

VOICE OF THE RURAL WORLD

2010/04 N° 100

Women and the right of ownership of land

VMR

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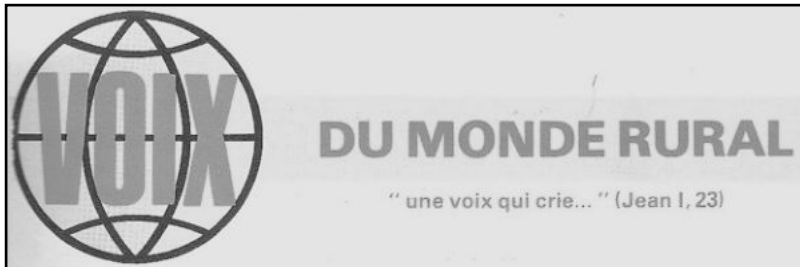
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highlights the rural world's life and activities of the member
Movements belonging or not to the Federation

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The Voice of the Rural World was first published in 1975. It was Gaby Falc'hun , Secretary General of that period drafted VMR 1. He has been collaborating regularly with FIMARC since 1993 for the drafting of VMR files. This year VMR enter its 30th year of existence and most symbolically we reach today with the 100th edition of it.

Hence this edition have 32 pages again ,considering the historical importance of our publication. I am sure that VMR is a great tool for the members of our movements at the grass roots to understand their realities and challenges of the present world in order to take proper actions for change and more over it is an open space to share the aspiration and information of the rural world. When we are at this historical moment, I must express "A big thank you " from my deep heart as well as from the readers of VMR to Gaby who dedicated his time and capacity for the successful publications of VMR so far.

It is evident that VMR brought many key topics and issues for public debate and understanding and more over brought solidarity among the rural people around the world .I am quite sad to inform you that Gaby stops his service with this edition but continue his collaboration in the Human rights working group of FIMARC. A very nice interview of Gaby is part of this edition and I am sure you will enjoy reading it.

The main theme of VMR 100 is "land access and land rights of women which is the second analysis on land issues. In this edition the main article explain about the specific situation and challenges facing by women with regard to land access, control and management as well as the causes that makes them vulnerable and how we as movement can act on it .

More than 60% of the hungry are women and children, which is quite a paradox given that it is women who produce 60% to 80% of the food in developing countries. Women face various constraints around the world related to access to land and property. Cultural, economic and social barriers are obstacles for women to own, inherit and use land. Nearly one third of the households in the whole world are headed by women. To give women right to access to land and property would not only provide an adequate shelter for all, it would also be one way of breaking the vicious circle of poverty

While women in rural areas are typically employed in the agricultural sector, many do not have legal rights to the land they work on. Disparity in land access is one of the major causes for social and economic inequalities between males and females in rural areas. It jeopardizes food security at the household and community levels, and has an impact on national food security and development. The situation of women in urban areas is also not different. Land rights for women can be governed largely by three major items' the right to use land' , 'the right to control land', 'the right to transfer land','

There is a need to recognize and understand those social and cultural practices and values and changing socio-economic patterns that act to limit women's access to land and there is a need for laws guaranteeing independent access to land for women'. Greater involvement of women in policy-making at local, national and international levels is essential, especially in the implementation of land reform

In fact we have received a lot of reactions from our readers explaining how much they are preoccupied with the current tendencies regarding land grabbing in their countries. I encourage all of you to send us information's about your engagement and local struggles on this topic too

Please note that the next VMR will bring a third analysis on the land issues with a particular focus on indigenous people. Looking forward to receive your reactions and comments, I wish you a good reading

Yours Sincerely

*George Dixon Fernandez
Secretary General*



Action of Movements

MRC (Spain)

Since several years we celebrate 15 October the World rural women's day, women invisible in the world. We celebrate this special day for rural women, in connection with the call of the World Conference on women (Beijing, 1995), the International Federation of agricultural producers (IFAP), the Global Summit of Women (FCMM) and the World Union of Rural Women (UNMR)

Accurate statistics of recent years on gender confirmed that most poor in the world are women, and that they have an overwhelming responsibility to feed hungry children and also the men.

Despite this, these women are the last to access to resources, training and financial loans. In many countries, the problems of rural women are aggravated by the migration of young men, in good physical condition to cities to find work.

15 October 2010 -day prior to the World Food Day- our message was "it is worth to invest the means in rural women to achieve food security. We realise that the investment in education for women and girls has the highest efficiency compared with any other investment in developing countries.

During the World Day of Rural Women in our country, we reiterate that we need to continue working for equal rights and duties of the urban and rural world, men and women in society and in the Church.

Our faith encourages us to believe that another world is possible and that needed us to work today itself for a world more

livable in rural areas and, in particular for women.

We support and we sympathize with all organizations working and fighting for the construction of a more just and more benevolent society according to God's plan, and we encourage all women of our societies to be organized and to work in the same direction.

ACRF (Belgium)

What shall we eat tomorrow?

It was the title of the colloquium organized by ACRF (Rural Christian Action of Women) on 16 and 17th September 2010 on the theme « the food and the Food sovereignty ». Such a programme embarks everybody whether they are consumers or producers. This new theme does not drop out the previous ones. We should not forget that we are still reflecting on the poverty. This reflection will continue during the months to come because when we speak about food we also speak about hunger. A billion persons are concerned in the world. How we cannot think of it! While getting safe and sufficient food here we have to foresee the connection with all the inhabitants of the planet.

Several speakers, persons in charge of platforms (FIMARC, platform for Food Sovereignty), or politics (Minister Of Agriculture and Rural Affairs) helped us to encircle the problem.



Camp Chak N°5, Rangpur (Pakistan) August 2010

The reflection work in regions and basic groups up to June 2011 will allow to deepen the subject and to collect the questions of Women of the rural world. These will be collected by the Board of directors and will hand over to the politicians.

FIMARC (Pakistan)

The 2010 monsoon flood disaster in Pakistan has been massive and unprecedented, killing more than 1,700 persons, affecting over 5 percent of the land area, more than 14 million people, and causing billions of dollars in losses and damages to infrastructure, housing, agriculture and livestock, and other family assets.

Thousands of people are homeless and helpless living under the open sky or have been put into temporary camps for saving their lives. Immediate and long-term health risks caused by the flood are high. Flooding can increase the

spread of water-borne diseases when access to clean drinking water is compromised. Likewise standing water caused by flooding can serve as breeding grounds for mosquitoes, increasing the potential for vector-borne diseases. Feeling the health sufferings of flood affected people, FIMARC- Pakistan organized a one day medical relief camp on August 23, 2010 at Chak No 5, Rangpur, tehsil and district Muzaffargarh. Chak No. 5 is the most dense and populated vicinity of Christian Community and as well as was most affected flood area.

MFC (Togo)

The MFC movement will celebrate soon its 40th anniversary .MFC has celebrated the World Food Day on October 16th as proposed by FIMARC. This action was quite successful, especially from a spiritual point of view, by participating in the half day fasting.



Materially, it was not exactly a success as the information reaches the grass root groups quite late, but we are promising success on both plans, material and spiritual for next year, as we will organize ourselves sooner in order to mobilize even before the call of the international secretariat.

MARC (Cameroon)

In Cameroon, since the World Assembly, three meetings have been hold in 3 different dioceses to reconstitute the works of the world assembly and especially to exchange with the members so that they can really integrate the theme of decrease and to adopt attitudes allowing them to join the fight with their possibilities. They have understood that everyone has to pay attention of their contribution and nothing is to be neglected. They are convinced that the native agriculture has to be developed and protected, as it preserves the environment contrary to the agro industrial agriculture. Therefore it is necessary to revive the traditional food habits and to turn back to the imported food, with all its advertisement and capital that brings more and more weight to our national debt and weaken our national balance.

For the protection and development of indigenous seeds, women of the movement have set up 2 banana plantation, one of 2 hectares in Ndelle and the other of one hectare in Nkilzok with native planting materials to keep it alive as it has a tendency to disappear due to the fact that most of the people are rejecting it.

With this products, they will participate in an agro pastoral festival that will take place from 9 to 14 of December in Ebolowa.

It will be a possibility for them to exchange with other farmers and to make their seed more famous. The present edition of this festival will be hold at a moment of important event of the civil society, where MARC movement is active in order to avoid any advertisement for the GMO seeds and GMO products.

MARC movement is also associated to the same fight in relation with imported products that are receiving subsidies in their countries and destroying the local agriculture. This fight is in the context of the national session for the vote of the budget 2011 where the deputies should vote the biggest part of the budget for agriculture.

MRD (Argentina)

8th of September is the Farmer's Day and this celebration is becoming more and more important in the different rural areas and dioceses in Argentina. In these celebrations we can find the spontaneity of the rural people, happy to come together, to celebrate this day and to share their difficulties, emphasizing priority of the religious aspect in all our activities.

Since many years, the movement animates these activities based on the faith, as like for the "international day of women" and we can see with a lot of pleasure, the reinforcement between the communities year after year during those celebrations of life. We can say that this is the visible fruit of this reality in the middle of all difficulties lived by the rural communities.

FIMARC INTERNATIONAL ACTIONS

FIMARC ACTIONS on World Food Day 2010 -United against Hunger

On 16 October 2010, World Food Day enters its 30th year. This date also marks the 65th anniversary of the founding of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations.

The theme of this year's observance was united against hunger. Uniting against hunger becomes real when state, civil society organizations and other stake holders work in partnership at all levels to defeat hunger, extreme poverty and malnutrition.

During the World Food Day 2010, when there have never been so many hungry people in the world, as a response to the call of FAO, FIMARC launched an International campaign to fight and unite against hunger. This year we organized our actions in connection with World Food Day in a much more participatory and meaningful way. Number of hungry people surpassed 1.1 billion marks at the peak of food and financial crisis and most of them are living in rural world.

As a movement of rural people, it is our responsibility to sensitize and initiate concrete actions to reduce this hunger crisis at different levels. In this context FIMARC urged all member movements to participate in the World Food Day 2010 in a more pragmatic way by observing a half day fasting in solidarity with the poor and marginalized who face hunger every day in their in life and thus

to launch a special fund from those who save some money through their fasting to facilitate actions eradicating hunger as well as to support the most needy people.

Even though it was a short notice, many FIMARC national movements responded to this call positively. It is important to notify few concrete actions from our movements .

Our movement in South Korea (CCFM) Collected rice from their members in order to send 125 tons of rice to North Korea to help the people who are in need and to show the solidarity. The Bangladesh movement RRF/BPDF organised a fasting campaign with their partners and with school students and collected money and contributed to World Food Programme (WFP) as well as for FIMARC WFD fund (602 USD). Our Spanish movement MRC supported a concrete project running by the women groups in Cameroon .

Considering the reactions of this year, it is quite sure that next year all the movements will prepare well in advance to continue this campaign in a more wider and result oriented manner

FIMARC call upon the movements to join with the petition “1 billion hungry project” launched by FAO director general Dr Diouf to reflect the moral outrage of the hunger situation and we invite you all to sign the anti-hunger petition at www.1billionhungry.org



FIMARC condemns the attack against Christians in IRAQ and all sorts of cruel and inhuman violence

A total of 68 people including 3 priests were killed by terrorist group during the mass at Our Lady of Salvation, Baghdad's main Catholic Church on 31st of October. More than 70 people are seriously wounded from the attack and many of them are women and children; Less than two weeks later, extremists killed five more people in Baghdad's Christian neighborhoods.

FIMARC condemns this attacks as well as all sort of cruel inhuman violence causing death of ordinary innocent people .

FIMARC requested the movements to organise Prayer and mass celebration for the souls of people who was killed in massacre and in solidarity with the church of Iraq- Christians; victims and their families. Our movements in Argentina, Chile, El Salvadore, Africa etc organised special prayer and mass services in this regard aiming for peace

FIMARC's intervention against the Multinational exploitation in Orissa,India

A large South Korean corporation Pohang Steel Company -POSCO's \$12 billion (Rs 52,000 crores)project to build a steel plant yielding 600 million tones of iron ore over 1,200 hectares in Orissa, with a captive port and iron ore mines, is acclaimed as the single largest infusion of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) since the Indian economy liberalized in 1991.

Orissa is one of the poorest state in India with an official estimate of 39.9 per cent of people living below the poverty line. Since 2005 , the attempt of Posco to launch this project with the support of Orissa and central government has been fiercely opposed by local farmers ,indigenous people and fishermen as it results the loosing of their land and livelihoods and cause lot of environmental hard ships

In pursuance of the concern raised at the Asian Coordination meeting of FIMARC regarding the POSCO project, INAG(FIMARC INDIA) made a preliminary investigation about the issue by getting an expert opinion of a researcher from National Centre for Advocacy studies and also made a field visit. A concern letter was send from the FIMARC International secretariat to the state government of Orissa and to the central government of India demanding them to withdraw this project and to save the life and livelihoods of the vulnerable groups. Mobilised public opinion prior to the G8 held in Seoul.

If you want to join in this struggle and to get all additional informations please contact Rony Joseph ,INAG coordinator (infactory@yahoo.com) or George Dixon Fernandez FIMARC Secretary General (fimarc@skynet.be)

Questionnaire

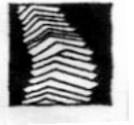
Dear readers of VMR,

As we are having the 100th edition of VMR , we would like to make an evaluation of our publication in order to get a feedback from you in terms of the usefulness of VMR for your actions at the base and also to know about your opinion and suggestion on how we can continue publishing VMR in more effective way in future.

This questionnaire also will be find on our website in word format .
Please fill it and send to the international secretariat by mail or post.

Name and Address + Name of the movement and country

- Since how long are you a reader of VMR?
- How many members of your movement are using VMR ?
- How do you receive VMR (Printed version or Electronic version)?
- Do you think to receive VMR in printed version or electronic version?
- What are the main positive elements for you to receive it as a printed version?
- How VMR is useful for your work with the members of the local movement as well as with a wider society?
- What are the main difficulties for you to receive VMR as electronic version?
- What do you like more about VMR?
- In your opinion which files we have to keep in VMR even though number of pages reduced?
- Can you suggest any other form of publication? which are the other ways of publishing?
- What changes would you like to see in the files of VMR in future?



Women and the right of ownership of land

The global food crisis revealed in broad day light the devastating effects of liberalization of agricultural policy and the abandonment of the family and peasant agriculture in favour of industrial agriculture.

At the same time, access to land is becoming a crucial economic, political and environmental issue. It stressed the important role of peasant women in local development, because they provide a large part of the activities of production and marketing of food products. But still they need to have access to land, as a property and tool, in order to give the full measure of their capacities and initiatives. This is what is far from being the case everywhere in the world. This article underline the situations, challenges, offers perspectives for action to make that women take their full place in the construction of a better future together

WOMEN ARE UNDERMINED AS SECOND CLASS

Women are the real pillars of domestic economy and community. Through their role, they ensure social cohesion and contribute to the production of wealth and food at the local level.

In South Kivu (Democratic Republic of Congo - DRC), land still remains today the property of men; sons inherit the land upon the death of their parents. Women do not inherit in their family or their husband's family.

In the country, large areas of farmland are owned by notably: traditional leaders, political or administrative officials, large local or international operators. Therefore this poses a problem of distribution of land in general, especially for women. In addition to become owners of land, women face a lack of arable land available for life giving family farming. Traditions relegate the women at the second level with regards to access to resources.

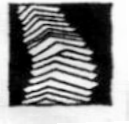


Togo, 2008

In Togo, limitation or the question of ability of women to own and control land reduces their ability to carry out economic activities. It also reduces their livelihoods and their contribution to the development of the country. In Togo, 84.8% of the heirs of the right of land ownership belong to men.

Women are vulnerable and disadvantaged

Culturally deprived of the right to land ownership and inheritance, women do not own any resources: land, livestock, trading funds, field products, areas of political, economic life and education . Life is still seen as the prerogative of only men.



In many countries, women are perceived such as "parent" and "nurse". This is thus limiting their place only in fields and households. They are deprived of the power and control over resources. They do not have access to production resources for their work in order to cover the food needs of their families. As a result, women are doubly vulnerable and disadvantaged, in succession practices and tenure standards.

Dramatic consequences

The situation of discrimination against women is also due to lack of information and communication on human rights in general and their universality: rights are for all. Consequences: insufficient production to cover the needs of families; food insecurity with repercussions on the health of the population; a larger maternal and infant mortality; stagnation of the status of women; an overload of work; a bad study scheme for the children, especially for girls.

In the vast group of landless peasants, where land rights are not guaranteed, women are the most vulnerable and the poorest. The lack of access to land and its enjoyment is the manifestation of social, political and institutional relations that elude them.

And let us add another reality: the rush on arable land for agro fuel production, or to produce for export (phenomenon of the land grabbing by foreign countries or multinational corporations).

Questions proposed to groups and movements:

- *What is the concrete situation in your country or region for the access for women property and land tenure?*
- *What are the obstacles faced by women to assert their right to land, to food and food sovereignty?*
- *Who own farmland in your country or region?*



India, 2001

WOMEN ACT FOR FAMILY AND PEASANT AGRICULTURE

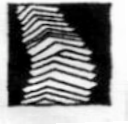
"Gender inequalities are rooted in political, social, economic, cultural and religious systems, in the system of exploitation of the vast majority of women and men by a minority". Oppression suffered by women is the most visible expression of this dominance. It is not only to think of specific actions in favour of women. The temptation is much to the group considering "women" a vulnerable group, instead of dealing with what makes them vulnerable".(VMR 85 - 2007)

We notice that the majority of small activities in the agricultural sector are functioning, thanks to the service of women. It is needed to break the patriarchal model suggesting that women cannot do anything outside of their home. Which means that for a true promotion and liberation of women, men must also change their behaviour; share everything in the family and community life. Because the well-being of families and communities requires genuine collaboration, women - men parity. Indigenous women are doubly discriminated as women and indigenous people.

Be an owner : greater productivity of the land

Due to traditional patterns, and of the dominance of men, women can hardly access to ownership of land; they remain dependent and vulnerable, and can hardly access to positions including peasant organizations.

In many countries, there is a feminization of poverty, as a result of accumulation of economic, social, educational, cultural and political discriminations. In theory, the concept of "head of household" is a neutral expression. But in practice, this term most often refers to men. Consequence: on the land market, women buy less land, smaller plots and often more expensive areas.



Agrarian reforms often prefer chief of the family, which means men. And then, the privatization of land is catastrophic for women. They are deprived of their ability to work in the fields. They lose their self esteem and also of others.

Of so-called developing countries, women own less than 2% of the land and have access to less than 5% of the services. However, the productivity of cultivated land increases when the woman is the owner. Confidently keeping the land, the wife works more and investing. It allows her to sell the surplus of food production. She can then reinvest in seeds, tools, animals, etc.

Questioning the industrial agriculture

Guarantee and security of owning land helps women to access to training, responsibilities in organizations. This allows a greater enrollment of children at schools, especially the girls.

The struggle of women for access to land questions the dominant industrial agricultural system. In this system, millions of farmers and peasants were deprived of the means of production. This model that favours the monoculture, the intensive use of water, energy, pesticides, is not sustainable.

On the contrary, peasant and family farming combines social, economic and environmental aspects. It favours food crops, local consumption, implementing the food sovereignty of peoples and peasants. This agricultural model has the capacity to feed the world. With the imperative condition that women have their place as economic producers, local actors in the family and community at the social and political level, and that they can have access to training, responsibilities and decisions.

Questions proposed to groups and movements:

- *What is the place of women in agricultural organizations? Do they have access to positions of responsibility and decision?*
- *What are the traditional or other - barriers to women's access to land ownership?*
- *What means have been implemented to develop peasant and family agriculture, and fight against industrial agriculture?*

Participation of women in agriculture

"In sub-Saharan Africa, women represent 60 to 80 per cent of labor employed in food crop production and livestock." In Asia, they are responsible for about 50% of the overall food production in the region, with variations depending on the country: 47% of the agricultural population in the Philippines, 35% in Malaysia, 54% in Indonesia, more than 60% in Thailand. In Southeast Asia, they play an important role in the production of rice, including for seedlings, planting, harvesting and processing.

(Women in agriculture – FIAN).

Women excluded from access to land

In the Southern countries, the persons who are producing food are women; however it is always those who are less protected, and always they are feeding last at the end of the day, after the other members of the family. Women always sacrificed for the benefit of man and the family. In Africa, for example, women contribute to 80% of the production of food, while only 2% of them have access to the land.

Land rights

"Almost everywhere, the women's land rights are less solid than men, particularly in Africa." In many regions, they have hardly using rights to natural resources (land, water, etc.). The lack of access to resources can increase the vulnerability of women and have various effects on the management of the environment with an emphasis on short-term logic. The fact that women have less access to resources, or lower quality resources has an impact on their living conditions and their strategies. They sometimes tend to put less energy and precautions in the preservation and conservation of soil (as they do not know if tomorrow they will still be accessed). While securing access and usage rights, it can promote precautionary behaviors of preservation and long-term.

(Women in agriculture – FIAN).



ACT AS A WHOLE, WOMEN AND MEN

Too often, there is a discrepancy between the texts of laws and their practical application. One of the actions is to change attitudes, to make sure that texts are applied and ensure that women have access to the ownership of land. This requires awareness of the need to evolve the customs. This involves an enrollment of girls, women literacy promotion that will enable them to take their place in all jurisdictions. They make them heard, recover their own self esteem.

One of the essential brakes to the release and promotion of women is the non sharing family and educational tasks. Men must share household tasks, the education of children, and should avoid to grab power in the community and the society.



Uganda, 2007

Groups and movements must denounce situations of injustice, their causes and consequences. This requires questioning the policy-makers, promoting situations, and helping to change the laws to women's access to land. It should also enable women to know their rights, to claim them, and enjoy on the same basis as men.

Action Network

We should therefore act on land policy to change legislation and for the advancement of women: to develop their ability, education, training, which involves networking with other organizations and public authorities.

In South Kivu (DRC) a Belgian aid organization has helped women to get solar radios. By this action, the radio becomes an instrument in the hands of women. They are organized into groups, in network. This allows them to know actions carried out by other groups of women. From this information, they put in place local economic actions, which gave an autonomy and incomes for women. It is also a way to publicize human rights and in particular women's rights. By this means, the question of the ownership of land can be put.

It is thus to respond to the financial and economic exclusion of women by strengthening their autonomy, the betterment of their physical conditions, especially for those who have no land. Thus full citizenship for women can be emerged. It promotes a life free of violence, without economic dependency of women to their spouse.

Often a simple action can bring much change: working towards the inclusion of the names of both spouses on the titles of ownership of land. Thus women is recognized as the owner. Defend the right to land for women need to be supported by peasant struggles to defend their rights. In India, "Dalit women Land cooperative" acts to recover their rights on the land, and to ensure food production.



Dalit women- WSF 2004



Multiple means of action

Access to land – even on small areas - contributes to enhancing food security, allows families to resist shocks to food crises, promotes a real woman - man, equality and implements a common management of land and natural resources.

Information and awareness of women and communities can be done by different ways: street theatre, legal aid, testimonies of women who have managed to buy the land and produced for their family and community, dialogues among women's groups, political powers inquiry, training of women on the knowledge of their rights, so they get their rights, etc.

Organizations and movements must act to agrarian reforms in favour of the poor and women. It is therefore requires information; organize arguments in favour of women and their access to land. This requires strengthening human capabilities of all actors, including the poorest women, in a long term vision, that gives women dignity and self-esteem.

Questions proposed to groups and movements:

- *What are the actions you are leading to women's access to land?*
- *With whom do you alliance in these actions and initiatives?*
- *What results have you obtained for the promotion and peasant women's liberation?*

Testimonies

Situation on women and land rights in Asia by Esther PENUNIA (1)

As the situation in Asian countries differ in each country, allow us to share with you the situation as shared by our members in three countries in Southeast Asia : Farmer and Nature Net (FNN) in Cambodia, Aliansi Petani Indonesia and PAK-ISAMA in Philippines.

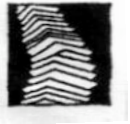
Rice is the staple crop in Indonesia, Philippines and Cambodia and 80-90% of the work in the rice farms are done by both women and men; with men traditionally doing the land preparation work and women traditionally in charge of seed breeding and preparation. Because women are in charge of putting food on the table, they are also into backyard gardening and livestock raising.

It should be noted that in Philippines, Cambodia and Indonesia, even male farmers struggle for their rights to land. Yet, when it comes to women's rights to land, we have to stress that traditionally and customarily , it is the men farmers – their husbands and sons – who have more access to rights to land. The men are prioritized to own-lands, even in customary inheritance . This is mainly because of the dominant notion that the husband is the head of the family and the men are superior to women. Even the laws that give rights to women to own-lands are not sufficient in Indonesia and Cambodia .

In the Philippines, the agrarian reform law allows for the name of the wife to be put alongside the name of the husband in certificates of land ownership awards. This is because of the strong lobby and advocacy work done by Philippine women farmers' organizations in the mid-1990s.

Therefore, to promote women's land rights, there should be more powerful organizing and education work on land and agriculture issues among women farmers first, then get the support of the men farmers. Then women farmers have to build their capacities for policy advocacy and campaign to get their rights to land as well. Women farmers should be in the top leadership positions of farmers' organizations to be able to influence the strategies and directions towards land rights.

(1) Esther Penunia is Secretary General of Asian Farmers' Association(AFA), a regional alliance , currently with a membership of 10national farmers' organizations in eight countries in Asia,representing around 10M small scale women and men farmers.



Our members in Cambodia, Philippines and Indonesia have taken initiatives using these strategies above. FNN (Cambodia) and PAKISAMA(Philippines) have formed women's committees /organizations, have affirmative action (e.g PAKISAMA's 30% - 40% of training participants should be women), have direct services and projects (e.g. FNN's women's savings groups and livelihood groups). In partnership with WOCAN, PAKISAMA and AFA has a rural women's leadership project. We hope these initiatives can be strengthened, and more definite actions on securing land rights for women farmers be supported.

The problems faced by women to be able to assert their rights to land in Kenya by SOPHIE .E. KIBUYWA- Director DESECE ORG

Kenyan women bear disproportionately large share of the burden of work in the house hold, on the farm and on the market places yet less than 5% Kenyan women and girls own land which is a critical resource in our community. In the past due to the patriarchy system women did not own land or property. They had to marry and depend on their husbands or their father or brothers. The patriarchy system which has norms and rules that infringe on women's assertiveness is a big obstacle.

The present constitution of Kenya empowers women to own land and property. In our region women have started to own land and property. This is because of the intervention of DESECE organization on women and girls empowerment which carried out civic education on land issues.

For example Mama Gladys with her four children is a widow. Her husband died in a plane crash, the family of her husband took all the property including land and chased away Gladys with the children. She joined in our organization DESECE and we provided courses on women/girls rights and with the guidance of DESECE and a lawyer, all the property and land for her husband was given back to her. Gladys now lives a dignified life and all her children are in school.

Land issues and rural women in Uruguay by Marta CHIAPPE (2)

Uruguay is one of the most urbanized countries in Latin America. In fact, rural population is just about 9% of the total population of barely above 3 million. In the last 50 years the number of farms has steadily declined, and land property has persistently been very unequally distributed, with currently above three quarters of land being owned by 15% of farmers. Agricultural activity is highly male dominated.

(2) Marta Chiappe has a degree of Agronomy Engineer of the College of Agriculture, University of the Republic of Uruguay (UDELAR), and a Master's Degree and Ph.D in Agricultural Education of the University of Minnesota. Currently she is professor at the Dpt. of Social Sciences of the College of Agriculture at UdelaR, in the area of Rural Sociology.

According to last Census of Population (2004), female population was less than a half (44%) of the total rural population. One of the main reasons for women migration to urban areas lies on the way farming systems are organized.

The main product of the country—beef cattle—is extensively produced on large farms, where most of hired workers are predominantly men. Women are also forced to migrate to the cities as a consequence of scarce job opportunities and lack of services in the countryside.

Despite women have no legal impediment to land ownership, there is a strong male bias regarding land property: of the total landowners identified, only about 18% are women. However, frequently land ownership is under legal figures such as “anonymous societies”, which makes it impossible to identify who owns the land and makes gender-specific information inaccessible.

Rural women organizations—there are two in the country—have raised the issue of female control over land and other resources, whereas other farmers’ organizations have not paid specific attention to this issue. Even with left-wing governments since 2005, so far no public policies have addressed this concern in Uruguay.

Equality between men and women in Belgium by Agnès JAMAR (ACRF Belgium)

At first glance, let’s say that men and women are equal in law, in Belgium.

Actually, women from the agricultural sector continue to struggle to gain the same rights as their husbands or their companions. Over the past five years, they have won two victories. Before 2005, administrative rights as milk quotas were attributed to men. As a consequence, only the man had the right to sell the quota without informing his spouse or companion. Currently, the law requires a co-ownership giving equivalent right to each.

Another example: prior to 2006, independent women who worked on the farm, were considered joint caregiver but had no right. Since 2006, their status is recognized in the same way as their husbands and companions and they open rights to social security.

In the French-speaking part of Belgium, women farmers are organized in an exclusively female Union: Women Walloon Union (UAW). They are affiliated to the Walloon Farmers Federation (FWA) and are represented in the bodies of their male counterparts.

Access to positions of responsibility is not all a problem within UAW. Although women participate in the commissions with the FWA, they are little present in the posts of this structure. They explain that it is due to the fact that they have their own structure but we believe that this reflects what happen in the civil society i.e. an over-representation of men over women.

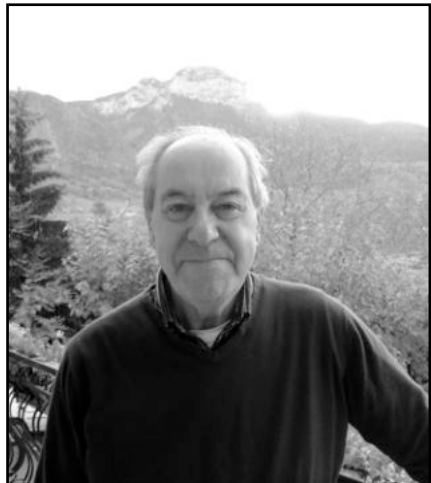


For the VMR n° 100, we asked Gaby (Gabriel) Falc'hun, who realized the n° 1 of this publication to trace the origin and its developments

Gaby, can you firstly introduce yourself for the readers of the VMR?

My name is Gabriel (Gaby) Falc'hun. With Marie-Thérèse, my wife, we have 4 children and 9 grandchildren.

From 1974 to 1978, I was the first permanent Secretary General of FIMARC. Then we came to Haute-Savoie (in the East of France, 50 km from Geneva), where I exercised the profession of a journalist until the end of 1998. I took my retirement at this period.



I have been committed to the reflection and action of the local groups. I am a member of the human rights working group of the FIMARC.

You were at the origin of the VMR. Can you tell us the context that led to launch this publication?

I have first to remind some historical moments. FIMARC was born in 1964, at the initiative of European and African movements with the support of MIJARC.

The first FIMARC newsletter was published in 1966. The editorial had the title "A worldwide dimension.". This annual bulletin was essentially intended for leaders of the movements. Initially working contacts were especially in Europe and in Africa. From late 1969, the contacts established with South America, thanks primarily to the officials of MIJARC. Contacts with organizations in Asia began in 1977.

In 1974 the 4th World meeting was celebrated in Yaoundé in Cameroon; it was the first world meeting hold outside of Europe. Delegates from three continents – Europe, Africa, South America – had exchanges and developed work plans. After the meeting, many of the delegates expressed their wish to continue those exchanges in one way or another.

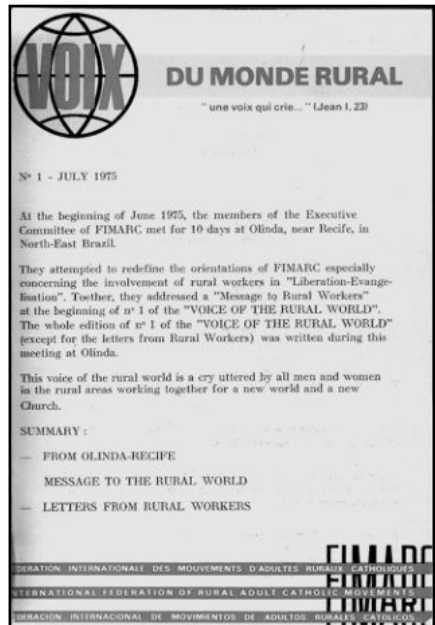
From there, "Letters between rural" was published to exchange news from groups and organizations from different countries. But the international Bureau felt that this was not enough.

In June 1975, the Executive Committee, which met in Recife (Brazil), decided to establish three publications:

Letter to the rural movements (LMR) which continues to exist for the relationship between the organizations of the FIMARC network;

Cahiers of the Rural World, publication designed to serve as support for reports of world assembly, regional and continental seminars...

Voice of the Rural World (VMR) for the movement and grass roots groups.



VMR n°1 - 1975



How n ° 1 of the VMR was launched ?

I was Secretary General of the FIMARC from 1974 to 1978. In July 1975, I launched the VMR n °1. Since the beginning, VMR was published in the current format, with 32 pages and a green color cover, color of hope. The format is important: it is easy to carry in the pocket for a meeting.

From the outset, the reactions were very encouraging, on the part of officials of movements and organizations as well as from organizations in relation with FIMARC: they found in the publication the echoes of the realities of the rural world and action of the movements and organizations and the life of the FIMARC itself.

Between the first numbers and those of today, the content has evolved – which is logical - but always in the same line: to make the VMR a pedagogical tool for leaders, groups and movements.

It shows the realities of rural and farmer's organizations, publish the actions of the movements and organizations, provides a worldwide analysis...

It is also a tool for the movements and organizations of the countries that have limited resources for their own publication.

It should be noted that the dimension "Human rights" has always been present in the VMR.



*Members of the Human Rights working group
of the FIMARC, Geneva 2001*

From 1994, you have worked on VMR writing. How was it done?

During the time, Joseph Pirson was Secretary General, VMR was not published or was published irregularly for some years; I do know why. The Bureau at that time decided to publish the VMR quarterly, but needed help to achieve this task. I was asked to work as volunteer in the drafting of the files. This is what I'm doing every quarterly since 1994. This work is done in close consultation with the Secretary General: Joseph Pirson initially and then Tilleux Leon during 4 years, and Daisy Herman for 12 years.

I stressed the fact that my work was always at the service of the organizations and the movements. I always had the desire to write for countries with limited means. And I could see through some travels in different countries, how VMR was used, annotated, discussed by the teams of movements and organizations.

And you have decided to switch the relay?

Indeed, after many years of writing files, I felt the need to relay to others. It was an exciting work, rich knowledge, an opening on the realities of the rural world of the entire world. It seems that no. 100 is a symbolic issue to retire, not from the concerns of rural world, but from this service. The world meeting in 2010 was also an opportunity which made VMR more in line with the current concerns of the FIMARC and of the rural world

I am confident that others will continue the VMR as a tool to help teams and rural people to understand their realities of life and action to transform their realities.

Finally, I want to say a big thank you to everyone who trusts me for almost 18 years (i.e. writing of over 60 files). I am sure that our roads will intersect at the service of a fairer and more human world.



General Information

NEWS FROM INTERNATIONAL SECRETARIAT AND CONTINENTAL COORDINATION'S



FIMARC Bureau Meeting

FIMARC Bureau meeting was held in Seoul, South Korea from 6-11 September 2010. Ki-hwan Chung (President), Fr. Abraam Maher (Chaplain), Nieves Martinez Bravo (Treasurer), George Dixon Fernandez (Secretary General) participated in the meeting. Philip Biswas (Asian coordinator), Rony Joseph (INAG coordinator, India) were also specially invited for this meeting. During the first three days Bureau had a discussion on organizational matters including the evaluation of the General assembly held in Paraguay and planning for 2011. Bureau took the decisions to Launch a campaign on World Food Day, to extend the deadline of the call for the candidature of chaplain until January 31st 2010, to organise the next

Exco meeting along with a training session on alternative Finances/Economy in April 2011 in Belgium and to publish VMR 100 with 32 pages.

Bureau members visited various projects such as 4 river Project, CCFM Logistics centre, CCFM Seoul diocese direct marketing centre, Korean Agricultural trade Centre etc. We had some interactive sessions with CCFM Bureau and with the CCFM farmers group at Andong region; Various projects organizing by our South Korean movement CCFM at various levels gave a real inspiration to think about the ways to make self reliance in finance for our movements. Thanks to CCFM for the financial contribution towards food and lodging during the Bureau meeting.



GTHD - FIMARC Human rights Group

The meeting of the working group on human rights (GTDH) was held in Ancy Region in France from 30-31st of October 2010. This meeting clarified the mandate, term of office, functioning and task of this group. Lobby and advocacy, preparation of documents on key issues and topics, field investigation and preparation of case studies etc will be the major areas of work of this group. It was also decided to renew the group. As part of research action, the group will prepare a document on the current burning issue of Land Grabbing. Some leaders from other continents will also contribute in this study .A working session with experts is foreseen in Geneva at the beginning of next year ;HR group members will participate in the next Exco to give an update of their work

Vatican Asian Lay Congres – Seoul, South Korea

The Asian lay congress, which had the theme “Proclaiming Jesus Christ in Asia Today “ took place in Seoul ,South Korea from 31 August until Sept. 5. The Pontifical Council for Laity organized the event which was being attended by 400 hundred people, including representatives and bishops from 20 countries from within the Federation of Asian Bishops’ Conferences and delegations from 35 different Asian Catholic lay associations, movements and communities. Cardinal Stanislaw Rylko, the president of the Pontifical Council for the Laity opened the Congress of Asian Catholic Laity in Seoul with the mass on 1st of September.

One of the main aim of the congress, was to discuss the challenges to evangelization and ways of proclaiming the Gospel in Asia. Conferences, panel presentations and extensive discussions examined many elements from within this framework.

Some of the topics covered include the formation of laity, Christian witness in society, religious freedom and the role of women , young people in the Church. Ki-hwan Chung, George Dixon Fernandez, Lawrenca Kwark, Serafina etc were some of the International lay leaders from Asia who attended the meeting. The Holy father gave the blessings and message to the congress. The first Congress of Asian Catholic Laity ended with a call by Cardinal Nicholas Cheong Jin-suk of Seoul for a “fearless” witness to Christ.

African coordination and World Social Forum in Senegal

The WSF was born in 2001 at Porto Alegre (Brazil) and celebrated its tenth birthday last January; The next World Social Forum will takes place in Dakar, Senegal from 6-11 February 2011; If we receive financial support, we foreseen the organization of a pre seminar of 3 days on land rights and land access in the context of Africa with the participation of few people from Senegal and participants from other countries. African coordination meeting, a joint workshop during the WSF probably with Entraide et Fraternite is also planned. A fair for African products, a permanent exhibition, days devoted to solidarity with peoples fighting on various fronts



(Palestine, Haiti, indigenous peoples / indigenous / first, etc..) Days dedicated to a number of categories (farmers; artists/creative people; women; young people; people with disability) will also be organized during the WSF.

If anyone from our member movements have plan to participate in the WSF please communicate this to FIMARC international Secretariat at the earliest so that we can make a common registration

Latin American coordination and seminar on migration

A seminar on migration will takes place in three different regions in Latin America. FIMARC Latin American Coordination will also takes along with the first regional seminar. FIMARC Latin American coordinators are preparing for the programme at the moment.

European Coordination and Seminar on Value of farmer, Value of Europe yesterday or tomorrow in Germany

FIMARC European coordination meeting was held from 9- 10 October 2010 in Assesse ,Belgium in order to prepare for the forthcoming seminar and extended European coordination meeting which will takes place in Bavaria ,Germany from 21-25 February 2011.

The topic of the seminar will be “ Value of farmer, Value of Europe yesterday or tomorrow “. 9 member movements of FIMARC Europe will participate in this seminar; Our german movement KLB is the main organizer of this seminar.

Thanks to KLB for the financial contribution towards this programme.

Asian coordination and seminar on land rights in Sri Lanka

FIMARC Asian Coordination meeting was held in Bangalore from 12-13 August 2010 . It was decided to organize a seminar on” land access and land rights –a development threat “in Sri Lanka in May 2011.

FIMARC ASIA decided to hold the campaign against Plastics by promoting jute bags as well as Setting up of fact finding team to research on land issues in North India on POSCO issue. The Asian Coordination was hosted by INAG.

Thanks to INAG for the financial contribution towards the food and lodge. Another meeting with INAG core team also took place prior to the Asian Coordination meeting.

50th anniversary

In spring 2011, Entraide & Fraternité will celebrate its 50th anniversary.

All over the year, different events will be organized. By the end of January, Entraide building at Brussels will be inaugurated after the important renovation work ; In March, an international seminar with the participation of 20 delegates from the Southern countries will be taking place in Assesse, and it will be the time to “refresh” the Declaration of the Marolles”, document produced 10 years ago.

All these activities will end with the international celebration on April 20th, organized together with Broederlijk Delen, the Flemish counterpart of Entraide. This celebration will be hosted in the cathedral with all our partners and with multi cultural chores of Brussels.

To wind up the overview of this celebration, let us also mention the activities on April 1 and 2 in Liege, celebrating this anniversary, associating the schools, the region and the public in general. Diverse cultural activities will be proposed for all publics.

1961-2011 : The CCFD-Terre Solidaire will celebrate its 50th anniversary

The CCF (Catholic Committee against Hunger) was born in 1961, from the joined initiative of movements and Church services and French Bishops following the campaign against hunger launched by the FAO.

The 15 movements and church services who were components of the first general assembly are nowadays 25.

In 1966, the CCF becomes the CCFD, Catholic Committee against hunger and for Development. Since 2008, the CCFD associates a name to its first name and becomes CCFD-Terre Solidaire.

To celebrate this jubilee CCFD – Terre Solidaire, with the movements and church services of the collegiality, will organize :

- on the 5 of March 2011 an ecumenical evening in the Saint Denis Basilica (Ile de France)
 - on the 6 of March 2011: a celebration in Notre Dame of Paris
- and also a colloquium called «Governance and responsibility ; proposals for a human development in solidarity» on December 8 and 9 of 2011 in the Museum du Quai Branly, in Paris

50th anniversary of Broederlijk Delen

Broederlijk Delen supports some 250 partner organisations in 20 countries to realise their own plans in their struggle against poverty and injustice . The first Lenten campaign was set up in 1961 when the expelled Baluba tribes people were threatened with starvation in Kasai, Congo. All over the year BD will organize different events to celebrate its anniversary.



*Le Bureau de la FIMARC
vous souhaite une très bonne année*

*The Bureau of the FIMARC
wishes you a very happy new year*

*El Bureau de la FIMARC
le desea un feliz año nuevo*

*O « Bureau » da FIMARC
deseja-lhe um muito bom ano*





*Members of the Bureau, Philip Biswas & Rony Joseph
South Korea September 2010*



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