

BOOK

**Gender, Covid-19 and Food Systems: Impacts, Community Responses and Feminist Policy Demands, October 2020**

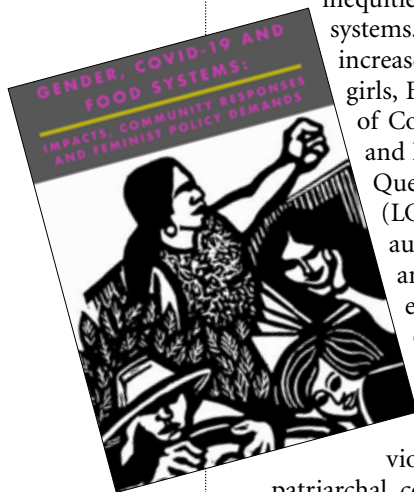
**A report of the CSM Women’s Working Group, authored by Jessica Duncan and Priscilla Claeys, 35 pages, English**

By **Vishakha Gupta**  
(vishakhagupta21@gmail.com),  
Independent  
Researcher, New Delhi

This powerful statement opens the report: “We won’t go back to normality, because normality was the problem”. The report, authored by Jessica Duncan and Priscilla Claeys, truly imbibes this statement in its ethos, approach, policy recommendations and structure.

The report draws on six cross-cutting principles to guide policies and programmes in relation to gender, COVID-19 and food systems. These are participation and representation; human rights; non-discrimination and intersectionality; food sovereignty; feminism and gender justice; and equality and equity. On the basis of these principles a number of key policy demands are formulated in four thematic areas, of economic activities, markets and access to resources; care work, public health and gender-based violence; participation, representation and digital equity; and government responses and social protection.

The sudden global upsurge of the COVID-19 pandemic and subsequent control measures made visible the weaknesses and inequities of existing global food systems. This resulted in the increased vulnerability of women, girls, Black, Indigenous and People of Colour (BIPOC) communities, and Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans, Queer, Intersex, and Asexual Plus (LGBTQIA+) communities. The authors adopt a methodical and perceptive approach in examining how the pandemic exacerbated systemic inequalities, oppressions, racisms, discrimination, injustice, exploitation and violence created by pre-existing patriarchal, colonial, neoliberal and global



capitalist systems. The recommendations go beyond food systems, and have the potential to catalyse structural transformation, based on an explicit assertion of women’s rights, including the right to life, food and nutrition, education, health, safety, social security and tenure as well as the recognition of women’s self-determination, agency and decision making power in all aspects of their life.

Within the report, a diverse spectrum of marginalised and vulnerable groups and communities are represented through examples of the ground realities of the impacts of the pandemic, instances of solidarity and support, and most importantly though the expression of group priorities and demands. Testimonials from migrants, Dalits and Adivasis in India; domestic workers in Brazil; fishworkers in Thailand; indigenous communities in Canada; LGBTQIA+ peoples in Perú, Colombia and Panama; farmers in Pacific Islands; immigrants in the USA together reflect the intersectionality and diversity of the report.

The report further shines light on initiatives, collective actions, protests and social movements risen in response to the immediate crisis of the pandemic, and longstanding systemic, economic and social inequities. These initiatives recognise the efforts of women, indigenous peoples, feminist organisations and civil society organisations during this traumatic period, despite incredibly challenging circumstances. By weaving these examples through the report, the potential for transformation is highlighted. By May of 2021, the pandemic had taken 3.3 million lives across the world. It is estimated the pandemic might add between 83 and 132 million people to the total number of undernourished in the world. The world of work has been devastated, with the brunt being borne by young workers, women, the self-employed, medium skilled workers and those in the unorganised sector. This report calls out the systems which have exacerbated this tragic crisis that is disproportionately impacting women and workers across the world.

The full report in English can be accessed here: [http://www.csm4cfs.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/NEW\\_Gender-COVID-19-and-Food-Systems-October-2020\\_compressed.pdf](http://www.csm4cfs.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/NEW_Gender-COVID-19-and-Food-Systems-October-2020_compressed.pdf)



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22 First Floor,  
Venkatrathinam Nagar, Adyar,  
Chennai 600 020, India  
Tel: (91) 44 2445 1216  
Fax: (91) 44 2445 0216  
E-mail: [icsf@icsf.net](mailto:icsf@icsf.net)  
Website: [www.icsf.net](http://www.icsf.net)

EDITED BY  
Nilanjana Biswas  
ILLUSTRATIONS BY  
Sandesh  
([sandeshcartoonist@gmail.com](mailto:sandeshcartoonist@gmail.com))  
DESIGNED BY  
M.S. Vasanth Christopher  
Writers and potential  
contributors to YEMAYA, please

note that write-ups should be  
brief, about 2000 words. They  
could deal with issues that are of  
direct relevance to women and  
men of fishing communities.  
They could also focus on recent  
research or on meetings and  
workshops that have raised  
gender issues in fisheries. Also  
welcome are life stories of women  
and men of fishing communities

working towards a sustainable  
fishery or for a recognition of  
their work within the fishery.  
Please also include a one-line  
biographical note on the writer.  
Please do send us comments and  
suggestions to make the newsletter  
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to hearing from you and to  
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