



Voices from the ground 2 transformative solutions to the global systemic food crises

POPULAR CONSULTATION ON GRASSROOTS IMPACTS OF COVID-19,
CONFLICTS, AND CRISES ON THE RIGHT TO FOOD AND FOOD SOVEREIGNTY

Impressum

Working Group on Global Food Governance of the Civil Society and Indigenous Peoples' Mechanism (CSIPM) for relations with the UN Committee on World Food Security (CFS). FAO Headquarters, Rome, Italy.

csm4cfs.org

DRAFTING TEAM:

This report has been produced by the CSIPM Working Group on Global food governance in cooperation with the CSIPM Secretariat and with support from the different regional task teams.

LEAD AUTHORS AND EDITORS:

Magdalena Ackermann, Charlotte Dreger, Thierry Kesteloot, Nora McKeon, Shalmali Guttal, Kirtana Chandrasekaran, Clare Pettersson, Betsy Diaz Millán, Andre Luzzi, Hala Barakat.

This report synthesizes the rich analysis and recommendations which emerged from a global popular consultation process led by CSIPM in 2022 on the grassroots impacts of COVID-19, conflicts, and crises on the right to food and food sovereignty.

With financial support from:

The Swiss Confederation, represented by the Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs, acting through Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation
The European Union
Brot für die Welt

ENGLISH COPY EDITING:

Katie Whiddon

TRANSLATION INTO FRENCH:

Grégoire Seither

TRANSLATION INTO SPANISH:

Rodrigo Gines Salguero

GRAPHIC DESIGN:

Harjyot Khalsa

EDITORIAL COORDINATION:

Marion Girard Cisneros

COVER:

Hamadi Mohammed Abba, ADJMOR. Samuel Ikua, Mazingira Institute. Cambrian Mbaabu. Movimento dos Trabalhadores Rurais Sem Terra. Midagri Peru. Desinformemonos.org. Quintafuerza.mx.

PUBLISHED:

October 2022

Table of Contents

| | | |
|-----|--|----------|
| ● | Preface | 4 |
| 1 | Current context and critique of mainstream responses | 6 |
| — | <i>Framing the crisis</i> | 6 |
| — | <i>Multiple and fragmented – Global action taken so far in response to the food price crisis in 2022</i> | 7 |
| — | <i>Crisis of multilateral governance</i> | 8 |
| 2 | Evidence from the ground | 9 |
| 2.1 | What has happened since 2020 | 10 |
| — | <i>Increased inequalities</i> | 11 |
| — | <i>The fragility of the global food supply system</i> | 12 |
| — | <i>Inadequate government responses</i> | 13 |
| 2.2 | What needs to happen now? | 14 |
| — | <i>Short-term measures</i> | 15 |
| — | <i>Long-term measures</i> | 16 |
| 3 | Concluding remarks | 19 |
| ● | Annex – Summaries from the regional consultations | 21 |
| — | <i>Africa</i> | 21 |
| — | <i>Europe and Western and Central Asia</i> | 22 |
| — | <i>Latin America and the Caribbean</i> | 23 |
| — | <i>Asia</i> | 24 |
| — | <i>North America</i> | 27 |

“Never in our lives, never in the history of this region, have we experienced such an accumulation of serious, deep, interconnected crises. We need structural solutions!”

- Ibrahima Coulibaly, President of the West African Network of Peasant and Agricultural Producers Organizations – ROPPA. *Voices from the Ground*, 2020, p.59.

“Almost 70% of the land is now flooded in Pakistan because of the climate crisis. People are not getting food properly. Hospitals have been wiped away. Women are giving birth on the ground. The government was totally silent at the start. Now aid is being received from different sources. Food is dropped from helicopters and it scatters to the ground. People are saying ‘we are not dogs; don’t feed us like dogs. Why are you doing this to us?’”

- Saima Zia, *La Via Campesina, Pakistan*. 7 September 2022.

These two citations are emblematic of the issues presented in this report. Over two years ago, when COVID-19 erupted, it was already evident to small-scale food producers and other constituencies of the Civil Society and Indigenous Peoples’ Mechanism (CSIPM) that the pandemic was unveiling and aggravating existing, deep, structural vulnerabilities and inequalities embedded in the global market-led, industrial food system. Recurring food crises have also exposed the risks inherent in the neo-liberal policies that prop up this system. Two years later, these issues and risks have not been addressed. The structural solutions called for by Ibrahima Coulibaly and millions of other voices from the ground have not been sought and found. The result is the enduring and deepening suffering to which Saima Zia testifies. Despite this, our constituencies continue to be the ones implementing real solutions, feeding their communities, and imagining and building a new food system from the ground up.

The consultations that the CSIPM conducted in 2020, by gathering evidence from all regions and constituencies, confirmed that peoples' existing conditions of inequality and injustice determined how acutely they were affected by COVID-19, with women, youth, refugees and migrants, workers, small-scale food producers, landless peoples, urban food insecure and Indigenous Peoples on the front lines. Many Government responses to the pandemic favoured food corporations and global food chains, while exacerbating the problems for local food systems, for example by subsidising big supermarkets while clamping down violently on small traders and local markets. Corporations took advantage of the pandemic to increase their profits and market shares. Attacks on human rights and democracy increased through containment measures and prejudices. On the more positive side, evidence from the ground demonstrated the strength of peoples' responses to the pandemic. They reinforced mechanisms of solidarity and reciprocity, while innovative actions emerged from territorial food systems. There were also some encouraging cases of collaboration between authorities and civil society.

The 2020 report, [Voices from the Ground: From COVID-19 to Radical Transformation of Food Systems](#), demanded breaking away from neoliberal policy orientation, respecting all human rights, putting food sovereignty into practice, reaffirming the primacy of the public sphere, and strengthening human rights-based global food governance with the United Nations (UN) Committee on World Food Security (CFS) at the centre.

At the 48th and 49th Sessions of the CFS, in alliance with several CFS member states, participants and UN agencies, the CSIPM advocated the Committee to implement its role as a space for developing globally coordinated policy guidance to address the multiple layers of these recurring food crises, and to prevent future calamities. The proposal was crushed by a coalition of six powerful commodity-exporting countries. Four months later the war in Ukraine brought yet another confirmation of the fragility of the global food system, and added a new layer to the existing crisis.

To refresh our evidence, the CSIPM reached out to our base again with Popular consultations on grassroots impacts of COVID-19, conflicts, and crises on the right to food and food sovereignty. A questionnaire was launched on 30 April 2022 along with [virtual consultations in all regions](#). Consultations have directly and indirectly involved hundreds of organisations. Summaries of these regional processes are given in the Annexes. This report synthesises the rich analysis and recommendations that emerged from the consultation process. Now is the time to respond to the voices from the ground by addressing the structural causes and multiple dimensions of today's food crises in a globally coordinated way, and the CFS is the place to do it.



During the pandemic, solidarity kitchens were created by the MST to provide food assistance based on rural-urban dialogue, bringing locally-produced food to the cities.

1 Current context and critique of mainstream responses

Framing the crisis

This is the third food crisis in 15 years. We are living in a situation where the dominant economic and food systems are causing multiple crises evidenced by continuing, multi-layered food crises, catastrophic climate change, public health emergencies, and ever-rising levels of poverty and inequality, as well as corporate profiteering, speculation and food price inflation.

In the context of an agro-industrial production model, our societies have become extremely vulnerable to food and nutrition insecurity due to overdependence on global value chains and fossil fuel-based production inputs, corporate concentration in almost all aspects of food

systems, and a stubborn adherence to neoliberal economic logic with its lack of market regulation and unjust trade rules. Countries with high levels of indebtedness and dependency on food imports are more deeply affected, with almost no means to cope with upwardly spiralling food and fuel prices, and volatile commodity markets.

Only if the crisis is understood in a comprehensive and systematic way, can it be rightly addressed and overcome. A profound transformation of the global food system and economic model is needed.

Multiple and fragmented – Global action taken so far in response to the food price crisis in 2022

Since the war in Ukraine began, global initiatives to deal with the food crises have multiplied. Some of these initiatives respond to the current crisis in an immediate way, such as the World Food Program (WFP), which [increased emergency assistance in Ukraine](#) and in other countries most affected by the [global food crisis](#).

Other initiatives include the UN Secretary General's [Global Crisis Response Group on Food, Energy and Finance](#) (GCRG), and the G7 and World Bank's Global Alliance for Food Security (GAFS). However, these initiatives do not tackle structural causes and systemic failures, or provide long-term solutions. They advance false solutions that are embedded within the logic of the dominant market-led economic and productivist model. For example, the UN Food and Agriculture Organisation's (FAO) emphasis on commodity and fertiliser trade does not tackle the precarity of import-dependent countries, nor the contributions to climate change and food price rises. It also neglects the long-term negative impacts of food imports on domestic agricultural producers. The GCRG seeks to ensure the global flow of chemical fertilisers, while small-scale food producers in the Global South seek to break dependency. The CSIPM participates in the GCRG Food Workstream with [clear criteria on its participation](#), and will evaluate its participation in due course. [The CSIPM declined the invitation](#) to participate in the G7 and World Bank's GAFS due to its lack of focus on human rights and lack of inclusive multilateral governance.

The World Trade Organisation (WTO) Ministerial Conference 12 in Geneva in June 2022 failed to propose measures to re-orient global trade investment rules to address the food crisis. [The Ministerial Declaration on the Emergency Response to Food Insecurity](#) of 17 June offers no proposals for tackling the structural and systemic causes of hunger and malnutrition. Instead, it commits members to further liberalisation of food and agriculture trade through global markets and adherence to WTO disciplines. Long-standing

issues such as developing countries' rights to build public food stocks/reserves through public procurement and remunerative support prices were postponed.

Many frame the current crisis as a "cost of living crisis", where people are confronted with high energy and food prices, caused by the disruption of global trade as a result of the war in Ukraine. This is only a very partial picture of a much deeper, multi-layered and multifaceted failure of food systems. The crisis builds on the devastating social and economic consequences of COVID-19, and on deeper systemic failures of climate chaos, increasing inequalities, and destruction of ecosystems.

Well before the Ukraine war, multilateralism was already severely under attack by narrowly nationalist states and corporate-promoted multi-stakeholderism, of which the [UN Food Systems Summit \(UNFSS\) was a prime example](#). The reality today is one of fragmentation, lack of multilateral political direction and oversight, and an effort to sideline the CFS as the foremost inclusive intergovernmental and international platform for food security and the progressive realisation of the human right to adequate food and nutrition (RtF). We cannot have a repeat of the 2008 or 2011 food price crises. We cannot tolerate a vacuum of global leadership to stop hunger or take the necessary steps to ensure that there will be no more food crises. There is a dire need for the CFS to take a leadership and convening role in tackling the food crises.

The CFS and the UN General Assembly held a High Level Inter-sessional Event on the food crisis on July 18 in New York. The CSIPM [welcomed the event](#) as a sign of support to the CFS' convening power, and its mandate to coordinate and strengthen collaborative action on the RtF. This should pave the way for decisive decision-making at the 50th session of the CFS Plenary in October 2022.

Crisis of multilateral governance

The Rome Based Agencies (RBAs),¹ GCRG, G7 and financial institutions frame the current global food crisis almost exclusively from a market and production perspective, and as caused by the disruption of global trade due to a war involving two major agro-exporting countries. They fail to acknowledge that many countries in the Global South were led by neoliberal policies to become dangerously dependent on imports, and that we continue to face unacceptable levels of hunger despite many years of world-scale record production. They do not recognise the need for profound, human rights-based food systems transformation.

These international official responses will further entrench neoliberalism and capitalism. The global food system will continue to extract from people and planet to provide ever-increasing growth

¹ The three United Nations Rome-based Agencies (RBAs), the Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN (FAO), the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), and the World Food Programme (WFP) knowledge, financial and technical expertise, and are internationally recognized forums for discussing policy issues related to food security, agriculture, and nutrition.

and profits for corporations and capital. Many multilateral institutions refuse to recognise that these 'false solutions', based on a productivist agenda, promote business as usual and are the biggest barriers to addressing hunger and poverty. As with past food crises, economically powerful governments are unwilling to put into effect the urgently needed structural reforms. These include regulation of food and financial trade and markets, curbing speculation on agricultural commodities, tackling tax injustice, cancelling illegitimate debt and stopping ecological destruction. Under the pretence of multilateralism, these actors keep poorer, indebted, food-import dependent countries at the table, while making sure that global finance and transnational corporations (TNCs) maintain their profits and power. There is no meaningful participation of the most marginalised and affected constituencies to shape the responses.



A local market in Nairobi, Kenya. Policies need to strengthen peasant economies and family farming, with a particular focus on youth and women. Public procurement must be used to ensure markets at remunerative prices for small-scale food producers.

2

Evidence from the ground

“In Brazil, the Landless Rural Workers’ Movement and the Homeless Workers’ Movement mobilized to deliver fresh food to different parts of the country. Building bridges between the countryside and the city. A great example of mobilization and articulation in civil society.”

- Vera Villela, Brasil. Latin American Consultation.

Dominant global narratives regarding the nature of the current food price crisis and how to address it, set forth in the previous section, are inappropriate and ineffective. Yet there are other, profoundly contrasting narratives that testify to reality as it is lived by people and communities around the world. Their evidence risks being drowned out by the narratives of the powerful. The CSIPM popular consultation aims at giving them voice.

The consultations show that official support has overwhelmingly benefited the corporate sector, leaving small-scale food producers aside. While some weak measures have been taken by the State, hundreds of examples show that in all regions, solidarity actions undertaken by local communities and organisations of food producers, workers, women and Indigenous Peoples have had to take over the State’s duty bearer responsibilities of realising human rights. Simultaneously, the vital contributions of small-scale food producers who are already engaged

in food systems transformation based on food sovereignty and agroecological transition are not recognised and supported.

Our consultations tell the stories of those most affected by this multi-faceted crisis. They provide rich evidence of the actions taken by youth, women, Indigenous Peoples, peasants, workers, pastoralists, fisherfolks, the landless, urban food insecure, and displaced persons, to provide practical and strategic responses to the food crisis. These voices from the ground must be heard to formulate meaningful responses. Policy responses need to be anchored in a comprehensive human rights approach, by recognising the agency of those most affected as rights-holders, and the accountability of governments as duty-bearers.

The following sections provide a synthesis of the issues emerging from the regional consultations and the responses to the questionnaires.



A roadside vegetable vendor in Nairobi loses customers as they are not sure if she has COVID-19.

2.1

What has happened since 2020

The steep increase of food and energy prices since mid-2021 has exacerbated already entrenched inequalities in all regions, particularly since the outbreak of war in Ukraine. Sharp price increases of often-imported food and energy have devastating impacts, especially for the poor. Even when food is available to buy, it remains unaffordable for millions of people.

Climate chaos continued unabated with ever more extreme weather catastrophes, as recently experienced in Pakistan and East Africa. Small-scale food producers all over the world were confronted with increasingly severe impacts of climate change through droughts, heatwaves, wildfires, floods and cyclones. Those countries and populations least responsible for greenhouse gas emissions experienced the impacts of climate change most acutely, with extreme weather events and failed harvests leading to the loss of livelihoods of Indigenous Peoples and small-scale food producers.

Conflicts, wars and state violence have persisted, and food is being used as a geopolitical weapon. Several conflicts across Asia, Africa, Latin America and Europe are leading to dispossession, displacement, migration, poverty, hunger and discrimination.

In light of a shrinking space for civil society and increasing human rights violations, 2020 also saw reduced participation of rights holders in democratic processes, and a growing disregard for defending human rights. The growing corporate concentration and power in food chains profited from government bailouts and support programmes, while financial actors increasingly turned food and land into objects of speculation.

Increased inequalities

“For the youth and children, the education crisis continues with its lack of equal access to educational materials and technology. This is changing, but at a slow pace, and even more in areas of conflict and in already vulnerable rural areas. There are a lot of reports of youth that have dropped out of school due to the pandemic and not enough is being done to completely open the schools and bring them back. If this will continue, we are expecting that there will be an even more widened gap in learning capacities from the Global North and the Global South.”

- Asian Consultation

The dramatic increase in inequality across and within all regions is one of the most prominent effects of the failing global economic and food system. Among those most affected are small-scale food producers, agricultural workers, women and youth. These were classified as “essential workers” during the pandemic and were at the forefront of feeding populations; yet they continue to face low wages, food insecurity, and lack of access to health services and social protection. Furthermore, multiple inequalities often combine discrimination based on class, social privilege, race/ethnicity, caste, gender, occupation, religion and age. Evidence shows that, despite the urgent need for universal access to social protection, and entitlements to fundamental rights including the RtF, states failed to deliver.

The rural-urban divide increased, with rural people receiving less support than those in the cities. The main challenges and impacts included income and wage losses, disruption of local markets, precarious working conditions and unemployment, hunger, increasing costs of food production, processing and transport, loss of education opportunities, land-grabbing, increased debt levels and lack of access to medical care/health services.

The incomes of small-scale food producers plummeted because of high production input, energy and transportation costs. Food processors and retailers increased prices to make profits without paying their suppliers adequately. Low-income and urban poor residents faced increased housing, energy, food and healthcare costs coupled with job and income insecurity, with some fearing the choice between heating and eating. Many urban poor communities engage in informal employment and depend on cash for food, energy, medicines, housing and transport. They are thus especially vulnerable to economic downturns and

wage losses. Despite greater exposure to health risks, frontline health, sanitation and delivery workers received some of the lowest wages and least social protections.

Indigenous Peoples in all regions faced increased displacement from their territories and attacks on their environments by private interests. Indigenous Peoples frequently face greater institutional neglect than other populations, which translates into more migration of Indigenous Youth to cities in search of subsistence, with the consequent loss of knowledge and traditions.

Many migrants travel on deadly migrant routes, and are subject to abuse, unsafe and bad working conditions, and extortion. Those in conflict zones are forced to flee, seeing their fields and food infrastructures destroyed. Migrants, refugees, and displaced persons face discrimination in access to government assistance, and are mostly unprotected by domestic and international law.

Because gender inequalities persist, [women, girls and non-binary people](#) are particularly at risk in times of crises and scarcity. Their needs are de-prioritised or even negated in the distribution of food, and access to health and education. Although the majority of frontline health workers in the world are women, they still face tremendous inequity in wages, health services and social protection. Moreover, they suffer from labour market discrimination, which pushes them into informal and casual employment. In a context of intensifying crises, conflicts and wars, sexual and gender-based violence increased. During the pandemic, the forced confinement within households and lack of state support resulted in the intensification of domestic violence against women and girls, often leading to unwanted pregnancies. Yet the world is now seeing a dramatic regression in terms of sexual health and

reproductive rights. Food price spikes resulted in significant additional responsibilities and work for women and girls striving to ensure sufficient and nutritious food for their families. Generally, women adopt extreme coping strategies when youth and men migrate to find work. They reduce their own consumption to feed others, they walk much further to collect food, they migrate in search of ways to earn income, and, when needed, women's assets are usually sold first. [The latest CFS negotiations on gender equality and women's and girls empowerment](#) showed how global food governance is also profoundly embedded in patriarchal attitudes.

Over the past two years, young people in food-producing and working class families (both urban and rural) faced multiple obstacles to education, skills development, employment and social cohesion. The temporary closure of schools isolated many young people and substantially reduced the quality of education, especially in rural areas. Those seeking to engage in food production faced barriers of access to land, energy and farming assets. Many faced difficulties to access decent employment. Today, following the increase in housing, energy and food costs, young people face financial difficulties. They know that they will pay the heaviest toll in the increasing public debt and reduction of public investments in education. Rural areas are becoming depopulated, given the poor, dwindling public services.

The fragility of the global food supply system

The food price crisis, further triggered by the war in Ukraine, has again demonstrated how vulnerable the global food system is. Populations of a good number of low-income countries rely on just a handful of large commodity-producing countries and import the majority of the grains that feed their people, in a global system monopolised by four mega grain traders. The hunger hotspots of Eritrea and Somalia are almost entirely dependent on wheat imports from Russia and Ukraine. This dependence makes these countries – already low on foreign reserves – extra vulnerable to market disruptions and price increases. Richer countries are also vulnerable to disrupted global value chains of inputs (like seeds and fertilisers) and imports of grains and agricultural commodities. In a free market driven food system, food is deviated from its nourishing function by rich buyers who use it as feedstuff for industrial animal farming and biofuel production. This puts upward pressure on the agricultural

While millions of people are struggling to find their next meal in both low-income and rich countries, billionaires involved in the food and agribusiness sectors have seen their collective wealth increase by \$382bn (45%) over the past two years, with 62 new food billionaires created in the sector since the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic.²

Many people highlighted the lack of participation of rights holders in policy and official decision-making processes. Virtual participation processes that have dominated policy spaces over the past two years are making meaningful participation almost impossible, resulting in more centralised and non-transparent decision-making processes. Social movements also encountered more difficulties for members' engagement in policy advocacy and mobilisation as a direct result of lower incomes, more reliance on off-farm incomes, and increasing authoritarianism in governance. The lack of social interaction and in-person exchanges contributed to increased isolation of people from policy processes, especially in remote areas. Even where consultations did take place through existing processes, they were often not translated into responsive decisions.

² Oxfam, *Profiting from pain: The urgency of taxing the rich amid a surge in billionaire wealth and a global cost-of-living crisis*, 2022. Available at: <https://bit.ly/3ULvyKF>

commodity prices. The global supply system's focus on only a few commodities has tragically diverted attention from native staple crops, which underpin the food systems across the Global South. It is now time to turn this around and promote domestic production of local foods.

Amidst high food prices, many governments – in particular of agro-exporting countries – have encouraged increased production, irrespective of long-term environmental costs, to fill the gap of the Ukrainian and Russian export markets. In the Global South, new policy measures attract investments to support export crops (such as cotton), subsidise synthetic fertilisers and high yielding seeds. All regions are confronted with pro-agribusiness policies pushing for corporate-friendly digital innovation, genetic engineering, deregulation of toxic inputs, financialisation and market driven solutions.

Inadequate government responses

“Overall, the government issued many administrative and health measures while enacting laws, making decisions, and signing several bilateral free trade agreements with China, South Korea, and other countries. These processes were implemented quickly, without public consultation or consideration of the implications for people’s lives and rights, nature, and the local economy.”

- Asian Consultation

Government measures are generally judged to be absent or, at best, inadequate, weak and fragmented. There is a lack of state presence, and an absence in implementation of public policies. In Asia, Latin America and Africa, there is a dire lack of protection for human rights, and attacks on leaders of social movements and human rights defenders go unpunished. Governments have dismantled public policies and regulatory frameworks in domestic food provision and food prices, public procurement and school meal programs. In some cases, governments have promoted private sector projects to supplement national budgets, with negative effects on land tenure, food systems and rights.

Across regions of the Global South, some governmental measures focused on production support, while others prioritised income support and neglected the other facets of the systemic failure of the agro-industrial food system, such as climate chaos, biodiversity losses, social inequalities, gender discriminations, failing social protection, and market deregulation. The consultations revealed that diversified and agroecological food systems, which have proven to address structural causes, were largely ignored for their benefits. They benefited only marginally from any policy measures.

Across all regions, the gap left by governments was bridged by communities, social movements, non-profit and people’s organisations. They addressed the deficiencies of government action by shifting their focus from transformational work and struggles (e.g. land access) to front line emergencies, for example, by providing immediate food assistance.

Some countries were able to develop financial packages to address the crisis. Reports have shown, nevertheless, that these were limited in scope, fragmented, and biased. Large bailouts were mainly captured by the agro-industry, pharmaceutical, and energy sectors. Little support was channelled to vulnerable sectors, small-

scale producers and workers. Experience shows that aid increased existing discriminations and inequalities.

In the Global South, governmental capacity to develop adequate public policies is still mostly limited by external debt,³ largely held by private finance. Inimical trade and investments rules prevent governments from providing social protection. Debt cancellation is a prerequisite for public policies and fiscal space. In 2021, in low-income countries, debt represented 171% of all spending on healthcare, education and social protection combined.⁴ In 2022, their debt servicing is estimated at \$43 billion.

It was highlighted that many governments still see further trade liberalisation as the solution to access cheaper food, yet this only reinforces structural flaws. Trade policies must be reviewed and better financial regulation established, to reduce (future) food price shocks, and avoid repeating the failures of the 2007-2008 and 2011 food price crises. Even though trade remains important, it needs to be reformed. Over-reliance on single providers and single commodities is problematic. Trade should be a source of risk protection, not vulnerability. Trade and investment rules should provide the space for stronger local and regional food systems and territorial markets that can better respond to local contexts and demands, paving the way towards increased self-sufficiency and food sovereignty. Broadly speaking, many governments have bought into the “modernisation” narrative and think of support to small-scale food producers in terms of connecting them to agribusiness value chains and transforming them into individual entrepreneurs, in deep contrast with what these producers themselves demand.

³ Debt Justice, *The growing debt crisis in lower income countries and cuts in public spending*, 2022. Available at: <https://bit.ly/3ChStWP>

⁴ Matthew Martin for Norwegian Church Aid, *A Nordic Solution to the New Debt Crisis*, forthcoming.



Market gardening experience to mitigate the risks of food insecurity due to climate change. Community of nomadic pastoralists in Timbuktu, Republic of Mali.

2.2

What needs to happen now?

As highlighted in CSIPM's 2020 report, based on the centrality of human rights and food sovereignty, constituencies from the territories around the globe have called once again for a paradigm shift that reclaims food systems as public commons for the wellbeing of people and the planet. In response to today's magnified and multi-layered crisis humanity, during the 2022 Popular Consultations, constituencies made clear demands to governments and the UN system. These are presented below, and, although divided into complementary short-term and longer-term interventions, they must not be seen in isolation. Short-term measures, needed to immediately address the crisis, must be coherent with the much-needed longer-term measures to transform our food systems.

Public policies set the framework for how the resources of a country/province/state are to be used, and how critical issues are to be addressed, and crises confronted. They also pave the way for regulations that ensure and protect public interest. Good public policies ensure that short-term solutions can become building blocks for long-term transitions. For example, if more food producers are driven off the land, there is little hope of countries gaining increased food self-sufficiency or food sovereignty.

Short-term measures:

“We continued to produce our Three Sisters Crops (corn, beans and squash) throughout the pandemic and provided mutual support foods (maize, beans) to communities in need.”

- North American Consultation

- Ensure the provision of humanitarian support to ensure food security for people in conflict zones, in Ukraine and beyond. Humanitarian food aid should conform with the beliefs, culture, traditions, dietary habits, and preferences of local communities; encourage local procurement and the use of local organisations in the implementation of humanitarian food assistance; and aim at strengthening sustainable local food systems, and fostering access to productive resources and to markets that are remunerative and beneficial to small-scale producers.
- Emergency and food aid programmes should support existing community and solidarity initiatives. These programmes should distribute healthy, agroecological produce that supports local farms and is driven by state policies and funding rather than donations. They must not become another route for corporations to distribute ultra processed products.
- Ensure small-scale food producers access inputs for the coming agricultural season, privileging domestically available resources such as peasant, and Indigenous seeds and bio-fertilizers.
- Stop unilateral responses (such as stopping exports, or massive food purchases) that could have negative impacts on rising prices and global food security.
- Regulate to stop food speculation and strengthen the powers of market and financial regulatory authorities.
- Restructure and cancel private and public debts in developing countries to enable them to invest in food sovereignty while dealing with soaring prices.
- Introduce a moratorium on the use and processing of agricultural commodities for non-food purposes, such as agrofuels.
- Taxes on excess profits and extreme wealth to fund social policies, especially in times of crisis.

Long-term measures:

a. Break food import dependency and support domestic food provisioning

Ensuring and promoting policies that strengthen the autonomy of the peasant economy and family farming, instead of policies that deepen their dependency on the global market are central for food sovereignty. Public procurement must be used to ensure markets at remunerative prices for small-scale food producers. Territorial markets must be built and strengthened as ways of relocalisation and increasing access to healthy foods, creating employment, and reviving local grains, foods, and building public food reserves. Mechanisms of public procurement of food produced by family farming and peasant agriculture should be ensured also to guarantee the access to those most affected by hunger and malnutrition. The strengthening of territorial dynamics will enable the work towards the diversification of food offer and access to this offer. In Africa, the Maputo Declaration on Agriculture and Food Security was deemed important in its commitment to apply to devote at least 10% of the national budget to the agricultural sector, with priority to small-scale producers and territorial markets.

Short circuits of commercialisation can also strengthen the autonomy of both consumers and producers. Linking producers and consumers, and urban and rural people, around domestic food provisioning is a priority. This linkage requires coherent packages of public policies and legislation, as well as investment in appropriate transportation infrastructure and a strategy of urbanisation that stimulates small urban hubs throughout the country, rather than a few mega-cities. For example, in Europe, it was suggested that if around 25% of food sales could go through direct sales between farmers and urban citizens, it could break the power relations of the agribusiness and supermarkets, and improve the livelihoods of farmers.

Furthermore, communities in the territories have expressed how these dynamics are able to counter the corporate supply chains that highly contribute to emissions accelerating climate change due to land use change towards production of agrocommodities. In the same line, support for territorial food systems must be accompanied by stopping production of agrocommodities for feed, fuel and profit.

Increase the support to family farming, using the UN Decade of Family Farming and the UN Declaration on the Rights of Peasants and Other People Working in Rural Areas (UNDROP) as frameworks to request related public policies and adequate financial instruments. Youth and women were also highlighted as groups that needed particular attention when strengthening the above-mentioned measures. Some examples of where support must be directed are rural institutions, knowledge transfer systems, and digital support for small-scale producers.

b. Transform food systems through agroecology

Prioritise integral and popular agrarian reform, opening the way for agroecology as the transformative pathway that can truly address social injustices, climate change and biodiversity loss. This includes policies that support sustainable fisheries and secure fishing sites for fisherfolks. In this sense, research should be reoriented to benefit small-scale food producers. The rights to access and control over land

and productive resources must be ensured and land and territorial conversions must be stopped. Special attention must be attributed to women's and non-cis heteronormative persons', youth's, and Indigenous Peoples' rights to land and natural resources.

The access to natural resources should guarantee the traditional and ancestral models of production, such as the protection of peasant seeds and knowledge, particularly women's knowledge. Participation of youth in these processes should be promoted.

Agroecological pathways, based on territorially-based processes and on the co-creation of knowledge, provide contextualised solutions to local problems, and reduce dependence on external inputs. Transformation towards agroecological models needs to be accompanied by regulatory and policy frameworks to phase out input-dependent, fossil fuel based agricultural systems, including through the progressive ban of highly hazardous pesticides and synthetic fertilisers. In this regard, it is essential to include the proposed references to Indigenous Peoples and safeguards for human rights in the International Code of Conduct on Pesticide Management.⁵

c. Implement food sovereignty, limit corporate power, transform trade rules

Food sovereignty policies must be promoted, so as to reverse corporate concentration, and dismantle corporations' power in food systems. Governments must regulate prices, limit opportunities for corporations to dominate global food markets, and introduce and enforce legal instruments to ban financial speculation in commodities. They should insist on reduction or elimination of foreign debt, and raise taxes on corporate profits to redistribute funds. The concentration of private grain reserves must be over-turned; instead, public food reserves must be supported to protect people from shocks. Economic sanctions that turn food into a political weapon must be withdrawn.

Neoliberal trade agreements and finance and investment rules have severely undermined people's food sovereignty. Trade and investment must be reoriented to serve people and societies, not corporations. Free Trade Agreements (FTAs) should be halted, and existing WTO agreements must be dismantled. Governments must be accountable to their citizens for trade, investment and finance policies.

d. Ensure human rights and democratic multilateralism

Ensure transformation of the global food system into one based on human rights, and the wellbeing of peoples and nature rather than profits. Peace, justice and equality as the basis for all social life is central to the vision for a transformed system. Such a transformative process needs to promote and protect the rights of marginalised communities; such as peasants, Indigenous Peoples, fisherfolks,

⁵ "Proposals for the inclusion of references to Indigenous Peoples and Safeguards for Human Rights in the International Code of Conduct on Pesticide Management" Submitted to the FAO and WHO by the International Indian Treaty Council (IITC) on 20 August 2022.

women, non-cis heteronormative persons, youth, urban food insecure, pastoralists, landless, agricultural and food workers, and consumers. Collective rights must be defended, such as the rights of association and assembly, the right to land, the right to protect territorial and local markets, and the right over access and control over natural resources, including seeds, water, soil, and land. Human rights defenders' security must be guaranteed, particularly for defenders of the right to land and of the right to water. Land and territorial grabbing as well as land conversions must be stopped immediately. Frameworks such as the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP), the UNDROP, and ILO provisions for protection of workers and Indigenous Peoples need to be recognised and implemented for protecting those rights.

Democratic control needs to be exercised over food systems and policies. This includes a shift away from corporate capture in decision-making, and an efficient and decisive role for the UN in ensuring that control is given back to states and communities. Furthermore, corporate interference in crisis response and policy decisions must be stopped. Clear plans, policies and laws need to be developed, transparently implemented, and adequately monitored, through meaningful and inclusive processes that enable the participation of civil society and Indigenous Peoples, and ensure the right to information. A greater role for parliament is also demanded. Participatory policy processes are central to the realisation of the RtF, and external donors and/or investors must be obliged to respect them. Regional cooperation should be promoted in all areas of food and agriculture policy making.



In Jalisco, México, a group of local producers succeeded in having “El Limón” declared as the first Agroecological Municipality.

3

Concluding remarks: the need for coordinated and coherent policy guidance in the CFS to address current and prevent future crises

The demands emerging from the Popular Consultations identify action that needs to be taken at all levels. There was a strong awareness that there is scope for countries and regions to do more to transform food systems. Simultaneously, obstacles to change have to be addressed at the global level, where policy coordination is urgently needed to address the current crisis, and to tackle the structural failure of our food systems in order to prevent future crises.

Since the outbreak of COVID-19, the CSIPM has been advocating that the CFS adopt this role of global coordination. Global coordination needs to be implemented within an inclusive multilateral governance mechanism that prioritises the voices of the most affected countries and constituencies.

These include import-dependent low- and middle-income countries, countries with high rates of food insecurity, and those hosting many refugees.

Policy responses need to be anchored in a comprehensive human rights-based approach, thereby recognising the agency of those most affected as rights-holders, and the accountability of governments as duty-bearers. Short-term responses must be coherent with longer-term objectives for food systems transformation.

The CFS was reformed following the food price crisis in 2008, and has become the foremost inclusive platform on food security and nutrition and the progressive realisation of the RtF. It has already developed relevant policy instruments

that are directly related to food price volatility, social protection, protracted crises, smallholder agriculture and access to markets. For instance, the CFS should make use of the Global Strategic Framework for Food Security and Nutrition. The CFS is supported by a unique interdisciplinary High Level Panel of Experts (HLPE), whose members have provided incisive analysis on the food crisis.

The CFS is the only existing inclusive multilateral forum in which the different aspects of the multi-dimensional crisis can be discussed from a human rights perspective. In this regard, the CFS can provide guidance to national governments, as well as guidelines on how to direct international/bilateral funding and address international policy issues. With the support of the HLPE, the CFS could establish a multidimensional monitoring mechanism that includes voices from the ground, and help to prevent future crises.

The Popular Consultations showed that the multi-dimensional nature of the crisis must be assessed. An in-depth discussion is needed on how to break countries' dependence on food imports and external inputs, and build resilience to future crises. In order to address the increase in inequalities, it must be based on a thorough understanding of how the global economic model impacts food systems, and what changes are needed in the global rules and institutional arrangements that shape trade, tax, debt, financial markets, investments, and public finances.

People on the ground believe that food sovereignty and re-localised food provisioning can help, and that food systems transformation is more urgent than ever. The resilience of local food systems was already evidenced during the pandemic. A meaningful transformation must therefore focus on the wellbeing of people and the planet.

ANNEX - Summaries from the Regional Consultations

AFRICA

1 Regional context: what needs to change

Africa is a prime victim of global inequalities: a subordinated economic power on the world scene, with limited voice in the decision-making that directly affects the continent and the exploitation of its natural resources. African countries suffer from food import dependency and unsustainable levels of debt, which gravely affect the governments' abilities to implement social protection and people-centred development measures. However, much more could be done. Government support for agriculture is inadequate and based on a "modernisation" approach. It does not back the small-scale producers who provide 80% of the food consumed in the continent. Decision-making is influenced more by

corporations, donors and international agencies than by democratic consultations with rights-holders. Extractivism and corporate resource grabbing are expanding. Multiple armed conflicts are spurred on by the acceleration of the global armaments markets. These conditions are a breeding ground for youth engagement in dangerous and illicit routes of survival. Women are particularly affected, and their burden is compounded by gender-based violence and inequalities.

2 Regional process

The African regional consultation was organised by a group of CSIPM African members and others that had worked together in the Counter-Mobilisation against Corporate Capture in July 2021: organisations of peasants, family farmers, pastoralists, fisherfolk, Indigenous Peoples, urban food insecure, women and youth, and civil society research/advocacy. Close to 100 responses to the Popular Consultation questionnaire were received from African respondents. 140 organisations registered for the virtual Consultation held on 21 July. The programme featured feedback from different constituencies and discussion in breakout groups on the guiding questions: What challenges are African constituencies/

communities facing as a result of today's multiple crises? How are they reacting? What initiatives are working well? What is being done by authorities to address these issues, with what impacts? What are the most important priorities and key policies to meet immediate needs but also build transformative change? How to confront the obstacles we are encountering to put these in place? How to build coherence and coordinate different voices within and among constituencies and involve other actors who share our concerns?

3 What needs to happen: main messages and recommendations

The outcomes of these rich exchanges was captured in a [Declaration](#) which was shared and discussed on 22 September in a roundtable bringing together perspectives from African governments, local authorities, regional institutions, international agencies, and civil society. The main messages include:

- Recognise and support the value of Indigenous knowledge, plants and people.

- Respect the Maputo Declaration in its 10% commitment and prioritise investment to the benefit of small-scale producers and the development of sustainable territorial food systems to build food sovereignty.
- Develop inclusive coherent cross-sectoral food strategies and policies that support African producers to continue to supply territorial markets, and cover most of the needs of urban people and local industry with healthy and nutritious food.
- Regulate markets and block imports that undercut local products, and reject free trade agreements that are not in Africans' interests.
- Promote policies and measures that support control over natural resources and biodiversity by African people themselves and reject investments that engender resource-grabbing.
- Promote and support the expansion of agroecology.
- Develop practices of responsible consumption as citizens, based on agricultural and food products that are supplied by family farms and local agro-food units, contributing to the reduction of food dependency.
- Defend all interrelated human rights and maintain peace and security.
- Advocate for the UN CFS to act as an inclusive multilateral space for developing coherent, globally coordinated policy guidance addressing present and future food crises.

EUROPE AND WESTERN AND CENTRAL ASIA

“Russia’s war in Ukraine is the greatest tragedy for the two peoples and states in modern history, as it violated the fundamental right to life of everyone.”

- European Consultation

1 Introduction

This consultation had a particular dimension, as it brought together people from diverse regions. It was particularly enriched with contributions from the Russian Federation, countries of the Community of Independent States (CIS), and from Ukraine. The consultation indicated strong

solidarity among all civil society participants, who condemned food being used as a geopolitical weapon. They called for the respect, protection and fulfilment of human rights and agroecological transformation as fundamental for food sovereignty.

2 The process

The European and Western and Central Asian regional consultation was organised by the CSIPM in close collaboration with the Nyeleni Europe process and the regional counter-mobilisation to the 2021 UN Food Systems Summit. The overall process received inputs from, among others, Italy, France, UK, Belgium, Netherlands, Austria, Spain, Ukraine, Germany, Russia, Switzerland, Portugal, Georgia, Croatia, Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan

including 5 pan-European and international networks. Close to 20 responses to the online popular questionnaire were received from European respondents. Around 30 people were present during the virtual Popular Consultation held on 13 July. The programme featured feedback from social movement and civil society actors, and discussion in breakout groups held in English, French, Russian and Spanish.

3 The main messages and outcomes

The war in Ukraine, and the resulting migration, destruction of infrastructure, and disruption of supply chains and export markets, is affecting agrifood corporations. Small-scale producers have proven to be more adaptable by planting more crops and actively supplying local markets with fresh produce. In the face of sanctions since 2014, the agro-industrial sector has been focusing on import substitution. In all territories, farmers continue to produce, and food is available. Despite this, the rising food prices led to increased hunger and food insecurity in all parts of Europe, with more and new categories of the population becoming dependent on food aid. Farmers themselves face difficult choices given the need to change their farming methods, the pressure to produce more, the adverse effects of the climate emergency, increased production costs, and price pressure from food processors and retailers. Inequalities are on the rise, based on multiple forms of discrimination including class, gender, race, sexuality, disability, age, rurality, and origin. This affected the mobilisation and participation of rights holders in public policy decision-making. The agro-industry lobby used the war in Ukraine to argue for the status quo, and to not advance with the greening and transformation of food systems. Responses remained punctual and fragmented,

focusing merely on the consequences rather than on addressing the structural causes, the neoliberal model, and the lack of public regulation. Emergency funds and subsidies were largely captured by big corporations from the pharmaceutical and energy sectors, leaving windfall profits untouched. There was little support to vulnerable sectors, small-scale producers and workers. Public policies hardly recognised the persistent efforts made by those engaged in agroecological transition, social and solidarity economy, and territorial dynamics.

A radical transformation of food systems, based on human rights and agroecology, is urgently needed. The RtF needs to be enshrined and realised regionally to address increasing food insecurity and protect the rights of marginalised communities, the food insecure, Indigenous Peoples, peasants and other people working in rural areas, women and youth. The strengthening of territorial food systems must go hand in hand with public policies that regulate markets, and revise trade relations so as to serve human beings and not the profit of the corporate sector.

LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

1 Regional process

The consultations were organised by the CSIPM in close collaboration with the regional counter-mobilisation process to the 2021 UN Food Systems Summit. The online questionnaire received responses from 34 social movement and civil society actors between May and August 2022, including from Mexico, Colombia,

Guatemala, Brazil, Bolivia, Haiti, Peru, Argentina, Paraguay and Costa Rica. In July 2022, two popular consultations were held via Zoom, one restricted to social movements and civil society actors, and one open to academics, governments and regional bodies.

2 What has happened? - Impacts and responses

The impacts of the pandemic are perceived as a deepening of pre-existing chronic inequalities, manifested in the lack of access to land and essential public services, the precarisation of labour, and discrimination against peasants in favour of mega food industries. In addition, the pandemic has a strong spiritual and cultural impact on Indigenous Peoples.

The war in Ukraine caused an increase in the prices of basic foodstuffs and inputs for agricultural production, especially urea, and fuel. It also reinforced and accelerated the agenda of large corporations in digitalisation, Genetically Modified Organisms (GMOs), the control of markets, and wild speculation in futures markets.

Government responses remained characterised by a lack of adequate measures, which was particularly visible in the weakening of the public sector. Measures such as the closure of school meals, wage cuts, and misleading advertising regarding donations favoured corporations, while undermining local production, marketing and access to quality food. In response to the exacerbation of the multidimensional crisis caused by the war in Ukraine, the trends remain

as follows: increased reliance on imported food and inputs for industrial agriculture, more flexible imports of pesticides and GMOs, and a lack of support for local and agro-ecological production.

Meanwhile, civil society responses focus on a profound transformation of food systems towards agroecology and food sovereignty.

3 What needs to happen? - Demands and proposals from Indigenous Peoples and movements

- Base emergency anti-hunger programmes on the grassroots experiences of solidarity practised during the pandemic, not on donations from the ultra-processed food and drink industry.
- Prioritise comprehensive and popular agrarian reform and territorial protection. Guarantee access, tenure and management of land and natural resources (especially water) for family, peasant and Indigenous agriculture (including through regional agreements). Guarantee the security of human rights defenders, especially land and water rights defenders.
- Ensure a package of public policies, including adequate financial instruments and increased institutional procurement mechanisms, for the strengthening of family and peasant agriculture, ensuring that these policies promote autonomy and non-dependence, and encourage the participation of women and youth.
- Promote short food supply chains to strengthen producers' and consumers' autonomy (logistical support, tax incentives, appropriate legislation).
- Ensure spaces for qualified social participation in the formulation, implementation and monitoring of public food policies.
- Realise the right of access to information and promote innovative mechanisms for the systematisation and circulation of knowledge among, from and to family and peasant agriculture.
- Recognise peasants as rights-holders and promote the implementation of UNDROP.
- Promote regional cooperation against the corporate capture of food decision-making bodies, as promoted by the Pan American Health Organisation (PAHO).
- Call on progressive governments in the region to review FTAs and promote regional food sovereignty policies.

ASIA

1 Context

Asia and the Pacific encompasses a large area with many sub-regions characterized by tremendous geographic, biological, agricultural, socio-cultural, ethnic, and linguistic diversity. South and Southeast Asia are extremely

vulnerable to climate change-induced catastrophes because of glacier melts, cyclones, storms and drought. The worst affected areas are populated by peasant, fisherfolk, pastoral, indigenous peoples' and urban poor communities.

2 Impacts

The COVID-19 pandemic and the Russia-Ukraine war have led to deepened poverty, hunger and indebtedness. However, prices of food, fuel, agricultural inputs, healthcare and essential goods/services had already been rising beforehand because of lack of market regulation and price controls. Over the past decades, economic liberalisation, “modernisation” of agriculture and fisheries, corporate expansion into national food systems and privatisation in most sectors have been rampant across the region. These trends resulted in the deterioration of public goods, services and social protection; the erosion of local food self-sufficiency, community custodianship of the commons (especially those vital for food security), and women’s control over food and nutrition; transfer of land to wealthy elites and corporations; and conversion of land and forests for industrial and infrastructure purposes. Despite economic growth, inequality within and across countries, and distress migration, have increased.

The main impacts include the deterioration or complete loss of livelihoods for peasants, fisherfolk, pastoralists, agricultural workers and street vendors; job losses for informal sector workers; and increased urban and rural impoverishment. Sufficient, nutritious food is becoming increasingly out of reach for those who depend on daily wages for survival, and employment has become more precarious. The rise in fuel and input costs has led to more indebtedness among peasants and fisherfolk, many of whom have taken on wage work in other sectors to make ends meet. Fisherfolk also face a decline in fish catch because of increased waste in the oceans. Pastoralists have been unable to access grazing lands, fodder and markets. Land

and resource grabbing, militarisation of territories and government persecution of grassroots leaders, journalists and human rights defenders have increased alarmingly.

Indigenous Peoples already faced tremendous official neglect with regard to access to essential services, now compounded by recent crises. Their territories, commons, culture and knowledge systems are threatened even more. Migrant workers and refugee peoples have faced particular hardships due to the absence of legal protection. Women have borne the brunt of the crises due to the patriarchy that is embedded in economic and social systems, and in cultural beliefs. Women and girls are responsible for family and community care work; the crises have increased their work burdens and vulnerabilities. Women are central to small-scale food provision but have not received recognition and support as farmers and workers. Landless rural women who work as daily labour have lost wages. There has been substantial increase in domestic violence, and harassment and rape of women and girls by uniformed personnel. Underage marriages increased.

Young people have lost several years of education. The closure of schools meant that midday meals were not available for children. Digital education methods were not equally accessible to everyone. Many rural communities do not have access to electricity, telephone and Internet signals. Devices needed for online education were also unaffordable to rural-urban poor families. Outward migration of young people to find jobs increased.

3 Responses

Most of the effective support came from communities, social movements and civil society organisations through legal assistance, fundraising, seed sharing, food exchanges, knowledge sharing about agroecology, community kitchens/pantries, and the setting up of local markets, cooperatives and work opportunities. Although some emergency programmes sought to alleviate the worst impacts, governmental responses for the most part were characterised by mismatched solutions and reliance on the

private sector rather than on balanced, robust and dynamic public expenditure that is focused on small-scale food producers, workers and local food production. Government provisions remain “aid-like”, unsustainable and targeted at large, commercial farming. As a result, existing meagre public funds have not provided ample support to rights-based grassroots approaches such as agroecological practices and diversification of farming systems. The governments’ inability to control market prices, inflation and food

hoarding by the wealthy were also cited as causes of economic distress. Economic recovery programmes have continued to favour corporations. The lack of coordination between

national and local levels resulted in the priorities of local communities being ignored.

4 What Needs to Happen:

- Support community initiatives and social movements, and participatory decision-making processes.
- Build and strengthen intersectional grassroots formations.
- Provide adequate, timely and flexible support to small-scale food producers, workers, rural-urban poor communities, so that they may identify the inputs, materials, technologies and services needed for production and livelihoods.
- Raise awareness, mobilise people for the RtF, food sovereignty, agroecology, and policy advocacy for local food systems.
- Recognise and respect Indigenous Peoples' rights, including to land and territories, knowledge systems, Indigenous foods, models of production and land use.
- Stop importing food that can be produced locally; support small-scale food producers to produce food for society, build local-national food systems.
- Build national/sub-national food reserves through public procurement of food from small-scale producers, and guarantee fair, remunerative prices.
- Put in place fair legal systems and public policies that favour small-scale food producers, workers, working classes, urban-rural poor and women, instead of corporations and elites. These include agrarian reform and protection of Indigenous Peoples' rights to territory. Policies must put smallholders at the driving seat of decision-making and planning.
- Protect traditional species and seeds, stop bio-piracy by corporations, and reverse patent and IPR laws that favour corporations.
- Control prices of essential goods and services, and make them publicly available.
- Stop pollution and environmental destruction/deterioration, and protect natural resources.
- Promote and support agroecology; ban chemically intensive farming.
- End the culture of impunity in human rights violations, social injustice and extrajudicial killings.
- Engage youth in solving agriculture problems. Youth bring an innovative, tech-savvy perspective to solving some of the most difficult problems in agriculture, and they are eager to apply their technology skills to create change in their communities.
- Dismantle private sector/corporate monopolies in all aspects of food systems; stop the liberalisation of food and agriculture, large-scale monocultures and industrial agriculture.
- Ensure inclusive and participatory policy-making and people's engagement in food and agricultural production.
- Promote the equal distribution of resources, subsidies, and relief packages, through favourable policies for food production and equitable distribution of food.

NORTH AMERICA

1 Introduction

The North American sub-region of the CSIPM consists of Canada and the United States of America, two major agricultural exporting countries that also share the legacy and enduring effects of settler colonialism. During the pandemic, we witnessed huge increases in

wealth inequalities. The results of the Peoples' Consultation highlighted these inequalities and the vulnerabilities created by a globalised food system, but also showed the resilience of marginalised people and communities.

2 Process

The CSIPM survey was disseminated to constituencies, and 9 respondents provided testimonials. Two virtual roundtables were organised, with participation by farmers and farmworkers, policy analysts, academics, and advocates.

3 Key Messages

The effects of the pandemic continue to be deeply felt in North America. Government programmes have primarily benefited agribusinesses and larger-scale farmers and landowners. Smaller-scale farmers, especially those producing for local consumption, face serious challenges to their livelihoods due to corporate consolidation,

the destruction of local infrastructures, soaring land prices, and rising costs for inputs. A deep reduction in the capacity of community-based advocacy and movement-building has also been observed. However, a racial justice awakening during the pandemic has been a bright spot for change.

4 Impacts

- Increased food insecurity, particularly among Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour (BIPOC) communities, women, and youth.
- Loss of community-based and decentralised food system infrastructure for food storage and food processing.
- Acceleration of land consolidation and corporate investment in land, and lack of protections against predatory land speculators and land grabbing, particularly for farmers of colour.
- Housing crisis and soaring land prices, exacerbated by an influx of people arriving from urban areas.
- Increased fuel prices that deepened inequalities and further entrenched limitations for marginalised communities and young people.
- Weakened capacity to engage in political mobilisation due to strain and greater reliance on off-farm income.

5 Responses

While some government programmes served to support those in need, social safety net policies have not recognised the social and environmental values that small-scale producers provide to society. Policies fail to address the inequalities of the capitalist system, and a lack of strong policy coordination from local to national levels further represents a failure of governments to provide viable solutions as duty bearers.

Mutual aid communities were formed to address gaps in the safety net. However, it remains to be

seen whether these structures will be durable and lasting. Major movements emerged after the murder of George Floyd to challenge systemic racism, representing a potential social justice awakening and new cross-racial coalitions.

The resilience of local food systems also led to consciousness building about the need for radical food systems transformation. There are efforts to reactivate local food policy councils, with a significant focus on land access in cities and peri-urban areas and solidarity economies.

6 Demands

- Coherent policies to stop corporate capture, shift the power imbalance, and prioritise small-scale, agroecological food production and territorial food systems. These policies would need to include minimum price supports for agricultural goods, parity policies, and termination of the WTO's Agreement on Agriculture to be replaced with trade policies that centre on food sovereignty, human rights, and truly sustainable food systems.
- Policies and programmes to address the land consolidation trend and ensure land access and tenure for food producers, particularly for BIPOC communities and for young people.
- Institutional recognition, and implementation, of the RtF.
- The rebuilding of spaces for collective movement building and democratic engagement.
- Structural representation.
- An uplifting of social solidarity as a key solution to end food insecurity and create food sovereignty.

Published in October 2022
Civil Society and Indigenous Peoples' Mechanism (CSIPM)
for relations with the UN Committee on World Food Security
(CFS)

www.csm4cfs.org
info@csm4cfs.org

Find us on

[Twitter](#)

[Youtube](#)

[Linkedin](#)

