworkers were rendered homeless after a fire gutted a settlement in Níjar (Almería). SOC-SAT, a trade union and La Via Campesina member organization, highlighted this incident and called for immediate support and rehabilitation of affected families.

A month later, La Via Campesina also extended its full support and solidarity to the agricultural workers, organized under Fédération Nationale du Secteur Agricole (FNSEA) in Morocco, who face exploitation and ill-treatment while working at agricultural farms, packaging stations as well as in the food processing industries and who are struggling for a decent life and social justice.

B.5 FOR PUBLIC POLICIES IN DEFENCE OF AGROECOLOGY, PEASANT AGRICULTURE: HIGHLIGHTS OF 2021



IMAGE: La Via Campesina

B. 5.1 – Policy, Alliances and Advocacy Work

This Collective is central to La Via Campesina's engagement at the Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO), the Committee on World Food Security (CFS), the Civil Society and Indigenous Peoples' Mechanism

(CSM), the UN Decade of Family Farming (UNDF) and scores of other national and regional spaces of these institutions.

In the pandemic context, the work of this Collective is immensely challenging as most of these institutional processes are now moving online, during time slots that are euro-centric, sometimes without interpretation – and most times with draft of the policy documents often only available in English. This makes meaningful peasant participation of delegations from Asia, Africa, and Latin America immensely challenging and often leads to the exclusion by default.

Despite these difficulties, the Collective, in the year 2021, engaged in policy advocacy tasks in the following spaces:

- LVC delegates followed the final phase of the negotiations on the Voluntary Guidelines on Food Systems and nutrition that Member States endorsed at the 47th Plenary Session of the CFS held in February 2021.

- Negotiations took place in 2021 concerning CFS Policy recommendations on agroecological and other innovative approaches. (See B. 1. 1)
- LVC delegates took part in the plenaries #47, #48, #49 of the Committee on World Food Security (CFS), held in February, June, and October.
- In September, La Via Campesina took on the second vice-chair position in the International Steering Committee (ISC) of the UN Decade of Family Farming (UNDF). In addition to this, throughout the year, nominated delegates on behalf of La Via Campesina spoke at different forums, such as the High-Level Special Event by CFS in February, a panel on scaling up sustainable agri-food systems (May), Global Conference on “Family Farming at the core of Sustainable Food Systems” (November) and a series of preparatory meetings of the Steering Committee of the UN Decade (UNDF).
- The role of LVC as the second vice-chair is to monitor the implementation of the Global Action Plan of the UNDF by making the bridge between the ISC and farmers’ organizations. An agreement was signed with the FAO in December 2021 to organize a consultation process among member organizations of LVC on the progress made during the first biennium towards the implementation of the UNDF, as well as to facilitate inclusive participation of regional and global family farmers’ organizations at the upcoming UNDF ISC meeting.
- The Collective also pushed for the inclusion and implementation of the UNDROP during the framing of public policies addressed to peasants and rural workers.
- In 2021, LVC also renewed its nominations to the CSM’s Coordination Committee.

B. 5.2 – Global meetings and Collaborations

The Public Policies Collective is also the main anchor driving La Via Campesina’s crucial alliance with the International Planning Committee for Food Sovereignty (IPC). Two leaders of the movement are also part of the Facilitation Committee of the IPC.

Beyond the regular activities in the working groups and the Facilitation Committee, the IPC held a Virtual General Meeting in 4 sessions of 3 hours each (21st and 27th of April and 11th and 18th of May). Particular importance has been given to the relation between the IPC and the FAO at the regional level, the UN Decade of Family Farming, IPC position and action towards the UNFSS (See B. 5.3 for more) and the ongoing process towards the Nyéléni Global Gathering for Food Sovereignty (See E.5 for more).

The Public policies collective also held a study session on the UN Food Systems Summit that provided a deep analysis of the processes that led to the Summit’s exclusionary character. It was also an opportunity to deepen the LVC’s position about the Summit among its members and allies. Nearly 100 participants attended this dialogue.

B. 5.3 – Global Solidarity Actions

The Public Policy Collective and the Peasants Rights Collective played a central role in amplifying La Via Campesina’s global mobilization against the UN Food Systems Summit (UNFSS) in 2021.

As early as March 2020, social movements and civil society organizations had alerted the world about the exclusionary character of the UN Food System Summit. 2021 was the culmination of this pushback from hundreds of civil society organizations. La Via Campesina, the IPC, and the CSM network joined the mass denunciation.

Among the highly visible online campaigns of 2021 were #NotInOurNames and the movements to build #FoodSystems4People. The Public policy collective was instrumental in connecting the mobilizations against the Summit to the overarching theme of 25 years of Food Sovereignty. Several campaign videos, social media banners, solidarity actions, media op-eds were published during the year and widely shared within the movement to highlight the Corporate Capture that defined the UNFSS. (See Annex)

Between 25-28 July 2021, some 9,000 people gathered for a primarily virtual counter-mobilization to oppose the United Nations Food Systems (UNFSS) Pre-Summit. The “People’s counter-mobilization to transform corporate food systems” kicked off with an 8-hour long global virtual rally. The alternative forum was hailed as a huge success. It drew together many attendees and catalyzed and amplified a counter-narrative to the official proceedings.

With critical articles and pieces published in major media outlets such as the BBC, Al Jazeera and Italian state TV Rai, and several thousands of #FoodSystems4People posts on social media seen by potentially 10 million users, the counter-mobilization succeeded in reaching a broad public with its vision for genuine transformation of unsustainable food systems. In South Asia, South East Asia, Africa, Europe and the Americas, members of La Via Campesina also participated in several forums hosted by allies and other civil society members to express the movement’s position about the Summit.

B.6 FOR CLIMATE JUSTICE: HIGHLIGHTS OF 2021



IMAGE: La Via Campesina

B. 6.1 – Policy Alliances and Advocacy Work

For COP26 itself, Land Workers Alliance, the member organization of La Via Campesina in Europe, took a leading role in the International Committee of the COP26 Coalition on behalf of the movement.

As a result, La Via Campesina was present at the International Opening Plenary of the COP26 People's Summit or 'Digital Rally for Climate Justice. LVC intervened for the first time in the Official Opening Plenary of COP26 and insisted on the need for inclusive public policies that dignify life in the countryside and recognize the role that rural communities play in taking forward climate solutions. It was not easy, as such a speech had to be constructed in dialogue with sectors close to agribusiness. Still, the result was greater recognition and receptiveness to the peasant demands brought to the UN by La Via Campesina.

B. 6.2 – Global meetings and Collaborations

The First Virtual Meeting of the International Collective in 2021 was held in June 2021. Its objectives included (i) to contribute to the political-technical training of the members of Climate Justice and Public Policy Working Collectives, (ii) to hear from and accompany our UK member organization (LWA) in its climate advocacy process in the context of COP26 (Glasgow, Scotland), and (iii) to discuss general strategies and tactics for LVC with the UNFCCC.

The meeting allowed participating members to delve into the details of "Nature-Based Solutions", which corporations are now being touted to solve the

world's crises. The study session, made possible by GRAIN, ETC, elaborated more on why "nature-based solutions" is a dangerous distraction. Often echoed by corporations and conservation actors, this marketing concept is dressed up with unproven and flawed data.

The Second Virtual Meeting of the Collective, held in October, was organized to facilitate information between LWA and self-convened delegates of LVC in Canada, Europe, and Puerto Rico. They travelled on their own to accompany the popular presence in Scotland during COP26.

B. 6.3 – Regional Initiatives

In November, the Southern and Eastern African members of La Via Campesina released a digital resource kit on how peasant agroecology achieves climate justice. These resources, now available on www.peasantsforclimatejustice.org, bring together a wide variety of peasant voices and experiences - from protecting peasant seeds to running and managing peasant cooperatives, highlighting the central role of women in the realization of food sovereignty and the contributions by peasant youth in spreading agroecological practices. It gathers field experiences from Zimbabwe, Uganda, Tanzania and Mozambique.

B. 6.4 – Publications and Key Documents in 2021

Chasing carbon unicorns: The Deception Of Carbon Markets and "Net Zero" - published by Friends of the Earth International in 2021, took inputs from La Via Campesina in preparing a synthesis that exposed the "Net-zero" pledges as a strategic step to maintain the status quo. And the status quo will undoubtedly worsen the climate catastrophe. "Net-zero" is a smokescreen, a conveniently invented concept that is dangerous and problematic because of how effectively it hides inaction. This publication unpacks the net-zero strategies. Fake zero methods rely on offsets rather than real emission reductions. Real zero strategies require emissions to go to zero or as close to zero as possible.

Third Edition of *Hoodwinked in the Hothouse: Resist False Solutions to Climate Change* also came out in April 2021, with contributions from La Via Campesina. The newly updated and expanded "Hoodwinked" educational toolbox for activists, organizers, impacted communities, and elected officials is easy to read and stunningly illustrated.

B.7 FOR LOCAL PEASANT MARKETS AND AGAINST WTO AND FREE TRADE AGREEMENTS: HIGHLIGHTS OF 2021



IMAGE: La Via Campesina

B. 7.1 – Policy, Alliances and Advocacy Work

This year, the working Collective consolidated the struggles against Free Trade Agreements and further mobilized members and allies to the scheduled (now cancelled) WTO Ministerial Meeting in November 2021. It worked with allies such as World Forum for Fisher Peoples, Focus on the Global South (FoGS), and Migrant Forum in Asia to build a strategic response to the WTO ministerial scheduled to take place in November in Geneva cancelled due to pandemic concerns.

B. 7.2 – Global meetings and Collaborations

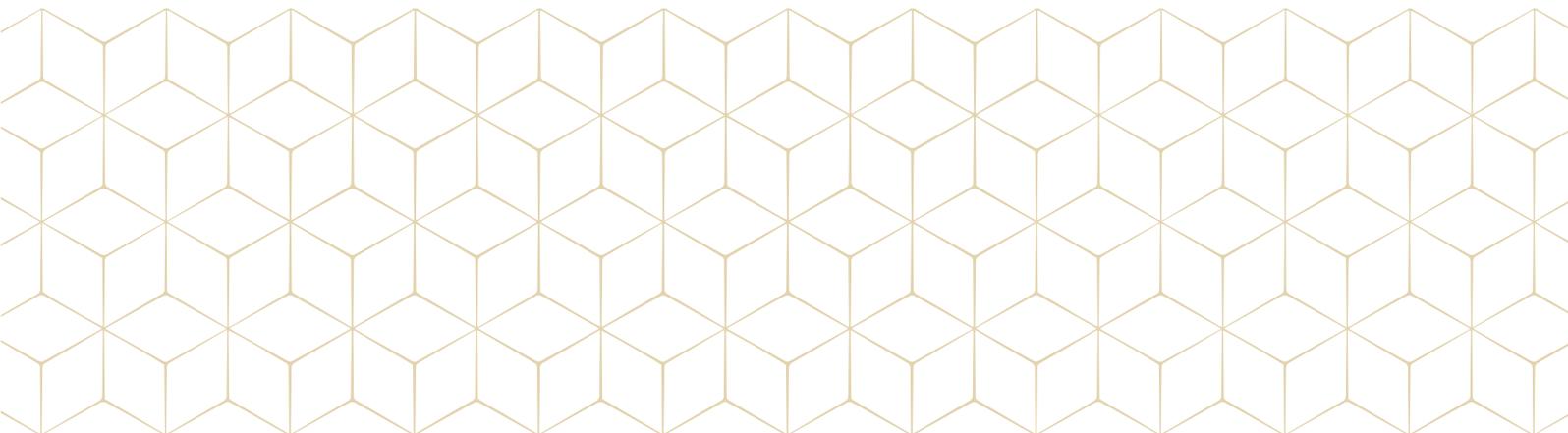
Together with FoGS, on 29 November 2021, La Via Campesina co-organized an online rally with our allies from grassroots organizations in our struggles against the WTO to highlight our systemic alternatives: Food Sovereignty.

The meeting was also a space for social movements to understand what is at stake at the WTO Ministerial Conference MC12 for peasants and small-scale food producers. As a result, LVC also published a Statement titled “Prosperity for a few, Poverty for the lot”.

The statement highlighted the discussions that are evolving around agriculture in the run-up to MC 12, particularly on the question of public stock-holding. The meeting participants expressed concerns that attempts are underway to issue a watered-down version of the “Bali Peace Clause” – an interim arrangement agreed upon while a permanent solution came into force.

B. 7.3 – Global Solidarity Actions

10 September is marked as the International Day of Solidarity Action against WTO and Free Trade Agreements by La Via Campesina, to commemorate the sacrifice of Korean farmer Lee Kyung Hae, who stabbed himself to death outside the venue of the WTO Ministerial at Cancun Mexico, 2003. His act was a desperate and angry reaction to WTO-led free trade deals that led to a total marginalization of small-scale food producers in his country and the world. This year, La Via Campesina issued a public communique titled “Freedom from Hunger, Poverty, Debt and Death! Freedom from Free Trade Agreements!” that captured the continued push by WTO and other transnational governance institutions to expand global free trade. In Korea, Indonesia and Kenya, members of LVC also carried out demonstrations against destructive policies on agriculture.



C

WOMEN ARTICULATION: HIGHLIGHTS OF 2021



IMAGE: KRRS

The work of the Articulation is not defined by a year or an activity. Still, it is a permanent axis present in all actions, events and positions put forth by La Via Campesina.

In 2021 too, despite the pandemic laying multiple and unique challenges to the participation of peasant women in public spaces and movement building, the Women's Articulation did exemplary work in advancing popular peasant feminism within the movement. On 08 March, the International Day to Defend the Rights of Women, La Via Campesina joined numerous other movements and worker's unions. During the solidarity actions held in March 2021, the central message was that the world needs the *Vaccine of Feminism and Solidarity to eliminate this Virus of Patriarchy and Capitalism*. This message was lapped up by several member organizations of La Via Campesina. With colourful marches, sit-ins, food donations, forums, meetings, and even blood donations, they showed the importance of feminism in the struggle.

2021 also marked some crucial contributions to the pedagogical advancement of popular peasant feminism. The Women Articulation was instrumental

in producing a historical account of "The Path of Peasant and Popular Feminism in La Via Campesina". This booklet was further translated into Portuguese, Spanish, English, French, Japanese, Thai, Wolof, Bambara, Afrikaans, Arabic by national members of La Via Campesina.

Later, in November 2021, this publication inspired an illustrated booklet with support from the FemGara-bat Feminist Collective of the Basque Country. Twenty-eight pages of stunning illustrations reveal the role of women in the global fight for Food Sovereignty and their centrality in promoting Peasant and Popular Feminism in their territories and organizations. It also offers several testimonies of peasant leaders from continents in implementing the Global Campaign to End Violence Against Women promoted by LVC since 2008.

The work to amplify the voices of Peasant women also found its foot in a strategic alliance that the women articulation built-in 2021. Capire (www.capiremov.org) is a communication tool created in 2021 in a collaboration between World March of Women, Friends of the Earth International and

La Via Campesina. It is a platform to echo the voices of women in the movement, make visible the struggles and the processes of the organization in the territories, strengthen local and international referents of popular, anti-capitalist and anti-racist feminism. Several interviews, op-eds and feature stories of peasant leaders were published on Capire in 2021.

The Articulation was also invited to participate in the Berta Cáceres Training School, to share visions and practices, of elaboration and

political synthesis about our resistances, to strengthen the organization of popular feminism, articulated with the construction of a project of transformation based on a feminist economy.

On 25 November, the Women Articulation also held a Virtual Solidarity Action - Basta de Violencia (*Enough, Stop the Violence!*).

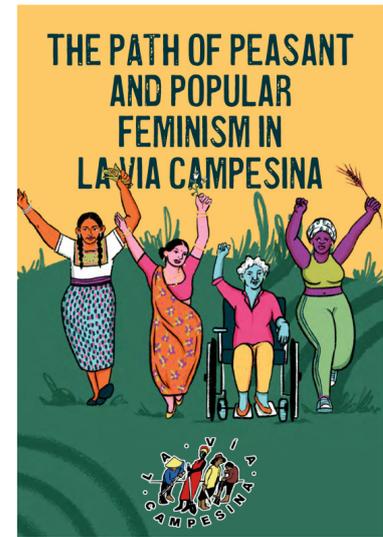


IMAGE: La Via Campesina

D YOUTH ARTICULATION: HIGHLIGHTS OF 2021



IMAGE: David Meek/Amritabhoomi

Youth Articulation is also a permanent pillar in La Via Campesina. The inclusion and participation of youth is a crucial pre-condition in all the processes and actions of the global movement.

The year 2021 marked some decentralized mobilizations and consolidation of youth.

In Indonesia, the young people agreed to organize Indonesia's Peasant Youth and Student Movements (Gema Petani). They came together to organize their first conference in Jambi – which combined virtual and face-to-face meetings.

In Mali, the young people of our member La Coordination Nationale des Organisations Paysannes (CNOP) have been pushing for the promotion of family farming within the framework of food sovereignty to ensure the sustainable development of agriculture in the Republic of Mali.

In Brazil, members of MST are staying in the countryside to contribute to the country's food sovereignty under the banner of agroecology and agrarian reform.

They did the mobilization amid economic, political and health crises in the country.

ECVC's youth articulation continued their public policies work within the EU and expressed concerns that the reformed Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) will continue to neglect the real needs of young farmers, and in particular small, agroecological farmers.

In South Asia, members of the Youth Articulation also published several media articles and op-eds in national and regional outlets that captured the rich history of the past 25 years of food sovereignty struggles.

Youth in 'Formation'

As cited under section B.3.2, LVC peasant youth from Asia, Africa, Europe and the Americas participated in the UNDROP virtual training, organized by LVC with Centre Europe-Tiers Monde (CETIM). The methodology followed a training-for-trainers format, which will allow the peasant youth to hold decentralized workshops at national and local levels of the movements.

The young peasants of La Via Campesina organized a webinar with the agroecology collective (see B. 1.2), which put together experiences on local agroecology training from a variety of territories from Africa, America, Asia and Europe.

Youth Articulation, in collaboration with the Women's Articulation, held a series of internal workshops, dialogues and discussions during the year to explore the questions of gender diversity that exist in rural territories and to provide a non-binary perspective to how the movement addresses the questions around life, land and labour.

Youth Articulation's involvement in International Processes & Mobilization

The youth continued to be active in delivering messages at the international level. The Youth Articulation was involved throughout the year to commemorate 25 Years of food sovereignty and the mobilization to boycott the UN Food System Summit with colourful and creative actions. *(As cited under B. 5.3)*

LVC youth has also been very active in the global governance processes, especially during the CFS 47 plenary sessions held virtually between 8-11 February 2021. The plenary is a worldwide platform where food security and nutrition stakeholders worldwide agree on policy guidance, review global progress, network, and share experiences.

La Via Campesina Youth Articulation also now coordinates the Youth constituency of the Civil Society and Indigenous Peoples' Mechanism (CSM).

The young people of La Via Campesina also participated in the Young Farmers' Round table held during the 04th and 05th of October at the World Food Forum. The forum was organized by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the family farmers organizations implementing the United Nations Decade of Family Farming (UNFFF 2019-2028). The delegation of LVC's youth articulation representing South Asia, ArNa and Europe, who spoke at the forum, insisted on agrarian reform as a crucial pre-condition to achieve food sovereignty.

During the year, the Youth Articulation also released a documentary feature that narrated the life and struggles of peasant youth in Senegal and the conditions that forced them to migrate into cities. In May, the Caribbean region of La Via Campesina released "Seeds of Freedom", which tracks the journey of peasant youth in promoting agroecological practices and their involvement in rural struggles.



IMAGE: La Via Campesina

E OTHER GLOBAL PROCESSES: HIGHLIGHTS OF 2021



IMAGE: La Via Campesina

E.1 Responding to criminalisation of our struggles and against repression



IMAGE: La Via Campesina

Besides giving concrete international solidarity in several cases, La Via Campesina has also put more effort into collaboration with other social movements to increase our capacity to respond to repression.

The current pandemic context and the rise of authoritarian governments have limited spaces for mobilization and democratic participation and increased repression against our struggles in many countries.

With our allies, we work to increase the visibility of the seriousness of the repression against popular movements and organizations in many countries; we consolidate organizational capacities to reply in case of an emergency. We are strengthening our capacity for legal support by building and maintaining a lawyer's network and conducting a global political analysis of the systemic causes of violations of the rights of rural people. We have created a space with communicators of different movements to plan and coordinate communication actions and generate more impact through our messaging. As a result, in the case of Colombia, we were able to improve our outreach and impact significantly.

This year we have organized activities with our allies to support our member UAWC in Palestine, suffering from attacks on Gaza, supporting their demand for a United Nations fact-finding mission on human rights violations. We kept working with our organizations in Colombia around the peace process and the threats

against members of Fensuagro. On the repression against peasant leaders in Colombia, one of the grassroots leaders spoke at the UN Human Rights Council.

We collaborated with the International Committee in Solidarity with Honduras, and we supported a statement of social movements to condemn the Burmese military coup. We supported our organizations

in Haiti in their demand that Haitian people can decide on their future and elect a popular transitional government and a Constituent democratically. We demanded from the new authorities in Afghanistan to respect, protect, and fulfil the human rights of peasants and other people working in rural areas.

E.2 Colombia Peace Processes



IMAGE: La Via Campesina

Following up on La Via Campesina’s long-standing commitment to serving as ‘guarantor’ to the 2016 Colombian Peace Agreement, specifically to the effective implementation of Integral Rural Reform (RRI) across rural Colombia. Early in the year, and in coordination with close allies, the La Via Campesina delegate addressed (virtually) the Plenary Assembly of the 46th Session of the United Nations Human Rights Council in March of 2021.

Soon after, in May, La Via Campesina issued a strong message of support and solidarity with the National Strike in Colombia organized by students, workers and rural social movements nationwide who, among other things, demanded the effective implementation of the 2016 Peace Agreement.

LVC also signed a joint statement with movements worldwide demanding respect for the right to peaceful protest. In June of 2021, the European Coordination of LVC (ECVC) issued a public statement to suspend the European Union’s Free Trade Agreement (FTA) with Colombia.

The working group released La Via Campesina’s bi-annual “Peace Bulletin” on the implementation of the Peace Agreement in both June (Bulletin #4) and December (Bulletin #5). In addition to these, LVC activated a specific Colombia Peace Process section on its website with several news pieces and analyses throughout the year.

E.3 Building the Movement in ArNa region & Solidarity for Palestina



IMAGE: La Via Campesina

The Arab and North African Region (ArNa) Process of La Via Campesina (LVC) is ongoing to consolidate peasant internationalism throughout the Arabic-speaking world. Beginning with the accession to LVC of the Union of Agricultural Work Committees (UAWC) of Palestine at the 6th International Conference, the movement went on to add the Million Rural Women of Tunisia and the National Federation of Agricultural Unions of Morocco at the 7th International Conference in 2017. Coordinated by UAWC, these organizations are now contributing to the ArNa Process and are in open dialogue with candidate organizations in Algeria, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Mauritania and Sudan.

In May of 2021, La Via Campesina found itself in the urgent need to denounce another Israeli assault on the people, peasants and fisherfolk of Palestine. After Israeli bombs killed hundreds of civilians across war-torn Gaza, LVC responded by demanding an immediate UN investigation and reiterating its call for friends and allies to join the global Boycott, Divest and Sanction (BDS) Campaign organized by Palestinian civil society, including UAWC. By the end of October, La Via Campesina was issuing a firm rebuke and call for rectification in response to the designation by Israeli Occupation Authorities of Palestinian Civil Society as “terrorists”. The UN Human Rights Council also reacted, affirming that such decisions must not be used to constrain legitimate human rights and humanitarian work. Even the US State Department – a close ally of the Israeli government – has expressed “concerns” over the decision. Israel’s Public Security Minister now claims the decision was not discussed within Israel’s Security Cabinet. At the same time, The Times of Israel recognized in writing that “the Defense Ministry provided no concrete evidence” to back its accusation when making the decision public.

Apart from the urgent responses which are always needed, La Via Campesina integrated UAWC and Palestine into its ‘25 Years of Food Sovereignty’ with an 05 October webinar organized alongside Friends of the Earth International, FIAN and PENTAGON titled, “*Palestine: The Struggle for Food Sovereignty Under Occupation*”. Attended by over 100 participants, the webinar was an essential opportunity for UAWC to share their struggle with an international audience. In addition to all of the above, La Via Campesina and close partners also launched an internal articulation process titled the “Solidarious Communication Strategy for a Food Sovereign Palestine”. It aims to educate more and more people, and policy-makers about the incredible work carried out by our member organization in occupied Palestine. An international communication strategy is now being built by close allies, in dialogue with UAWC, for implementation in 2022 and beyond.

E.4 Solidarity Actions for India’s Peasant Mobilisation



Among the most striking and inspiring mobilizations of 2021 was the one led by the Indian peasant movements against three controversial laws that threatened to accelerate the privatization of peasant markets and introduce pro-corporate reforms in Indian agriculture. Indian movements’ pushback against these laws, brought in without consultation during the pandemic, started as early as July of 2020 but caught the world’s attention since the early part of 2021. At the end of 2020, several members of La Via Campesina had sent solidarity statements to their counterparts and remained alert to the developments in the country.

In January 2021, members of La Via Campesina worldwide lit candles of solidarity and shared them with the hashtag #ShineOnIndiasFarmers. The Indian coalition – Samyukt Kisan Morcha (SKM), comprises hundreds of peasant organizations, including Bharatiya Kisan Union and Karnataka Rajya Raitha Sangha and Tamizhaga Vivasayigal Sangham – also invoked India’s commitment to the UNDROP while negotiating for the withdrawal of the laws.

The peasant demonstration, which lasted for a year, is an inspiring example of what organized resistance of the working class can achieve. In the end, bowing to the resilience of peasant farmers, the Indian government withdrew the three laws and are considering a permanent redressal mechanism to guarantee support price for farm produce legally. La Via Campesina expressed its admiration for the Indian social movements by organizing rallies and virtual actions under the hashtag #SaluteToIndiasFarmers. All through 2020 and 2021, LVC published several articles that informed the world about the progress and perseverance of the protestors.

E.5 Nyeleni

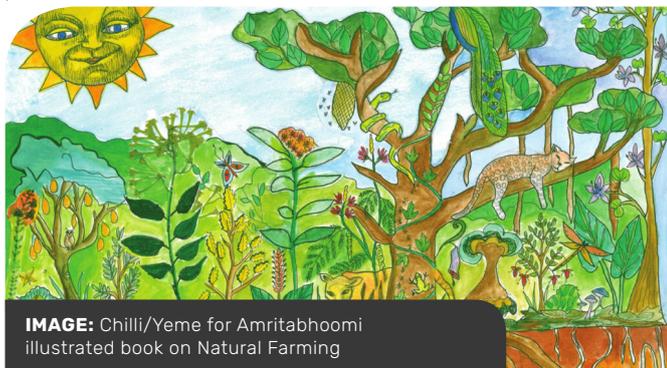


IMAGE: Chilli/Yeme for Amritabhoomi illustrated book on Natural Farming

Towards Nyeleni III

The idea of organizing a solid moment of global reflection around food sovereignty had emerged during the last face-to-face meeting of the IPC Facilitation Committee held near Rome in December 2019. The IPC virtual general meeting held in April-May 2021 confirmed this. In light of the many challenges linked to the Covid crisis, it became the occasion to adopt a new strategy that goes far beyond the limits of food and agricultural institutions and the struggle for Food Sovereignty and Agroecology themselves. With this understanding, the IPC decided to launch an open, inclusive, representative and grassroots convergence process (Nyeleni III) with other movements, including environmental and social justice struggles.

This convergence aims to bring forward Food Sovereignty and a renewed vision of societies based on food and people's sovereignty and pathways for transformative change while pushing back global capital.

The Nyeleni Newsletter: 25 Years of Food Sovereignty

Ten years since its launch, the Nyeleni Newsletter in 2021 also became a tool to amplify the 25 years of global struggles to make food sovereignty a reality. The four editions of the year focused on different dimensions of this collective struggle. The March edition focused on the pandemic's impact on migrant farmworkers. The second edition, coordinated by La Via Campesina, Real World Radio and Friends of the Earth International, and launched in June, explored people's culture and popular education in communicating food sovereignty. The September edition, released in the UN Food Systems Summit backdrop, highlighted how corporations use their considerable resources to co-opt the conceptualization and governance of food systems through financing, trade, investment, and multi-stakeholder platforms. The last edition of the year, released in December, focused on the life and struggles of pastoralist communities worldwide. The four editions, available in English, Spanish and French, were cumulatively downloaded 8886 times in 2021.

E.6 Emergency Relief Support



IMAGE: La Via Campesina

La Via Campesina has set up an emergency response mechanism within the movement that allows our members to engage in relief and rehabilitation efforts in the event of a severe calamity or human-inflicted misery.

Gaza, June 2021

In June 2021, a spate of bombings by Israeli forces in Gaza had killed over 260 people, including 60 children and 40 women and forcibly displaced more than 120,000 people from their homes. Missiles pounded the region for 11 consecutive days inflicting catastrophic damages to the lives and livelihood of the people of the area. Gaza's Ministry of Agriculture estimated around \$27 million in damages, including greenhouses, agricultural lands and poultry farms. La Via Campesina extended relief support to affected peasant and fisherfolk families in the region to restore their water wells, greenhouses, animal barns and fishing boats.

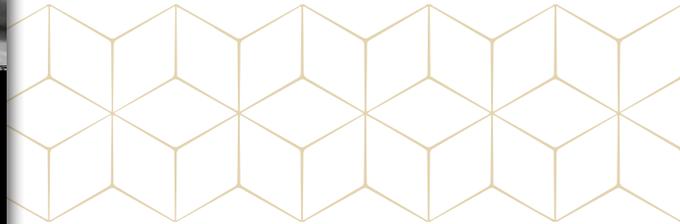
Haiti earthquake, August 2021

Notwithstanding the political turmoil, which worsened with the assassination of its President Jovenel Moïse in July, a devastating 7.2 magnitude earthquake that struck in August killed more than 2200 people, injured more than 12,000 people and rendered half a million people without homes. Several members linked to the three peasant organizations of LVC in Haiti also lost lives and livelihoods. La Via Campesina extended support to our member organizations to support their immediate relief measures in communities.



Nepal Floods, October 2021

Three days of incessant rains had devastated eastern Nepal districts, killing scores and submerging paddy fields, sweeping away bridges, roads and homes. La Via Campesina extended relief support to the affected peasant families through our member organization, The All Nepal Peasants Federation.



E.7 Engagement with allies



Friends of LVC autonomously held scores of events at FIAN, Grain, ETC Group, FoEI, WAMIP, Peoples Assembly, Urgenci, Focus on the Global South, FIMARC, World March of Women, International People’s Assembly and more.

These joint and autonomous events explored topics of Digitalisation, False Solutions

The year 2021 also marked itself for some successful collaboration with allies among other social movements and global civil society actors. The central message of ‘25 years of Food Sovereignty Struggles’ also found resonance among members of the IPC and the members of the CSM during the year.

The International Planning Committee on Food Sovereignty, IPC, remains the pivotal space that allows La Via Campesina to link up with movements of indigenous peoples, pastoralists, fisherfolks, and other rural workers’ alliances.

The counter-mobilization that challenged the UN Food Systems Summit was a point of convergence.

So was the occasion to celebrate food sovereignty struggles on 16 October while marking the global day of solidarity action for food sovereignty.

to Climate Crises, Agrarian Reform struggles, successful examples of Agroecological advances, and a host of other aspects.

With support from the Communication team, the Women’s Articulation also created a space for collaboration with feminist multimedia portal Capire (www.capiremov.org). Capire is a joint initiative with the World March of Women and Friends of the Earth International to echo women’s voices in the movement and make the organization’s struggles and processes in the territories visible.



F MOVEMENT STRENGTHENING: HIGHLIGHTS OF 2021



IMAGE: La Via Campesina

F.1 Formation



IMAGE: La Via Campesina

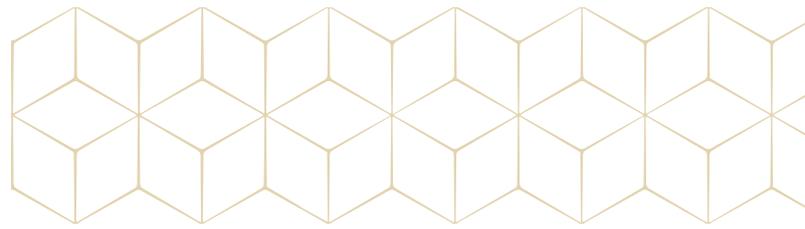
The Formation, which is a set of pedagogical processes that La Via Campesina follows to provide political and technical perspectives on food sovereignty and agrarian reform, is central to the efforts to forge a collective consciousness at all levels of the global movement. La Via Campesina recognizes Formation as a comprehensive, systematic, broad, continuous and permanent process at every step of the organization. If the people of the countryside have the task of producing healthy food, then the Global Movement at the international level has the most beautiful, free

and emancipatory work of gathering this diverse knowledge and experiences and disseminating it among the network to enable the construction of transformations and sovereign, free societies.

In 2021, this vision found a voice in a 30-minute documentary feature titled “A Movement in Formation” that stitches together a series of pedagogical practices followed by different members of La Via Campesina for its grassroots communities, especially the youth and the women.

As already cited under Section B, in 2021, the Formation Collective also facilitated several global technical training sessions. These covered a wide range of topics, including Digitalisation of Agriculture, UN Food Systems Summit, Nature-Based Solutions, History, Adoption and Implementation of UNDROP and Agrarian Reform for Food Sovereignty. All these sessions, well attended by the leadership and members of Youth and Women Articulation, were meant to deepen the political analysis on these topics linked to the struggles for Food Sovereignty.

The movement has also created at least six functional regional training collectives at the regional level, providing workshops and training on agricultural entrepreneurship, seed laws, agroecological practices, and more.



F.2 Communication



IMAGE: La Via Campesina

The pandemic has accelerated the adoption of digital tools worldwide, and since 2020, the mode of conversations and interactions have been growingly moved online. It has also exacerbated the existing digital inequity and fatigue further. It limited the meaningful participation of delegates from Asia, Africa, and the Americas to engage with global processes and campaigns.

Yet, 2021 – despite all these challenges – also remain a year of striking mobilizations and convergence of global struggles. La Via Campesina’s communication efforts during the year were anchored around the central message of 25 years of Food Sovereignty Struggles and all the International Solidarity Days of Action that the global movement commemorated, made it a point to keep this central message intact. More than 80 articles on the website, published during the year in three languages, highlighted the central message of #NoFutureWithoutFoodSovereignty. We developed several communication materials during the year for reinforcing the collective struggle for Food Sovereignty.

- A series of illustrated postcards defining the seven pillars of Food Sovereignty, inspired by the 1996 World Food Summit Declaration, was released this year.
- All the regions of La Via Campesina produced short videos that gave testimonials of the struggles in Asia, Africa, the Americas and Europe. LVC published these videos on the official social media channels and through regional handles under the tag of “Voices for Food Sovereignty.”

- LVC also produced a series of illustrated posters, translated, disseminated, and used by members while marking the International Solidarity Action Days, especially on 17 April and 16 October.
- As part of the counter-mobilizations against the UN Food Systems Summit, between June and September 2021, several short explainer videos illustrated posters and media op-eds were produced in multiple by LVC and allies – all of which also evoked the struggles for food sovereignty. Reputed mainstream and progressive news outlets carried op-eds from LVC and ran the statement that the movement released on 16 October. A social media solidarity action against the UN Food Systems Summit #NotInMyName and collaboration with the CSM (Civil Society and Indigenous Peoples’ Mechanism) - #FoodSystems-4People - was well-received amplified by members of LVC as well as the CSM.

Apart from this, La Via Campesina also carried out solidarity actions during the year. In January, several members of La Via Campesina sent messages of solidarity to India’s protesting farmers under the hashtag #ShineOnIndiasFarmers. At the end of the year, when the Indian movements finally forced their national government to take back the three controversial laws that threatened to corporatize Indian agriculture, several members of La Via Campesina also expressed their admiration and solidarity with the hashtag #SaluteToIndiasFarmers.

During the year, La Via Campesina also carried out joint solidarity actions to express support for the Palestinian Civil Society under unprecedented attack. La Via Campesina also continued with its email dispatches that monitored the progress of Peace Agreements in Colombia and issued quarterly newsletters that captured the peasant news worldwide.

In 2021, La Via Campesina also rolled out a series of collaborations with the progressive news outlet Capire and ran scores of featured articles that amplified the peasant feminist struggles for

food sovereignty. Nearly 45 English, Spanish and French articles were published during this year.

Nyeleni Newsletters, another space for collaboration with the broader food sovereignty movement, also issued four special-edition newsletters that celebrated the 25 years of collective struggles. The four editions, available in English, Spanish and French, were cumulatively downloaded 8886 times in 2021.

To strengthen the priority on political, ideological and technical Formation, La Via Campesina developed various publications to enhance understanding and prepare the cadres for the movement's struggles with food sovereignty.

The movement is also developing short audio-visual materials such as animation films. Two animation films, one on food sovereignty and the other on UNDROP, were commissioned in 2021 and will be launched in 2022.

The following are the publications launched during the year:

- "The Path of Peasant & Popular Feminism" – a 28-page graphic book tracing and illustrating the role of women in the global fight for Food Sovereignty
- UNDROP Introductory Booklet, the first in a five-part toolkit of popular education materials² to create broader awareness, promote deeper understanding and enhance capacities (through training) of rural people's movements as Via Campesina pushes for UNDROP implementation. This booklet, available in EN, ES, FR, has attracted 7090 visits in 2021 (cumulative).
- "La Via Campesina: Construction of shared knowledge on Peasant Seeds" – the first module under the five-part monthly series on "Food Sovereignty born of Peasant Seeds", which aims to deepen the study of the global struggle for peasant seeds within the context of Food Sovereignty.

During the year, La Via Campesina (in all three languages) recorded 920,399 visits to the website from a cumulative set of 293,592 unique visits. On Social media, La Via Campesina has followed a policy of only generating organic followers on the strength of the contents being posted. The global movement avoids engaging in paid promotions on social media and hence also faces the challenge of working doubly hard to make the posts visible to the followers.

On Twitter, La Via Campesina's handles in EN, ES & FR languages cumulatively added 4,432 new followers reached 1.6 million potential viewers. The three profiles cumulatively saw 286,468 visits in the year. Of these, other Twitter handles mentioned either of the three handles at least 4,715 times in 2021, with engagements peaking in July (during UNFSS counter mobilizations).

La Via Campesina also made added efforts to popularise its new Instagram channel, especially in the last quarter of 2021, reaching 15,700 Instagram users with its posts in the previous quarter, generating 9,164 interactions (likes, shares, comments). Fifty-five images and 17 videos posted on the handle in the last quarter saw 3211 Instagram accounts engaging with it. 68% of these users identified as women, and 50% of them fall between the age of 25-34 years, thus allowing the movement to reach a younger youth with the messages of food sovereignty.

On Facebook, La Via Campesina recorded 44,528 likes on its official page and 49,750 followers. The posts on the official Facebook page reached 1,427,927 users Facebook, generating more than 2.5 million views on different users' timelines. More than 55% of those contacted were women in the age group of 25-44. In July (UNFSS counter mobilizations) and during October (during the 25 years of FS celebrations), the videos generated nearly 2000 engaged viewers on Facebook. More than 2,300 followers on Facebook engaged more than 7000 times with the different videos and broadcasts on Facebook throughout the year.



F.5 IOS Transition



IMAGE: La Via Campesina

2021 also marked the formal 'rotation' of La Via Campesina's International Secretariat from Harare, Zimbabwe (2013-2021), hosted by ZIMSOFF to Bagnolet, France (2021 onward), to be hosted by Confederation Paysanne on behalf of the ECVV region. Morgan Ody, a peasant farmer from France, assumed the role of the new General Coordinator, a task she takes on from her predecessor Elizabeth Mpofo.

LVC Carried out the official transition in two phases: the first phase was on 07 July during Confederation Paysanne National Congress and focused on the administrative and internal processes such as office set up, recruitment, establishing operational systems in France.

The political transition phase was held on 30 November through a hybrid ceremony (physical and virtual participation) linked to ECVV General Assembly. This second phase completed the official transition of La Via Campesina's International Operative Secretariat (IOS) move to Bagnolet in France, hosted by Confederation Paysanne on behalf of the European Coordination Via Campesina (ECVC). The transition to Europe allows the movement to bring its rich history of struggles and experiences right to the doors of global governance institutions based in this continent.



IMAGE: La Via Campesina



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LOOKING AHEAD:



IMAGE: La Via Campesina

La Via Campesina is now entering the fourth decade of its life. The first seeds of a globally organised peasant movement was sown at a gathering of organisations in Managua in 1992 and this movement took its formal birth at the First International Conference in Mons, Belgium 1993. These thirty years also saw the movement spreading its presence into 81 countries through 182 national member organisations. It has been a period of collective struggles that found victories in highlighting the devastating consequences of global free trade agreements and in promoting food sovereignty as a vital principle to build alternatives.

The world is currently witnessing a moment of reckoning. Wars, conflicts, pandemic, extreme climatic events have derailed local peasant farming everywhere. Global Industrial Food Systems, which promoted monocultural practices through intensive chemical farming has effectively failed in stepping up to the challenge of providing healthy nutritious food to all. Hunger is rising and even economically advanced nations are now recognising that a country that can't feed its own citizens is never really free. Food Sovereignty, after finding acceptance among institutions such as the FAO and the CFS, is now also gaining political currency everywhere. That said, it is also true that chauvinist, parochial and patriarchal political movements are also threatening to appropriate food sovereignty and limiting it to a narrow idea of closing the borders to outsiders.

In this context it is now more urgent than ever for La Via Campesina and the global civil society to own our idea of Food Sovereignty that can be achieved through feminism and solidarity. As noted in the manifesto published by La Via Campesina in 2021, this principle offers a vision for our collective future, and defines the principles around which we organize our daily living and co-exist with Mother Earth. It is a celebration of life and all the diversity around us. It embraces every element of our cosmos; the sky above our heads, the land beneath our feet, the air we breathe, the forests, the mountains, valleys, farms, oceans, rivers and ponds. It recognizes and protects the inter-dependency between eight million species that share this home with us.

The UN Declaration on Rights Peasants and Other People Working in Rural Areas further re-emphasizes this in Article 15.4, when it states, " Peasants and other people working in rural areas have the right to determine their own food and agriculture systems, recognized by many States and regions as the right to food sovereignty. This includes the right to participate in decision-making processes on food and agriculture policy and the right to healthy and adequate food produced through ecologically sound and sustainable methods that respect their cultures."

Peasant Agroecology, which is fundamental to ensuring food sovereignty in our territories, is now recognized at the FAO as central to our fight against global warming. Current and previous Special Rapporteurs of the United Nations have endorsed food sovereignty as a simple but powerful idea that can transform the global food system favouring small-scale food producers.

Yet, what lies ahead of us is a road ridden with many barriers.

The promoters of the capitalist world order realize that food sovereignty is an idea that impinges on their financial interests. They prefer a world of monoculture and homogenous tastes, where food can be mass-produced using cheap labour in faraway factories, disregarding its ecological, human and social impacts. They prefer economies of scale to robust local economies. They choose a global-free market (based on speculation and cut-throat competition) over solidarity economies that require more robust territorial markets (local peasant markets) and active participation of local food producers. They prefer to have land banks where industrial-scale contract farming would replace small-holder producers. They inject our soil with agro-toxics for better short-term yields, ignoring the irreversible damage to soil health. Their trawlers will again crawl the oceans and rivers, netting fishes for a global market while the coastal communities starve. They will continue to try to hijack indigenous peasant seeds through patents and seed treaties. The trade agreements they craft will again aim to bring down tariffs that protect our local economies.

None of this is new to us. Those condemned to the peripheries of our societies by a cruel and all-devouring capitalist system have no choice but to fight back. We must resist and show that we exist. It is not just about our survival, but also about future generations and a way of life handed down through generations. It is for the future of humanity that we defend our food sovereignty.

This is only possible if we insist that any local, national or global policy proposal on food and agriculture must build from the principles of food sovereignty. The young peasants and workers of our worldwide movement must lead this fight. We must remind ourselves that the only way to make our voice heard is by uniting and building new alliances within and across every border. Rural and Urban Social Movements, Trade Unions and civil society actors, progressive governments, academics, scientists and technology enthusiasts must come together to defend this vision for our future. Peasant women and other oppressed gender minorities must find equal space in the leadership of our movement at all levels. We must sow the seeds of solidarity in our communities and address all forms of discrimination that keep rural societies divided.

Food Sovereignty offers a manifesto for the future, a feminist vision that embraces diversity. It is an idea that unites humanity and puts us at the service of Mother Earth that feeds and nourishes us.

In its defence, we stand united.

LA VIA CAMPESINA
2022.

La Via Campesina is an international grassroots movement that defends small-scale sustainable agriculture as a way to promote social justice and dignity. It brings together millions of peasants, small and medium-size farmers, women farmers, landless people, indigenous people, migrants and agricultural workers and youth from around the world.

It strongly opposes corporate driven agriculture and transnational companies that are marginalizing people and destroying nature. The movement comprises 182 local and national organisations in 81 countries from Africa, Asia, Europe and the Americas.

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