Local and Global Food Justice

Good afternoon, my name is Teresa Lopez, I'm from Honduras and i work with an organization called the Semiente Foundation.

I work in the southern region of Honduras, and i specifically work with women based in the rural areas that are farming women.

in the southern region we work with women specifically around food sovereignty and their rights. the southern region of Honduras is characterized by the fact that it's a zone of expulsion or emigration. specifically mainly men who come to Canada or the US in search of a better life and better conditions for their life. what this means is that the women stay in Honduras and are alone. and the entire responsibility of their family stays on their shoulders.

I see this as a great opportunity to be able to speak to the Canadian public. and particularly i mentioned the fact that the importance of solidarity with central America and particularly Honduras. And I would like to highlight the solidarity with vulnerable groups such as youth and women. Especially in the context of Honduras, where we're still feeling the consequences of the coup d’état. There’s a constant violation of human rights, particularly of women and youth. and so what i would like to say is that the economic support is really important because what that does is it does allow us to transform lives. What I’d like to say to the Canadian people is to stop the mining exploitation, particularly open pit mining. because what it does is it promotes death and violations of human rights.

so this area of Honduras is incredibly deteriorated in terms of the environment. it only rains four months of the year. and so what this means it that there's really large shortages of water and very little production for food.

So, Istanbul principle number three is incredibly important for our institution because we work with women who have been historically excluded, who have access to very few opportunities such as education, they don't have a lot of access to resources.

so, for these women they lack autonomy in the sense that they don't have access to spaces of organization. They have been historically excluded from that. for example, young women often have to ask permission of their father to be able to participate outside of the home. And if a woman is married, she has to ask permission from her husband to be able to participate.

so we have made some progress in Honduras, particularly in terms of laws and public policies, we have the law against domestic violence, we also have the law of equal opportunities. But particularly at the local level there’s a lack of public policies that promote the inclusion and participation of women. So in Honduras there’s a law that dictates that two percent of the local municipal budget must go towards projects that benefit women, but because there's a lack of commitment to women's rights, what happens is these funds don't actually reach the women, there's just not the interest in insuring that they are included.

our work is important because what it does is it helps women recognize the fact that they are actually subjects and participants in development. And they are actually subjects of their own rights. So once they know that and learn that they can demand that of their local authorities, as well as within their families. so if they don't feel like they're subjects of their own rights how are they going to demand those spaces.

So what's really important is that women find spaces of connection, of creating networks and connection between women. What that does is it gives them the opportunity to articulate themselves, organize themselves, and be able to advocate with their governments.