

GLOBAL NETWORK FOR THE RIGHT TO FOOD AND NUTRITION

CHARTER

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The Global Right to Food and Nutrition Network is an initiative of public interest civil society organizations and social movements (peasants, fisherfolk, pastoralists, landless people, consumers, urban people living in poverty, agricultural and food workers, women, youth, and indigenous peoples) that share an understanding of the meaning of the human right to adequate food and nutrition. Taking advantage of the diversity of its members' activities and expertise, the Network opens a political space for dialogue and debate, as well as for building synergies and pursuing joint actions at the global level. Network members will actively support the existing struggles of social movements, communities and groups fighting against the violation of their right to adequate food and nutrition, and related universal, interdependent and indivisible individual and collective human rights.

NETWORK MEMBERS ALSO COME TOGETHER COMMITTED TO:

1. Support and protect human rights defenders against the repression, violence and criminalization to which they are often subjected;
2. Mobilize Network members to strengthen human rights accountability and the application of the human rights-based framework from the local to the global level;
3. End the impunity of abusers and violators of the right to adequate food and nutrition and related rights; given the interdependence and indivisibility of all rights, only one violation jeopardizes all other rights.
4. Develop analysis and advocacy instruments like the Right to Food and Nutrition Watch to publicize the Network's concerns and specific struggles against human rights violations.

IN THIS ENDEAVOR, NETWORK MEMBERS COMMIT THEMSELVES TO THE FOLLOWING PRINCIPLES:

1. All human beings, independent of gender, religion, ethnicity, caste, sexual orientation or other personal or group characteristics, are entitled to enjoy the full realization of the human right to adequate food and nutrition. Network members understand this right as including the right to people's informed participation in the decision making and elaboration of public policies directed at guaranteeing an economically, politically, socially, and ecologically sustainable supply of adequate and nutritious food, achievable through defending and promoting sustainable food systems at local, national, regional and global level. Moreover Network members fully agree that all of their efforts must take place within the frameworks of food sovereignty and people's sovereignty. The content of this right includes communities

having regular, permanent and unrestricted access to quantitatively and qualitatively adequate and sufficient food supported by culturally sensitive, nutrition-relevant information, which includes information pointing to breast milk as the most important and sustainable local first food in the food system. This access must respect both cultural traditions and the principle of non-discrimination.

- a. Food must:
 - i. meet the physical, mental and social needs of individuals and communities; and
 - ii. contribute both to a dignified life and to the nutritional wellbeing of all people.
 - b. Network members are committed to ensure that all people have direct access to food, food-producing resources and spaces and/or means for its purchase without compromising other essential needs.
 - c. Access to food is inseparable from access to adequate income, living wage, land tenure, territorial rights and livelihood considerations, as well as to sustainable food production processes (including access to restricted fishing grounds for artisanal fisherfolks) and sustainable food consumption systems (including breastfeeding); access is also dependent on appropriate public and social security and protection policies. It is clear to Network members that the human right to adequate food and nutrition covers the rights of both food producers and consumers. Realization of the right is based on its full justiciability and State accountability.
2. States, as duty bearers, have clear national obligations under International Human Rights Law including their extraterritorial obligations under the Maastricht Principles to:
- a. Enforce the principles of non-discrimination and equality, including gender equality, progressive realization, non-retrogression, transparency, participation, accountability and rule of law.
 - b. Realize the right to adequate food and nutrition, which under General Comment 12 of the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights states, “like any other human right, imposes three types or levels of obligations on States parties: the obligations to respect, to protect, and to fulfill. In turn, the obligation to fulfill incorporates both an obligation to facilitate and an obligation to provide. The obligation to respect existing access to adequate food requires States parties not to take any measures that result in preventing such access. The obligation to protect requires measures by the State to ensure that enterprises or individuals do not deprive individuals of their access to adequate food. The obligation to fulfill (facilitate) means the State must pro-actively engage in activities intended to strengthen people’s access to and utilization of resources and means to ensure their livelihoods, including food security. Finally, whenever an individual or group is unable, for reasons beyond their control, to enjoy the right to adequate food by the means at their disposal, States have the obligation to fulfill (provide) that right directly. This obligation also applies to persons who are victims of natural or other disasters.”
 - c. Meet their obligations as global actors, including in their role as members of intergovernmental organizations; to take action, separately, and jointly through international cooperation, to realize human rights universally as set out in the

Charter of the United Nations, and corresponding UN, regional and national human rights instruments.

- d. Take the necessary measures to ensure that non-state actors, which they have the obligation to regulate, such as private individuals and organizations, transnational corporations and other business enterprises, do not nullify or impair the enjoyment of economic, social, cultural and other rights (e.g., the right to a healthy environment) within national territories and extraterritorially; these measures include administrative, legislative, investigative, adjudicatory and other actions.
 - e. Set up decentralized and accessible recourse and remedy mechanisms, and educate the population about them. Monitoring these mechanisms must be open to public interest civil society, social movements and pertinent national human rights commissions.
 - f. Set up effective mechanisms that assure their accountability in the discharge of their extraterritorial obligations, including the systematic use of right to adequate food and nutrition impact assessments.
 - g. Develop, implement and enforce agricultural, economic, trade, energy and fuel, corporate, land and other relevant policies that are designed to protect the dignity and self-determination of rural and urban families living in poverty, peasants, small holders, agricultural and food workers, the landless, pastoralists, indigenous people and fisherfolks, with particular attention to women among these categories, as well as to preserve the environment.
3. The State as duty bearer must be held accountable not only for its own violations, but also for abuses by non-state actors who must be regulated for their compliance with human rights. Impunity must end; there is no statute of limitations in such cases. Clear legally binding (as opposed to voluntary) instruments must be set up; accessible and timely recourse and remedy mechanisms, including guarantees of non-repetition, must be demanded and enforced at local, national, regional, and global levels.
 4. Through network solidarity, its members will make all efforts to protect all human rights defenders at risk, from all walks of life who are working on their own and/or in partnership with others on individual or collective human rights. They are welcomed as well by the Network to collaborate as resource persons.
 5. Structural violence and discrimination against women are often invisible or ignored, magnifying the violations of women's rights and hindering their capacity to participate actively in the realization of the right to adequate food and nutrition. Network members support women in their struggle for equal rights with men, for their right to self-determination, for their sexual and reproductive rights, including the right to choose their partners and whether or not they want to procreate. Child marriage and adolescent pregnancies violate the right of women (as per CEDAW) and of children (as per the CRC) and typically reflect and perpetuate poverty in general and violations of the right to adequate food and nutrition of both women and children in particular.
 6. The Network condemns the agro-industrial model whose promoters:
 - a. Contribute to the impoverishment of smallholder farmers, agricultural and food workers and overall farming systems;

- b. Monopolize research and funding agendas of agriculture and nutrition thereby biasing mainstream food knowledge into the presumption that there are no alternatives to the agro-industrial model;
 - c. Influence the political establishment through means such as direct political financing and public-private partnerships to support their own interests; and
 - d. Promote non-sustainable food consumption patterns and negatively influences health.
7. The Network is committed to addressing the right to adequate food and nutrition of infants and children who cannot defend their own rights and for whom the protection, promotion and support of optimal infant and young child feeding practices --including early initiation and exclusive breastfeeding for 6 months followed by safe and adequate complementary feeding with continued breastfeeding for 2 years or beyond-- is undisputed as the best nutrition strategy. Network members similarly place emphasis on the right to adequate food and nutrition of the elderly and the sick, recognizing that their capacity to defend themselves often needs advocacy and support. Network members are concerned about and committed to take action on the role of the corporate food industry in the causation of diet-related non-communicable diseases with particularly grave consequences for children.
8. Network members see the achievement of nutritional wellbeing as an integral part of the full realization of the right to adequate food and nutrition. Members are clear that the successful achievement of this right necessitates the successful achievement by all (including women, children, indigenous peoples, refugees, etc.) of all other human rights (for example, to education, water, and human development). Moreover, the right to adequate food includes a quality component. Thus, since every man, woman and child have the right to adequate food in a quantity and quality sufficient to satisfy their dietary needs, Network members must include nutrition considerations in all food system debates and measures being taken.
9. Network members promote and support agro-ecological technologies and ancestral forms of food gathering and production, as well as the struggles of indigenous people, artisanal fisherfolks, peasant communities and pastoralists. Any change in local technologies requires the full participation of community members centrally including women. These technologies must incorporate local knowledge and respect the sustainable livelihoods of all community members. Network members also stand in solidarity with the struggles for food sovereignty of landless peasants and of all persons, young and old struggling with maintaining their livelihoods in urban and rural environments.
- a. Network members extend their concern and take action on:
 - i. the too often pernicious consequences that agrochemical, food and seeds corporations have on the health and economic wellbeing of small producers, agricultural and food workers, and the general population, as well as on the environment;
 - ii. the growth of public private partnerships (PPPs) that operate outside of human rights accountability frameworks, brushing aside conflicts of interest of corporate partners that avoid or ignore legally binding codes, hide behind government and international agencies' acquiescence, and remain accountable only to their shareholders.
10. Network members promote nutritional wellbeing for individuals of all ages, first and foremost by strengthening the capacity of local and national food systems, based on

ecological and sustainable principles. Network members pay particular attention to local sustainable food systems, never forgetting breastfeeding. They see food sovereignty strategies as a mean to avoid dependency on non-local, outside systems and a way to increasing and maintaining all-inclusive democratic systems of food policy making.

The Global Right to Food and Nutrition Network is not an organization as such, but rather a flexible and dynamic network of public interest civil society organizations and social movements, that reserves for itself the right to invite individuals committed to the full realization of human rights to participate as resource persons. Central to its functioning is the promotion of exchanges and dialogue among its members. Each member organization has its own focus area of work; members of the Network agree to work together on and advance issues of common interest deemed of great relevance for the furthering of the right to adequate food and nutrition.

To guarantee the autonomy of the Network and its adherence to human rights principles, institutional membership in the Network implies a commitment NOT to:

1. Engage in actions that directly or indirectly undermine the human right to food, nutrition, and health or the fulfillment of any other human right.
2. Promote armed struggle or foster hatred or violence in any way.
3. Be closely aligned with a governmental institution, an official information service or a political party. It is noted that, to participate, members wishing to work with the Network must keep their autonomy and independence if affiliated with any of these public sector structures.
4. Seek or accept funds, donations, gifts or sponsorship from or have a link with private sector organizations that directly or indirectly have vested interests that conflict with the promotion and protection of the right to adequate food and nutrition.
5. On the basis of these principles, the Network calls on all interested public interest civil society organizations and social movements to join the Network.

MEMBER ORGANIZATIONS OF THE NETWORK (JUNE 2013):

World Organization Against Torture (OMCT); World Forum of Fish Workers and Fish Harvesters (WFF); World Forum of Fisher People (WFFP); World Alliance of Mobile and Indigenous Peoples (WAMIP); Terra Nuova; Right to Food Campaign India; Peoples' Health Movement (PHM), Observatori DESC; ICCO; Inter-American Platform for Human Rights, Democracy and Development (PIDHDD); International Baby Food Action Network (IBFAN); International Indian Treaty Council (IITC); International Union of Food Workers; FIAN International; Ecumenical Advocacy Alliance (EAA); Dan Church Aid (DCA); Centro Internazionale Crocevia; CIDSE International Alliance of Catholic Development Agencies; Brot für die Welt; African Right to Food Network (ANoRF-RAPDA).

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