

Food for All, Food Conflicts and the Future of Food Systems

31 May 2021 - 14 to 16 Rome Time

Maurizio Pitzolu and Virginia Solis, Economy of Francis

Responding to conflicts in food systems. Perspective of youth (10 minutes)

Agenda proposed for our space:

- **Introduction:** About The Economy of Francesco - a call from Pope Francis. (Pitzolu) 3 min
- **The injustices in Agriculture:** Conflicts in the Food Systems. (Solis) 3 min
- **Moving towards a New Life:** Agriculture & Justice Village - Specific solutions developed by Youth for mitigating the injustices in Agriculture.

Maurizio

Francesco va e ricostruisci la mia casa che è tutta in rovina. Con queste parole più di 800 anni fa Dio chiama San Francesco alla sua missione e alla sua vocazione per la ricostruzione di una chiesa corrotta e in forte crisi.

Con le stesse parole il 1 maggio del 2019 un papa chiamato Francesco invita tutti gli uomini di buona volontà e in particolare i giovani economisti, imprenditori e attori del cambiamento, di tutto il mondo alla stessa chiamata per ricostruire la chiesa e il mondo nuovamente in rovina.

Sappiamo tutti di vivere un momento complesso e non soltanto a causa della pandemia che ha costretto il mondo a fermarsi per più di un anno dando peraltro la possibilità a molti di noi di interrogarci su dove stiamo andando con la nostra storia di uomini e di credenti.

Sappiamo anche di vivere un momento di profondo cambiamento in cui è necessario pensare ed agire con coraggio e discernimento, trovando la coesione necessaria tra gli uomini di buona volontà, per poter costruire le fondamenta di un' economia che costruisce e non distrugge, che aggrega e non separa, che avvicina e non acuisce le differenze tra ricchi e poveri.

Tutti conosciamo i numeri di questa profonda crisi, grosse ricchezze accumulate nelle mani di poche persone, tanti uomini e donne anche nei paesi sviluppati che soffrono problemi legati alla

povertà o alla malnutrizione, che si ammalano a causa del cibo o dell'aria che respirano quotidianamente o dall'acqua che bevono. Tutti respiriamo l' avvelenamento quotidiano dei nostri corpi, delle nostre menti e dei nostri cuori a causa dell'impoverimento dei beni relazionali ed in particolare a causa dell'erosione continua della fiducia reciproca, legante imprescindibile per una vita gioiosa e di senso dell'uomo sulla terra.

A questa chiamata urgente, più di 3000 giovani di tutto il mondo, cristiani e non cristiani hanno risposto con grande entusiasmo, energia, vitalità ed impegno per ragionare e costruire insieme un' economia diversa, che finalmente possa dare la possibilità all'uomo di guardare con coraggio a quella faccia della medaglia che Gesù mostra ai romani quando, alzando la famosa moneta dice: "non potete adorare Dio e il denaro insieme".

Tanti progetti, ricerche, idee stanno prendendo forma in questi mesi per poter concretizzare questa chiamata ed in particolare i progetti del villaggio dell'Economia di Francesco chiamato Agricoltura e Giustizia sta già realizzando delle opere profetiche perché il mondo possa davvero ritrovare l'amore necessario per contribuire all'edificazione dell'opera di Dio sulla terra.

Passo ora la parola a Maria Virginia Solis, giovane coordinatrice del villaggio dell'Agricoltura, che ci racconterà che cosa il villaggio sta già oggi costruendo e che cosa sogna di fare per il futuro di questa nuova economia.

Maria Virginia

Thank you, Maurizio.

Agriculture and Justice are keywords that, together, answer the great challenges of ecological conversion towards integral Ecology. Agriculture is the basis of all food production, while Justice of every democratic system. These words, if mutually intertwined and in harmony, form the basis of a free and dignified society, where people are at the center.

Pope Francis invites us to practice fraternal love as the realization of social justice. With this objective, the Village has youth representing farmers, indigenous people, social activists, business owners, and researchers from all over the world. With active collaboration of seniors who support sharing their knowledge and experience and walk this journey with us.

The **main challenges and pillars** we considered key in agriculture are: Integral Ecology (Role of the Church and the importance of Indigenous Communities); Agriculture woman (As indigenous, peasant, worker); The real value of food (Fair prices - Role of Economy); and Care of Common House (Soil health, Biodiversity, Climate Change, water, "forests").

In order to face sensitive issues and decide how to act creating justice in agriculture, we understand that there are at least ten fundamentals, those that were shared before by Youth from our Village in the video.

To act and build **prophetic and specific** projects we are organized in four Streams: Project, Start-up, Research and Communication working together with the local territorial hubs in different countries around the world. Following a process of See, Choose, Act.

This is how **The Farm of Francesco** was born in June 2020. Answering Pope Francis' call to restore our Common Home and addressing injustices present in our economy The Farm of Francesco is a global network of farmer-centred demo farms with a vocational education program to co-create solutions towards sustainable food systems and regenerative soils. What was a Project and vision of 10 Youth representing 8 countries is today a reality. With the first two demo farms in Ibadan, Nigeria, and Manaus, Brazil.

Currently smallholder farmers, who grow over 80% of the world's food, most of them women, live the main food system conflicts, facing uncertain ownership rights to the land they farm and not having access to knowledge of beneficial farming practices. At the same time, global food and climate security is threatened by 12 mln hectares per year of soil lost due to erosion.

Our model is teaching regenerative agricultural practices on an existing demo farm, offering a viable opportunity for disadvantaged youth to build regenerative livelihoods for themselves and their families. Guided by our scientifically-validated impact dashboard - a research recently submitted together with the collaborative work with the Research Team - we are developing our business in a hybrid formula: the farm is a viable business operation on its own, supplemented by income generated by new farms set up by the trainees.

The other initiative as part of our Village is the **Women Mother Earth Alliance** which seeks to offer concrete answers to the demand for "Land, Roof and Work" for women with a focus in rural areas of Brazil and the world; to defend their right of access to genetic resources; and to

build fair relationships around the production, trade and consumption of healthy food.

The alliance is rooted in two pillars:

- Promote this agenda in the global public debate as well as to build dialogues and bridges put forward by Pope Francis in diverse multilateral forums.
- Comprises the development of actions and projects.

One of them, created together with the Energy & Poverty Village, is **Casa di Francesco**, a possibility to re-found cities by creating places for entrepreneurship and intrapreneurship. The prototype is in development in Florianópolis, Brazil and has inspired new Casas di Francesco all around Brazil and some other countries.

Other on-going initiatives in the Village is research on the topic of “fair prices” for a more humane and environmentally sustainable agriculture” to respond and give voice to the conflict of exploitation of farmhands, especially migrants and local women.

As well as having participation in events as the International Conference on Environmental Justice in Switzerland thanks to our partnership with Georgetown University, a set of Master Classes for the World Food Forum and the co-creation of the Latin American Economy of Francesco School. All initiatives to be active creators of the new narratives on Agriculture toward Integral Ecology.

Today, more than never, we need the participation and collaboration of key institutions and the Church. We invite you to actively join and collaborate in the initiatives that we are currently working on, join our Projects, our Farms so we can respond together to the cry of the Earth and the Poor.

I had the blessing in 2013 as an Argentinian, and after hours of waiting under the rain in Rio, Brazil, to hear Pope Francis say “Hagan lío” which is “Make a mess”. Today, after witnessing many hours of work, after spending long time with the Youth that I represent in this occasion, I respond to that petition of Papa Francisco and encourage our Church to open the buildings, trust us the management of the land, we will keep putting our hand to work, studying and brainstorming the best ideas to serve the poor. Join us on the journey of making a mess towards building a New Life and Economy. Thank you!