

UNDROP

United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Peasants



This book belongs to :

.....



**WOMEN, GUARDIANS OF
SEED, LIFE, AND EARTH**

UNITED NATIONS DECLARATION ON THE RIGHTS OF PEASANTS AND OTHER PEOPLE WORKING IN RURAL AREAS (UNDROP)

In this booklet you will find out:

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1. WHAT IS A PEASANT ?

The use of the word 'peasant' is political!
It refers to rural, working-class people
who fight for and defend their rights.

In Article 1, UNDROP defines a peasant as someone who does ***small-scale agriculture***, by themselves or collectively in community, ***for their livelihoods.***

This includes:



• **small, medium-sized farmers and fishers**



• **nomadic and landless people**



Importantly, a peasant is also someone who has a ***close connection with the land*** and ***depends*** on the land. It is often ancestral land.



• rural women and youth



• indigenous peoples



• agricultural workers



NDROP
IS US!

• migrants



2. WHO OR WHAT IS UNDROP?

It is a Declaration by the governments of many countries that ***peasants and other rural people have rights!***

The governments agreed that these rights must be promoted and protected in their countries, so that peasants can enjoy their rights without fear.

The governments that agreed to UNDROP are ***members of the United Nations (UN).***

This MAP shows all the countries in southern Africa which signed UNDROP.



Only two countries did not sign. Which ones?
WHY NOT?

3. WHO INITIATED UNDROP?

La Via Campesina (LVC) is an organisation which has been ***fighting for the rights of peasants and landless people around the world*** for many years.

LVC started the campaign by different organisations to fight for UNDROP.

The organisations led by LVC worked hard to ensure that ***countries signed UNDROP in 2018.***



4. HOW DID THE UN EVENTUALLY AGREE TO UNDROP?

It took *seventeen (17!) years of mobilising and negotiating* for UNDROP finally to be signed in 2018. 121 out of 196 countries signed UNDROP. Some powerful countries such as America and Israel did not sign.

UNDROP is a *legally binding Declaration*, It means that *those countries which signed* must now *develop, implement, promote and protect everything that UNDROP says*.



South Africa signed UNDROP in 2018, but five years later there is **STILL no legislation (laws)** to implement and support UNDROP.
WHY NOT ?

5. IMPORTANT MILESTONES IN THE HISTORY OF UNDROP

MARCH 2001:

International meeting to decide what the peasant movement thinks about 'neo-liberalism'

JUNE 2008:

International conference on the rights of peasants wrote the *first draft* of the text of UNDROP

SEPTEMBER 2018:

The *UN Human Rights Council* voted for the Declaration on the Rights of Peasants

DURING 2003:

LVC launched a global campaign to report on the violation of the rights of peasants. In **2005**, *LVC started discussions* with the UN Commission for Human Rights

MARCH 2017:

Global Congress for Peasants and Peasant rights

NOVEMBER 2018:

The *UN General Assembly voted* for the Declaration - **UNDROP** was finally **BORN!**
South Africa signed the Declaration.

6. WHAT IS UNDROP FOR ?

UNDROP can be used by
**PEASANTS AND RURAL
COMMUNITIES** in their
daily struggles for:

FOOD SOVEREIGNTY

(we control the
production and
the supply of
the food
we eat)

AGRARIAN REFORM

(changing laws in order to
**promote non-discrimination
and equality** among all farmers.
The new laws must also **work
with, not against, Nature**)

CLIMATE JUSTICE

(proper assistance for
poor people who are
the hardest hit by
the **climate crisis**)



HUMAN RIGHTS

(especially for
rural women
farmers)

SEED

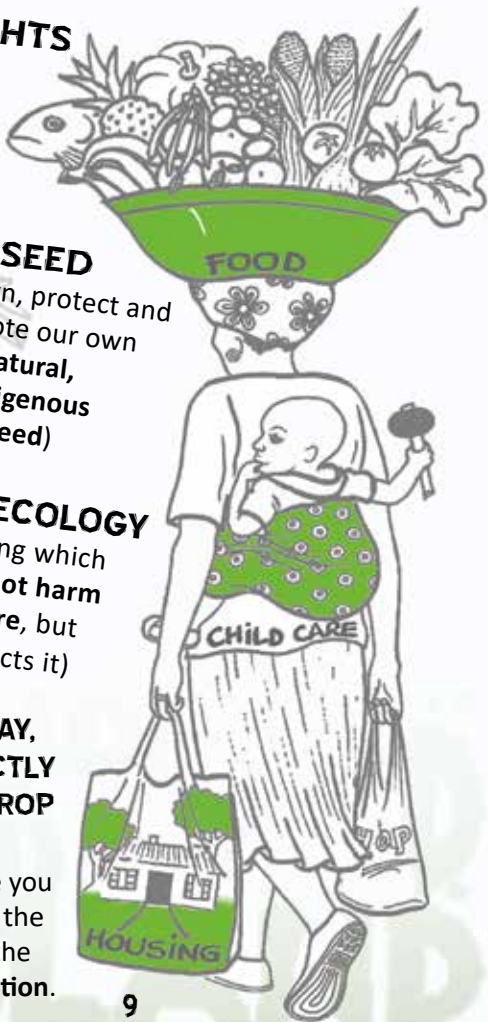
(we own, protect and
promote our own
natural,
indigenous
seed)

AGRO-ECOLOGY

(farming which
does not harm
Nature, but
protects it)

7. BY THE WAY, WHAT EXACTLY DOES UNDROP SAY ?

On the next page you
will find a list of the
28 Articles of the
UNDROP Declaration.



28 ARTICLES OF UNDROF

Article 1: Defines 'peasants' and other rural people



Article 2: What governments are obliged/supposed to do

Article 3: **EQUALITY AND FREEDOM FOR ALL**

ARTICLE 3:
Equality and freedom for ALL!

Article 4: **RIGHTS OF PEASANT WOMEN AND OTHER WOMEN IN RURAL AREAS**

Article 5: Rights to natural resources and the right to development

ARTICLE 4:
Rights of
PEASANT WOMEN
and **OTHER**
WOMEN in
rural areas

Article 6: The right to life, liberty, and security of every person



Article 7: Freedom to go anywhere

Article 8: Freedom to think, to have an opinion, and to express it



Article 9: Freedom to associate with anyone

Article 10: **THE RIGHT TO PARTICIPATE**

Article 11: The right to information about producing, selling, and distributing

ARTICLE 10:
The right to
PARTICIPATE

Article 12: The right of access to justice

Article 13: The right to work

Article 14: The right to health and safety at work



ARTICLE 15:
The right to **FOOD**
and food sovereignty

Article 15: THE RIGHT TO FOOD AND FOOD SOVEREIGNTY

ARTICLE 15:
The right to
FOOD and food
sovereignty

Article 16: The right to a decent income, and livelihood, and means of production

Article 17: THE RIGHT TO LAND AND OTHER RESOURCES

ARTICLE 17:
The right to
LAND and
other
resources

Article 18: The right to a safe, clean, and healthy environment

Article 19: THE RIGHT TO SEEDS

ARTICLE 19:
The right to
SEEDS

Article 20: The right to biological diversity

Article 21: RIGHTS TO WATER AND SANITATION

ARTICLE 21:
Rights to **WATER**
and sanitation

Article 22: The right to social security

Article 23: The right to health

Article 24: The right to adequate housing

Article 25: The right to education and training

Article 26: CULTURAL RIGHTS AND TRADITIONAL KNOWLEDGE

ARTICLE 26:
CULTURAL RIGHTS
and traditional
knowledge

Article 27: The responsibility of the United Nations and of other international organisations

Article 28: General obligations



We can see that each Article in the Declaration is an important part of life for peasants, small-scale farmers, and rural people generally.

8. WHAT HAS UNDROP ACHIEVED SO FAR ?

In spite of many obstacles, UNDROP has already been successful. It has achieved CIVIL, SOCIAL, ECONOMIC, CULTURAL, and POLITICAL RIGHTS, as well as rights to NATURAL RESOURCES, for peasant communities in many parts of the world.

Here are a few examples:

UGANDA:

FIAN Uganda (an ally of LVC) is using UNDROP to push for a better Fisheries Bill (law) **to put fisher people first before** private corporations (businesses).

The Ugandan parliament is busy discussing a document on the **rights of fisher people** according to Article 16.

LVC members in Uganda **use radio to raise awareness** about UNDROP.



PALESTINE:

Members of the Union of Agricultural Work Committees (UAWC) are **using UNDROP to campaign for**

- the right to **land**,
- access to **markets**, and
- the right to **seeds**.



They organise **workshops, conferences, and mobilizations** on the ground to **educate community members** about their rights. In this way they are **building a movement** to demand that **UNDROP be included in government policy**.

ARGENTINA:

APENOC Producers' Association and other organisations are using **UNDROP to fight against forced evictions**. They are also using UNDROP to **challenge the use of agri-toxins** on farms. Agri-toxins are **poisonous chemicals** which harm animals, people, and our home, planet Earth.



In Indonesia, Cuba, Nepal, Columbia, Phillipines, Haiti, and other countries, organisations are also making progress to include UNDROP in their countries' policies.

9. HOW CAN WE USE UNDROP IN OUR OWN COMMUNITIES TO PROTECT AND PROMOTE OUR RIGHTS?

UNDROP can help us to face discrimination and oppression.

- ✓ It can **protect us** through policies and laws;
- ✓ It can **defend us** in court;
- ✓ It can **inform us** through popular education, and
- ✓ It can **help us** when we communicate with the media.

WHAT STEPS CAN WE TAKE TOGETHER,

to achieve and enjoy all our rights as peasant farmers and other people who work alongside us in rural areas?

How can we move from aims to action?

Working collectively, we can:



RAISE AWARENESS IN OUR DAILY LIVES

Make sure that **everyone in our community knows about UNDROP** – share this booklet and discuss it. Make sure that local authorities and regional authorities and our governments also know about UNDROP.

**B.**

**BUILD THE CAPACITY OF
OUR ORGANISATIONS TO
DEFEND OUR RIGHTS.**

Learn the specific language used by **UNDROP** in its Articles so that we can use it to really show that we know what we are talking about.

C.

**CAMPAIGN FOR, and CONSOLIDATE
PROCESSES which INCLUDE US in all
DECISION-MAKING** which affects us. We must make sure that we are **properly represented** on any committees and structures which make decisions about our lives.

D.

**BUILD PARTNERSHIPS, CO-OPERATE WITH
OTHER COMMUNITIES, and CO-ORDINATE
OUR ACTIONS** to support our voices in the **LONG-TERM**.
Act in solidarity with others. Together we are strong!

E.

**MONITOR and EVALUATE HOW WELL OUR
RIGHTS ARE RESPECTED AND IMPLEMENTED.**

We must **document any processes and
situations which deny us our rights.**

We can take photographs,
make a video, keep a diary,
tell others, write a report...



APPENDIX A: LA VIA CAMPESINA

During the UN Decade of Family Farming (2019 - 2028), la Via Campesina has **three main goals**:

Farming must
be **small-scale** **1.**

Human rights
of peasants
and rural people
must be
protected **2.**

3
GOALS
(aims)

3.

All the **diverse**
(different) food
producers must
be included



APPENDIX B: THE PEASANT WOMEN OF RURAL WOMEN'S ASSEMBLY SAY:

Women should
have the right to
LAND with WATER

**NO to
gender-based
violence**

**EQUALITY
FOR ALL**

People should have
the right to **FOOD and
SEED SOVEREIGNTY**



Rural
Women's
Assembly

*We are the Guardians of Land,
Life, Seeds and Love*

APPENDIX C: In the time of Covid, WHY SHOULD WE FIGHT FOR UNDROP?

Since 2020, the whole world has been badly affected by the **Covid 19 virus and the rules** which governments put in place to deal with it. During Covid, our lives have been made even more difficult than before.

Especially, **many people have lost their jobs and therefore have even less access to resources.** This has caused more people to become more poor and more hungry.

At the very same time,

- Huge trans-national corporations (big business) have quickly **increased the use of technology through digitisation** (using computers), thus squeezing more people out of work;
- Pharmaceutical (drug) companies especially have made **massive profits through Covid**, while ordinary people struggle to put food on the table.



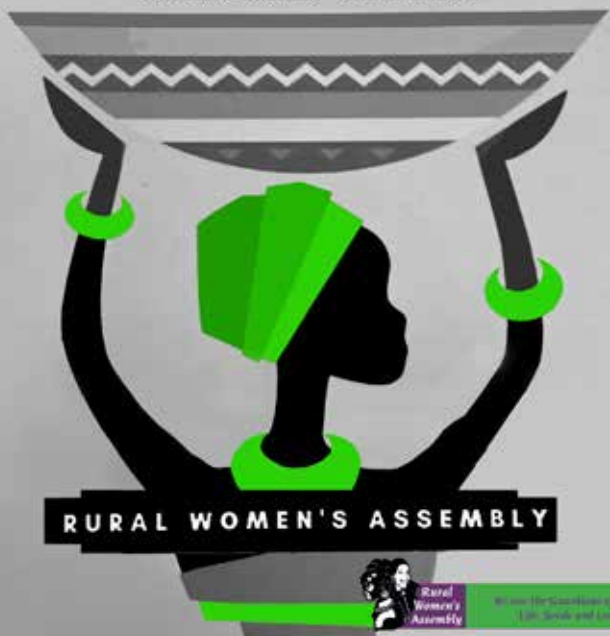
- Poor countries that borrowed money to buy products such as masks, gloves, sanitizer, and expensive vaccines are even **deeper in debt**. This means that they have **less money to spend on the basic services** that they keep promising for poor people.

**OUR GOVERNMENT MUST
IMPLEMENT UNDROP NOW!**



LAND, SEEDS, & LABOUR

**WOMEN HOLD UP MORE
THAN HALF THE SKY**

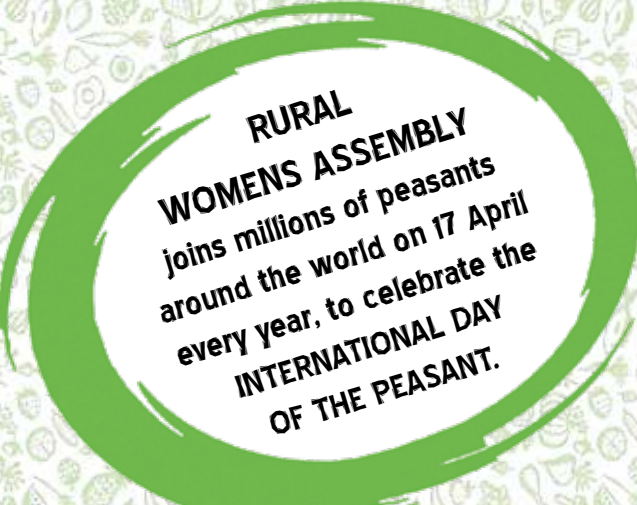


RURAL WOMEN'S ASSEMBLY



**Rural
Women's
Assembly**

**Women for Sustainable Land,
Lives, Seeds and Livelihoods**



**RURAL
WOMENS ASSEMBLY**
joins millions of peasants
around the world on 17 April
every year, to celebrate the
**INTERNATIONAL DAY
OF THE PEASANT.**

For more information about
UNDROP, please contact us:

Rural Women's Assembly



Rural
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