



31 March 2016 – Polytechnic University of Valencia

WORKSHOP 5: THE DIFFICULTIES OF WOMEN'S ACCESS TO LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES

Translated from French by Anna White, Translators Without Borders (TWB)

In opening, participants paid tribute to Berta Caceres, an environmental activist and defender of indigenous peoples, murdered in La Esperanza (Honduras) on 3 March 2016.

EVALUATION

Throughout the world, the vast majority of women are faced with conditions of access to land and control of land and natural resources that are unequal to those of men.

Social relations have trivialized the fact that they are entirely in charge of domestic work and the education of children, which prevents them from devoting themselves as much as men to agricultural activities. In the fields, they are the forced laborers of the family and take on the often less valued tasks, considered as part of their domestic obligations. As a result, they generally receive no income.

The customary rules of heritage often perpetuate inequality. In some areas of Madagascar, for example, women have no rights over the inheritance of their father or husband. In native and indigenous communities, heritage is often the concern of "elders", most often men. The exclusion of women from the inheritance of land is sometimes also advocated in the name of religious concepts.

National institutions reflect these patriarchal structures. Many states are relinquishing women's equality and social inclusion and continue to place a secondary focus on gender issues. In some countries, data on women in agriculture are not available, as they relate only to family and family properties. The legal texts on the environment and development do not always clearly consider the role of women. Generally, they do not have the status of farmers and have less access to credit and agricultural equipment.

Very often, women have no recognized right to land. In India, only 12% of women are land owners. Ownership is only attained after the death of their husband. When it is recognized in their community, collective ownership is often the only guarantee of some access to resources. They are therefore the greatest victims of the disappearance of this form of ownership. If an individual right to land and natural resources is recognized by law, they are generally not in a position to bear the cost of the administrative procedures necessary for its realization (cadastral operations, securitization, etc.). In the same way, they rarely have the means to fully exploit their land.

Market mechanisms that apply to land rights, labor, production means and credit are ineffective in providing women with access and real control over land and natural resources. They are a minority in representative bodies, in civil society organizations and in local, national and international decision-making processes. This has been unfortunately reflected in several panels of the WFAL. Management positions are still too often in the hands of men, which undermines the progress of women's rights.

In the current context of grabbing and concentrating land and natural resources by fewer and fewer individuals and businesses, and crowding out the majority of the rural population, women are doubly penalized. It is a long road to the full and effective implementation of the Convention on the Elimination of

All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), one of whose specific commitments calls for greater access to and control of land and other more egalitarian means of production for women. This commitment was reaffirmed in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG).

Strong political action in favor of women is therefore essential to enable them to access and have control over natural resources. Access to land and control of it by women are paramount for their emancipation, the well-being of families and, consequently, for the fight against malnutrition and poverty. Their role in agriculture is essential. They provide up to 70% of the work in family farming. In doing so, they are the most important contributors to the realization of food sovereignty and food security.

PROPOSITIONS

The actions of citizens should aim to strengthen women's organizations, from the presence of women in farmers' organizations to the education of societies as a whole.

Strengthen women's movements and their presence in farmers' organizations:

- Promote basic legal education for women so that they are aware of existing legal texts concerning them, such as CEDAW,
- Ensure equitable representation within farmers' organizations and in struggles against land grabbing to ensure that patriarchal structures are not repeated,
- Strengthen existing women's organizations and support the creation of new ones where there is a lack of advocacy. Form federation spaces at national and international level to make the common voice of rural women heard. It was proposed to look at the examples of movements and actions of women presented during the workshop such as the MAKAAAM¹ network in India or the marches of Marguerites organized by CONTAG² in Brazil, which allowed for more than 70% of the land in this country to be co-owned by men and women.

Educating societies:

- Raise awareness of all forms of violence against women,
- Evaluate and advocate women's "invisible" work at community and government levels,
- Highlight their major potential for contributing to the fight against land grabbing, the rise of agroecology and thus the fight against poverty, disease, malnutrition, and climate change.

The political demands made by these movements should be aimed at the adoption by the States of the following **political measures**:

- Protection of women against community and institutional violence,
- The full participation of women in governmental, national and local institutions and in decision-making,
- Implementation and protection of women's rights, particularly those stipulated in CEDAW, including secure access to land and natural resources and other means of production and the right to control how they are used, as well as the recognition of the status of women farmers,
- Women's access to credit, subsidies and tax relief to make women's agricultural activity possible and sustainable,
- The obligation to include women's names on documents that demonstrate land rights (ownership, usage),
- Recognition of agricultural work done by women.

¹ A network of 74 women farmers' organizations. It was set up to ensure the implementation of their demands, including redistribution of land to women, registration of their rights, equal access to services, and the creation of community resource centers to promote women's rights. Gender equality, namely the possibility for women to make free choices based on individual capacities and aspirations.

² The last march of the Marguerites took place in August 2015 and brought together 70,000 women.

INTERVENTIONS

The following list is not exhaustive. We apologize to the speakers at this workshop and the participants who do not find their name, and invite you to present yourself at the following address to allow us to edit a new version of this report with the complete list:

secretariat@landaccessforum.org

Introductory interventions:

BORQUEZ, Rita, PROCASUR, Chili
ECHEVARRIA LEON, Dayma, Center for Studies of the Cuban Economy, Cuba
EL HADJI FAYE, Pronat and Environmental development action in the third world (ENDA PRONAT), Senegal
LUNAS COSTA, Alessandra, National Federation of Agricultural Workers (CONTAG), Brazil
NITYA, Rao, School of International Development, University of East Anglia, United Kingdom
RAVONIARISOA, Lilia, Federation of Women Farmers in Madagascar Federasiona ny Vehivavy Tantsaha eto Madagasikara, , Madagascar

Interventions of participants:

ANGULO GUTIERREZ, Elga Betty, Peasant Confederation of Peru, Peru
BEL MOKTHAR, Agronomist, Minister's Office, Centre of Parliamentary Affairs, Ministry of Agriculture and Maritime Fisheries, Morocco
BEN SAAD Abdallah, University Lecturer, National Institute of Agronomic Research (INRAT) Tunisia
GAMBOA BELTETON, Klemen Guadalupe, United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), Delegation Latin America, Guatemala
HERNANDEZ, Veronica, Alliance of Community Forestry Organizations of Guatemala, Guatemala
I MOBIN JINAH, Shah, Executive Director of Community Development Association (CDA), Bangladesh
MARTÍNEZ JIMENEZ, Florita, Bribri and Cabecar Indigenous Network (RIBCA), Costa Rica
NAÏT SID, Kamira, Algeria President of the Amazigh World Congress, World Mountain People Association, Algeria

Moderator :

CASTILLO HUERTAS, Ana Patricia, Agrarian feminist, Guatemala

Rapporteur :

GATUNDU, Catherine, ActionAid, Kenya