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**Editors:**
- Tom Sullivan
- Wilma Strothenke

**Contributions:** FIAN International Secretariat

**Layout design:**
- Harjyot Khalsa

**Illustrations:**
- Zago Brothers
- Harjyot Khalsa

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Dear FIAN supporters,

For all of us fighting for implementation of the fundamental human right to food, 2021 was a challenging year. Transnational corporations increased their hold over our food systems to the detriment of peasants, small hold farmers, Indigenous Peoples and the health and welfare of all of us. This was evident at the UN Food Systems Summit in September which confirmed their disproportionate role in shaping the global food policy agenda.

FIAN made it a top priority to denounce this corporate capture of the UN and to fight for democratic and accountable UN institutions that work for people, rather than corporate interests. Our work in 2021, as always, was rooted in grassroots movements and closely coordinated with global networks of peasants, farmers and Indigenous Peoples.

Corporations have been able to capture our food systems by capitalizing on the idea that they are essential food providers – that their interests are the same as the public interest. This false narrative portrays corporations as better equipped than governments and civil society to draw up rules and policies for our food systems. It is a dangerous worldview. It allows corporations to take control over massive tracts of land, as well as the world’s groundwater and fisheries. It hands them a quasi-monopoly on commercial seeds, locking peasants and farmers into dependency on harmful pesticides and chemical fertilizers.

If this narrative continues to dominate major international forums like the UN Food Systems Summit, it will further undermine democracy and self-determination far beyond the corridors of the UN.

Building on first-hand experience, FIAN has denounced the fact that transnational corporations have a clear conflict of interest when it comes to finding solutions to land grabbing, malnutrition, withheld tax revenues, overuse of pesticides, and addressing calls for a transition from intensive farming to agroecology. Companies are accountable to shareholders and profit is a bigger driver than protection of the common good.

With this in mind, we continued last year to advocate for a UN Binding Treaty on Transnational Corporations and Human Rights and to campaign against agro-toxics alongside our national sections, while supporting communities fighting land grabbing and pesticide poisoning.

In 2021, we also successfully convened our first virtual International Council meeting, preceded by a series of lively online dialogues. These covered a range of timely topics including climate, environmental justice and human rights and the future of human rights in the 21st century, as well as fundraising in challenging times, enabling great exchanges between members of the FIAN network and demonstrating the diversity of our actions to defend the right to food. The Council also confirmed the relevance of FIAN’s five main struggles and agreed to prolong our current strategic plan.

Priscilla Claeys
President

Sofia Monsalve
Secretary General
**WHO WE ARE**

FIAN International was founded in 1986 and was the first international human rights organization to advocate for the realization of the right to food and nutrition. Shortly afterwards, national sections and groups were founded and our network now covers 23 countries in Asia, Africa, Europe and Latin America. FIAN also has members and partners in more than 60 countries.

Our secretariat is based in Heidelberg, Germany and we have a permanent representation in Geneva. FIAN has consultative status with the UN Economic and Social Council and works closely with the international human rights system, notably the UN Human Rights Council and the special rapporteurs.

Our funding comes from state and non-state donors as well as membership fees.

FIAN International members meet in the International Council and elect the International Board. All members work according to principles and methods laid down in our Statutes.

FIAN International’s overarching goal, as expressed in our international Strategic Plan 2018 – 2024, is to strengthen people’s struggle for the right to food and nutrition and related human rights, working towards the vision of a world free from hunger and malnutrition, in which every person fully enjoys all human rights in dignity and self-determination.

FIAN works closely with partner civil society organizations, social movements and other social justice actors at global, regional and national level and runs the technical secretariats of the Global Network on the Right to Food and Nutrition, and the ETO Consortium.

**INTERNATIONAL BOARD**

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Environmental & Climate Destruction/ Asia

Philip Seufert  
Natural Resources / Financialization

Janette van Poppel  
Project and Finance / Administration

Ayushi Kalyan  
Corporate Accountability / Justiciability / Asia

Tom Sullivan  
Communications & Campaigns

Harjyot Khalsa  
Communications & Campaigns Design
WHAT WE DO

Our commitment is to people around the world struggling to end hunger. We stand with them and strive to eradicate unjust and oppressive practices that prevent communities and individuals from feeding themselves. Our vision is of a world free from hunger and malnutrition, in which every person can live with dignity, enjoying all human rights and self-determination.

The full realization of women’s rights is a pre-condition for the realization of the right to food and nutrition. Women produce most of the world’s food and perform most of the unpaid care work. They also account for most of the world’s hungry, own less than 2% of the land and have limited access to education and decision-making. Their rights and priorities are not properly addressed in legal frameworks, policies and programs, which impacts on everyone’s right to food and nutrition, including children.

Our priorities are grouped into five main struggles:

1. ADEQUATE FOOD AND NUTRITION AND HEALTHY DiETS IN SUSTAINABLE AND LOCALIZED FOOD SYSTEMS

We prioritize the rights and demands of the most marginalized who are affected by violations of the right to food and nutrition as a result of industrial food systems. Agricultural and other food systems workers face the worst food insecurity and are often exposed to toxic substances.

Governments subsidize low quality “junk” food, leading to forms of hidden hunger including obesity and chronic health conditions like cancer, diabetes and heart disease. Ultra-processed foods are increasingly linked to serious health issues. In rich and poor countries alike these products are mainstreamed into emergency food systems, amplifying public health risks particularly among low income and groups and people living in poverty.

2. PEOPLES’ SOVEREIGNTY OVER FOOD SYSTEMS AND NATURAL RESOURCES AND THE PROMOTION OF AGROECOLOGY

Land, oceans, rivers, forests, and all of nature are much more than a means of production. They are the very basis of life, culture and identity, and fulfill crucial social, cultural, spiritual and environmental functions. We work for the respect and promotion of the rights of peoples, communities and groups to self-determination, which includes their respective forms of self-organization, and governance of their lands, natural resources, common spaces and territories.

Sustainable livelihoods depend upon small-scale, diversified and agro-ecological production. This is how most of the world is fed. We build alliances with communities struggling to control their lands, water, forests and fisheries and advocate for the rights of Indigenous Peoples, peasants and other rural dwellers.
Transnational corporations (TNCs) disrupt local and national patterns of food production, markets and economies. Alongside global financial and multilateral institutions, they increasingly monopolize public spaces of food governance. Governments have relinquished the capacity and formal authority to shape the limits of transnational business practices associated with land concentration and territorial dispossession, the deterioration of food quality, and the erratic behavior of international markets.

We oppose financialization – the growing power and influence of the finance industry over our economies and societies – including the placing of monetary value on nature itself. We join others in the struggle to dismantle corporate power and establish binding mechanisms to regulate TNCs and other business monopolies. We will fight for the democratization of food systems to overcome the concentration of food markets.

FIAN International fights the obstruction of public accountability and the dismantling of the democratic promise that governments will respect, protect and fulfill human rights. The intentional weakening of public institutions responsible for social wellbeing and redistribution of wealth exacerbates inequality and destabilizes social peace. Chronic poverty, structural violence and internal and cross-border conflicts result in migrants and refugees, destroy the social fabric and the belief of the youth in a decent life.

Resistence to these injustices has been criminalized and met with brutal repression, and the realization of a human right to adequate food and nutrition has been severely compromised.

FIAN International opposes extractive activities, contaminating manufacturing, and industrial agriculture that pollute and degrade water, soils, air, and biodiversity. Fertile land has been lost and fisheries decimated. The synergistic effect of these practices ruin the reliability of the earth’s ability to heal itself. They directly contribute to greenhouse effects, disrupt ecological interactions, and destroy the integrity of sustainable environments that sustain human livelihoods.
We **promote** human rights education and raise awareness about the human right to food and nutrition (RtFN).

We **respond** to requests to research, analyse and **document** specific violations of the RtFN and support advocacy.

We **advocate** for the inclusion of the RtFN within national legal and political frameworks and **hold governments** and other actors **accountable** for their obligations. This includes **monitoring** public policies, advocacy and recourse to the law in close cooperation with people struggling for their rights.

We **contribute** to strengthening legal instruments and developing new instruments for the protection of human rights and related state accountability within the United Nations system and other legal regimes.

We identify and **analyze** global causes, policies and challenges which pose a threat to the full enjoyment of the RtFN and advocate for alternatives in line with a human rights based approach.

We **build strategic alliances** to strengthen organizations working on transitions towards more sustainable and equitable food systems and promote the convergence of struggles across constituencies and issues.
PESTICIDES-FREE FOOD SYSTEMS

Pesticides destroy and contaminate soil and water needed to produce food and at the same time harm people, animals and the environment. They are part of a food production model dominated by large agribusiness interests which concentrates land in the hands of a few. It relies on monocropping and the dependency of small-scale food producers on corporate-owned seeds, pesticides and fertilizers that disrupt sustainable, locally adapted food production and consumption.

The UN’s Special Rapporteurs, on the right to food and on hazardous substances, have both argued for better regulations to protect humans and the environment from the effects of hazardous pesticides. However, corporations, making profits from agrochemicals and other patented technologies, are moving ever more aggressively into UN policy spaces, attempting to block national and global moves to transition towards pesticide-free approaches.

Poisoned food, poisoned ecosystems

We campaign with the Pesticide Action Network for a ban on highly hazardous pesticides and for the phasing out of all pesticides with known harmful effects. We also campaign for an end to the partnership of the UN’s Food and Agriculture Organization with Croplife, the global trade association representing major agrochemical, pesticide, and seed companies.

A 2021 report by FIAN national sections Pesticides in Latin America: Violations Against the Right to Adequate Food and Nutrition exposed indiscriminate use of pesticides in corporate-controlled food production in eight countries in Latin America and the Caribbean. The comprehensive report’s outcomes were promoted using the hashtag #NoPesticidesInOurFood and attracted wide interest when it was presented online.

FIAN has denounced the harmful effects of pesticides, documented in the Latin American report, to the UN Special Rapporteur on Toxics and Human Rights via formal complaints. These include the weaponization of aerial pesticide fumigation to evict people from disputed land in Pernambuco, Brazil; the impacts of pesticides on banana plantation workers in Ecuador; and the prevalence of chronic kidney disease among farming communities in Sri Lanka.
**Phase out pesticides, practice agroecology**

In collaboration with the Human Rights Clinic of the University of Miami, FIAN carried out a study looking at ways of taking pesticides out of our food systems. The study *Transitioning Towards Pesticide-Free Food Systems: People’s Struggles and Imagination* examines cases in India, Brazil, Argentina, France, Spain, Italy and the USA, analyzing environmental problems resulting from pesticides and showcasing bottom-up solutions for a transition towards pesticide-free food systems. FIAN also published a legal guide for activists and public servants on how to advocate for phasing out pesticides and facilitate the transition to agroecology.

FIAN will continue to support communities and mobilise civil society networks fighting for a pesticide-free future and a transition to agroecology.

**Why was it important for you to work on this report on pesticides?**

In this report, we examine the use and commercialization of pesticides, and their impacts on human rights, in Latin American countries where FIAN sections or groups are present.

Those impacts include the contamination of water, food, and animals; severe health impacts on people; loss of biodiversity; deforestation, and displacement of communities. Also, we are witnessing the stigmatization and criminalization of people and movements that oppose the use of pesticides.

For that reason, it was crucial to prepare this report also as an instrument of advocacy and complaint.

**How has FIAN’s international network helped in doing this research and using it for advocacy?**

Considering the difficulty of accessing information on official platforms and gathering data from the different countries, the action of FIAN sections in Latin America was crucial. They made available information both through their own databases as well as specialized literature. FIAN International Secretariat provided essential technical support to the report, and in addition, facilitated work with the UN Special Rapporteur on pesticides to denounce a Brazilian case of the use of pesticides as a weapon.

**What did the report achieve in your view?**

First of all I would highlight is that this work is the result of the collective effort of the Latin American FIAN sections. The strong point of this document is that it highlights the causes and consequences of human rights violations that result from the use of pesticides and are common in our hemisphere. Here are some conclusions and reflections:

- **Pesticides** are an integral part of the prevalent agrifood model that uses land for the production of commodities and agroenergy. Latin American countries have become large markets for pesticides corporations;

- At least a third of the best-selling products are highly hazardous pesticides (HHHPs), forbidden in their countries or regions of origin, such as the European Union;

- The growing use of pesticides is a regional problem that is only possible due to the action of Big Food and agribusiness as well as the acquiescence and active role of states that allow pesticides to be used on a large scale without control.
What more needs to be done in this area in Latin America and globally?

The report provides recommendations on what we still need to do. I will highlight some of them:

- Resistance actions against pesticides and the model that supports them are growing on the continent, despite all opposition and violence. Other actors could be called upon to enrich these actions.

- States where the headquarters of multinational companies producing pesticides are located must comply with their extraterritorial human rights obligations, among others in prohibiting the export of especially HHPs. States in our region should refrain from providing favorable economic or regulatory conditions to multinational pesticide companies.

- Public authorities should refrain from criminalizing organizations or people who denounce the impacts and violations resulting from the use of pesticides and the productive and economic model underlying them.

- Considering that we are on the verge of an environmental collapse and in an accelerated process of income concentration and inequality generation, it is about time we protect common goods, including water and food diversity.

- Regulating pesticides and the corporations selling them should be a priority for states and societies. We do not have any time to lose!
Corporate influence over our food systems is all around us. Giant supermarket chains determine what we can buy, marketing influences our ability to decide what we eat and global pesticide and seeds firms increasingly hold sway over what can be planted.

The actions of giant agribusiness corporations also contribute to world hunger: undermining the livelihoods of peasant farmers – who feed most of the world’s population – through land grabbing, overuse of pesticides and genetic contamination and patenting of crops. To perpetuate this unsustainable business model, corporations also seek greater influence over global decision making.

A prime example is access to meetings where policy orientations and programmes are defined at the highest political level of the United Nations. This goes far beyond lobbying. Now corporations, or industry organisations, sit at the table as equal partners in “multistakeholder” arrangements which disregard the blatant power imbalances between big business, poorer states and civil society.

Not a “people’s summit”

The 2021 UN Food Systems Summit created a dangerous new precedent for this corporate redesign of the UN. Building on a partnership between the UN and the World Economic Forum, the stated aim was to create momentum for achieving the sustainable development goals by transforming food systems. The organizers claimed it was a People’s Summit. In reality it served the interests of corporations and powerful nations.

FIAN called from the outset for a democratic summit, co-signing a letter to the UN Secretary General with 500 other organizations. We then advocated for a change of course for the summit, working with the Civil Society and Indigenous People’s Mechanism (CSM) which advises the UN Committee on World Food Security. FIAN and hundreds of civil society groups called for a human rights-based summit to tackle the structural, underlying causes of climate change, hunger and malnutrition and the corporate concentration of power. FIAN also raised awareness of the threats of the summit with a policy brief and a comic on corporate capture of our food systems.

When these efforts failed to change the direction of the summit, FIAN joined a four-day counter-mobilization to build a global Autonomous People’s Response to the UNFSS. More than 9,000 people joined the counter mobilization which attracted strong media attention and gathered social movements and NGOs from around the world.

Building alliances and confronting corporate capture

Unfortunately, the outcomes of the summit confirmed the worst fears of its critics. It proposed solutions to world hunger largely focused on profit seeking, market-based adjustments.

Although states never agreed on a follow-up process, the summit’s infrastructure continues to exist amid attempts to create a parallel universe in the existing UN architecture. There is a clear agenda to replace human rights-based, democratic processes with “multistakeholder” public-private partnerships that only deepen existing power imbalances.

FIAN will continue to monitor and oppose this, building alliances and confronting the corporate capture of public institutions and our food systems - from the UN to the local policy level.
HOLDING COMPANIES ACCOUNTABLE ON HUMAN RIGHTS AND THE ENVIRONMENT

Transnational corporations are rarely held accountable for human rights abuses. Their growing economic power and complex web of supply chains make the issue of enforcing legal liability across borders increasingly complex and urgent.

There is no binding global legal framework to regulate the activities of transnational corporations, such as mining companies, agribusiness and other businesses linked to human rights abuses. Many of these companies operate in resource rich countries in the global south. They can exploit loopholes in national and international legislation and argue that they follow local and international laws while forcing communities off their land, destroying habitats, and even causing loss of life.

Today, as we face the compounding global crises of climate change and stark inequalities in access to nutritious, affordable food, adequate housing and healthcare, it is even more important to check the growing power of corporations and hold them accountable for their impacts on people and the planet.

Advocating for an international treaty on transnational corporations

FIAN International, alongside like-minded civil society groups around the world, seeks ways to curb corporate power and introduce robust international legislation to ensure the protection of human rights and the environment over economic interests.

Ayushi Kalyan, coordinator of the work on corporate accountability at FIAN International, participated in negotiations in Geneva towards a UN Binding Treaty on TNCs.
An important aspect of this struggle is work at the UN on a binding treaty on transnational corporations and human rights, which has been underway for several years.

During negotiations in 2021, FIAN helped to develop a consensus on key points vital for civil society, including the rights of those affected by human rights abuses and the issue of liability and access to remedy. We did this by joining forces with others to establish a strong presence in the treaty process where private sector influence has generally loomed large.

FIAN targeted key state representatives with advocacy and lobbying messages rooted in casework with communities in Brazil, Uganda and India. This helped to convince some states to take a more positive approach to the treaty.

Keeping up the pressure

The growing influence of corporations on policy processes makes civil society advocacy towards states more important than ever. A growing number of national and regional processes are underway to introduce mandatory human rights due diligence. FIAN will continue to advocate for a strong binding treaty at UN level and also feed into other civil society campaigns, presenting thoroughly researched casework conducted with communities.

We will continue to organize and mobilize in global civil society networks, lobbying states to agree on a treaty with sufficient teeth to hold corporations to account for their impacts on human rights and the environment.

How did you get interested in working on the right to food and nutrition?

Food and some eating habits like sharing and eating meals together are very central to my culture, identity and upbringing. During my master’s degree in human rights, I took some modules on economic, social and cultural rights and found myself very drawn to the case jurisprudence and legal applicability of these rights. My interest in understanding and advocating for these rights eventually grew and I came across an internship opportunity with FIAN who happened to be working on exactly the kind of issues I was looking for – tying the realities of people affected by hunger and malnutrition to policy and legal discourses with a rights based approach.

Why work on corporate accountability?

Corporations represent one of the main threats to human rights and our planet today. With their complex web of actors sprawled across the world, they are able to exercise a great hold on economic systems. The increasing control of businesses over food systems, policy spaces, natural resources and governance structures is putting human rights at great risk. Corporations are fuelling conflicts, jeopardising policy advancements on climate and environmental justice, exploiting human and natural resources and all the while prioritising their profits. It is extremely crucial to focus attention towards ensuring accountability for corporations that commit human rights violations and pave the way for victims to access justice and remedy.

How did you feel about participating in negotiations in Geneva?

The 7th session of the open-ended working group towards the creation of the UN Treaty was held in October in Geneva in 2021. This session was particularly interesting as it marked an improvement of civil society participation in comparison to 2020 where the pandemic greatly reduced accessibility to NGOs. Even though the pandemic and related restrictions/vaccine apartheid still restricted NGO participation, I was in awe of the collective spirit and team energy that civil society brought to the session. Despite being from different parts of the world and working on different thematic issues, civil society was able to work together with a lot of sincerity and mobilised states effectively.
What did FIAN International achieve during the last year’s advocacy?

With rigorous mobilisation and advocacy efforts, FIAN International, together with other NGOs, was able to ensure that the concerns and stories of affected communities were brought to the table. Many of our ally states also picked up content from our recommendations in their official positions. We constantly made clear that there must be a transparent and constant exchange of the working group states with civil society members. Despite attempts from some states and other actors to derail the process and empty it of its content, one of civil society’s biggest achievement was to secure the process from these attempts and demonstrate unwavering commitment towards ensuring its actualisation. As the friends of the chair will discuss the draft of the treaty during 2022, we plan to continue actively lobbying and exchanging with the working group and states and ensure that corporate impunity is finally put to an end.
Key Elements in Regulatory Frameworks to Ban Highly Hazardous Pesticides, Phase Out Other Pesticides, and Facilitate the Transition to Agroecology
Advocacy paper

Transitioning towards Pesticide-free food systems: People’s Struggles and Imagination
Study

The Right to Food and Nutrition Manual
Manual for Activists and Legal Practitioners in Uganda

Recovering the Cycle of Wisdom: Beacons of Light Toward the Right to Seeds
Guide for the Implementation of Farmers’ Rights

The Case of the Posco-India Project - Could a UN Treaty make transnational Corporations accountable?
Legal analysis and infographic

Peasants’ rights briefings Series of briefings on the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Peasants and Other People Working in Rural Areas (UNDROP)

Disruption or Déjà Vu? Digitalization, Land and Human Rights
Case Studies, Analysis Grid and Mapping

The corporate capture of food Systems
Comic series

State of the right to food and nutrition Report 2021

The UN Food Systems Summit: Obstructing the transformation of corporate food systems Policy Brief

Not our Menu – False solutions to hunger and malnutrition
Right to Food and Nutrition Watch

ANNUAL REPORT 2021
The Financial Summary includes income and expenditure account for the year 2021, from 1 January to 31 December 2021. The financial information summary presented hereby is an extract from the statutory accounts of FIAN International e.V. (Heidelberg, Germany), audited by an independent chartered accountant (PKF Riedel Appel Hornig GmbH). The budgets of FIAN International sections are not part of this financial report. All amounts are listed in Euros (€).

### Income

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### Expenditures

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<td><strong>2,259,292,16</strong></td>
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**Result from ordinary activities**

- 49,977,74

**Flow to / from reserves**

- 49,000,00

**Result**

- 77,74
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

In addition to its sections, seed groups and members around the world, F IAN International’s crucial work relies on a broad network of representative groups working across Africa, the Americas, Asia and Europe, and on the various civil society organizations and social movements to fight for the defense of human rights. We owe our gratitude to the numerous activists and human rights defenders across the world who take action by spending their time and part of their financial resources as well as by educating others about the right to food and nutrition and related rights.

We acknowledge the following institutions and organizations that supported FIAN International’s work in the year 2021.

Thank you for your support!
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CONNECT WITH US
Contact Martin at
martin.gerdemann@fian.org
+49 15140010796