

Report of the Global Network for the Right to Food and Nutrition (GNRTFN) Encounter at the World Social Forum, February 11 - 19, 2024

March, 2024

The Global Network for the Right to Food and Nutrition (GNRTFN) participated in an international Learning and Exchange Program organized by FIAN Nepal prior to the World Social Forum (WSF). During the WSF, GNRTFN, together with FIAN International (including FIAN Nepal) and Bread for the World, Germany, organized two side events; 1) Global Talk on Hunger, the Right to Food and Food Sovereignty and 2) 20 Years of Right to Food Guidelines: Past, Present and Future. GRNTRN also had three brief but exciting moments of reconnecting with members present at the WSF.

This report is a brief summary of these three activities.

We thank Bread for the World, Germany, for its generous support.



Members of the GNRTFN at the Solidarity March of the WSF.

The Learning and Exchange Program

The Learning and Exchange Program consisted of an introductory session on the right to food legislation in Nepal (the Right to Food and Food Sovereignty Act and the drafting of guidelines for the implementation of the Act) and case exposure trips to 5 cases of violations of the right to food and nutrition (RTFN). One group visited 3 cases of the violations of the RFTN: Pollution from the United Cement plant in Dhunibeshi municipality, southeast Nepal, has impacted the quality and quantity of agricultural produce and the health of local people since it was established in 2008. At least 230 households are affected as the vast majority of them depend on farming for their living. The villagers demand that mitigating actions be taken by the factory. In Chitwan, south Nepal, the military denies indigenous peoples' access to forest, river and customary land. About one thousand indigenous households are affected. The community forest, rivers and customary land have long provided an important source of food to the people living in the buffer zone of the Chitwan National Park. When caught entering, women are fined, detained, and forced to work for free. Wild animals also enter the

land, destroying agricultural products, settlements and even killing people. The indigenous community of Bote must be allowed to enter the forest, rivers and customary land; and barriers must be established to protect their lives and livelihood. In another case in Raksirang Rural Municipality, Chainpur, a Chepang indigenous community's RtFN is threatened due to a lack of secure tenure and demands for land titles.

The communities have been advocating for the accountability of local, provincial and national government by submitting petitions and engaging with authorities with the support of FIAN Nepal. The members of the GNRTFN expressed their solidarity with all the communities.

The delegation also held meetings with the Joint Secretary of the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock Department, Mr. Sanjiv Jumar Karna, as well as with several members of Parliament, the Nepal National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) and several key CSOs, and actively interacted with and learned from them about the challenges and opportunities of the Right to Food and Food Sovereignty Act in realizing the RTFN of the people of Nepal.



Indigenous community living near the Chitwan National Park.



Interaction with the Chepang community in Chainpur.

A group photo after the introductory workshop.





Members of the GNRTFN at the Solidarity March of the WSF.

World Social Forum

The delegation actively participated in two side events which were organized by FIAN International, FIAN Nepal, and Bread for the World, Germany.

"20 Years of the Right to Food (RTF) Guidelines – Past, Present, and Future" was co-organized by the GNRTFN. The objective of the side event, among others, was to learn from country experiences and strategies and build a renewed commitment by the government towards a new global agenda for the RTFN. Moderated by Neetu Sharma, Center for Child and the Law (CCL), National Law School of India University, here are some highlights from the side event:

- Colin Gonzales, a human rights lawyer from India, reminded how the situation of the right to food today in India is worse than at the time of the adoption of the Guidelines. He emphasized the need to coordinate an international campaign and apply the RTF in courts and laws;
- FAO emphasized the human catastrophe of the current hunger situation yet 45 countries have the Right to Food in their constitutions and committed towards working with CSOs in the light of the 20 Years of the RTF Guidelines;
- Pramod Adhikari, Nepal Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock Development, re-emphasized the need for regulation for the implementation of the RTF Law in Nepal;
- Martin Remppis, Bread for the World, Germany, called the German Government which supported the adoption of the RTF Guidelines to take its commitment, especially its international commitment seriously, in line with the section 3 of the RTF Guidelines;



Martin Remppis, Bread for the World Germany, speaking at the Side Event on the 20 Years of the RTF Guidelines.

World Social Forum - Continued

- Nayara Cortes Rocha, FIAN Brazil, shared the Brazilian experience of the right to food, the revival of the Brazilian Food and Nutrition Security National Council (CONSEA), and the importance of people-centered governance for the progressive realization of the RTFN.

The side event was well attended by over 150 people. The final declaration was drafted and is now open for endorsement by allies and partners:

<https://forms.gle/rhYNKkdoUUtpq2SA6>

The GNRTFN delegation also contributed greatly to the success of the second side event, "Global Talk on Hunger, the Right to Food and Food Sovereignty". The event was also co-organized by WHH Nepal and aimed to send out clear messages about the people's right to food sovereignty while opposing globalization, privatization, and commercialization, and to deliver strong solidarity for individual and collective global movements of activists fighting against inequality, poverty, and hunger. The GNRTFN delegation from Bangladesh, Pakistan, India and FIAN Sections from Indonesia, Burkina Faso and Brazil made oral interventions on the challenges faced in their respective countries regarding the RTFN.

In addition to the two side events mentioned above, FIAN, in collaboration with the World Forum of Fisher Peoples, a member of the GNRTFN, organized the workshop "Reclaiming Our Ocean. Our Future. We belong to the ocean. We are Fisher Peoples". This was the only event among the 400+ events at the WSF that explicitly focused on the human rights of fisher peoples and coastal communities. The role of fishers as guardians and custodians of the marine ecology and the threats they face from the marine economy expansion - such as the ever-expanding aquaculture industry or massive development projects such as mining, oil drilling and tourism - and the impact of these projects on their livelihoods were discussed.



The panelists of the Global Talk on Hunger, the Right to Food and Food Sovereignty.



Togs Baladad, Focus on the Global South, facilitates the meeting of the Asia Chapter/GNRTFN.

Meetings of the GNRTFN

There were three meetings of the GNRTFN: the Coordinating Committee (CC) meeting, the Global Gathering, and the Asia Chapter meeting.

The CC Meeting: The four CC members present in Kathmandu met for the first time and held their first physical meeting. CC members began by expressing solidarity with Ahmed Sourani, a CC member from GUPAP in Gaza. The purpose of the meeting was to explore the potential role of the GNRTFN within existing policy and networking spaces focused on food sovereignty and the RTFN. Suggestions from CC members included mainstreaming RTFN, educating communities, showcasing global approaches to RTFN, and building a narrative around RTFN. They also emphasized linking the RTFN to food sovereignty, creating external pressure, and using human rights mechanisms. In addition, they discussed using communications and media, following international processes, and identifying collective actions that the network could support, such as contacting special procedures and using social media platforms. The meeting concluded by thanking the outgoing CC members for their contributions.

The Global Gathering: The members of the GNRTFN had a pleasant gathering around the fireplace of the Kathmandu Guest House. The members introduced their organizations, focus of work in relation to the RTFN and enjoyed the moment of interaction and get-together. The members also welcomed Biraj Patnaik, one of the founding members of the GNRTFN, who shared a brief history of the establishment of the GNRTFN and expressed his appreciation in how the GNRTFN continues to thrive and grow.

The meeting of the Asia Chapter: This space was exclusively for the members of the Asia Chapter, which was established during the last physical meeting of the GNRTFN in Indonesia in 2018. The Asia Chapter has been meeting regularly since then. The Asia Chapter members discussed possible priorities for the Asia Chapter for 2024 and the years to come. A follow-up meeting is planned for the end of March.

Appendix - List of Participants

Maisnam, Kalanjoy Singh / Center for Social Development, India
Salma, Umme / KAHNI Bangladesh
Perera, Nimal / NAFSO, Sri Lanka
Spartegus, Jones / World Forum of Fisher Peoples
Herenj, James / Right to Food Campaign India
Tripura, Mathura Bikash / Malaya Foundation
Divis, Frances / Zambia Alliance for Agroecology and Biodiversity (Zaab)
Paikray, Prasant / POSCO Pratirodh Sangram Samiti (PPSS), India
Carranza, Danny / Katarungan, Philippines
Pribadi, Dian / FIAN Indonesia
Kurniawaty, Arie / Solidaritas Perempuan (SP), Indonesia
Sharma, Neetu / Centre for Child and the Law/National Law School of India University (NLSIU)
Maqsood, Riffat / Pakistan Kissan Rabita Committee (PKRC)
Baladad, Togs / Focus on the Global South
Silga, Lucien / FIAN Burkina Faso
Cortes Rocha, Nayara / FIAN Brazil
Hertani, Rachmi / FIAN Indonesia / TNI
Owigi, Hannington Owino / PELUM Association Regional Secretariat (PARS), Uganda
Sathivel, Visva / FIAN Sri Lanka
Jony, Jahangir Alam / UBINIG, Bangladesh
Imran, Zahid Mohammad / Participatory Research & Action Network (PRAAN), Bangladesh
Babb, Suzanne / WhyHunger, USA
Remppis, Martin / Bread for the World, Germany
Mari, Francisco / Bread for the World, Germany
Tang, Yifang / FIAN International Secretariat
Pabst, Sabine / FIAN International Secretariat



