

SE14: Uncovering the invisible – A feminist call to urban food system transformation

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Organized by: PFM - Philanthropic Foundations Mechanism; TMG Think Tank; Brazil; Canada; Caritas Nairobi; Instituto Comida do Amanhã; UNDP

Description

A feminist call to urban food system transformation advocates addressing intersecting inequalities within food systems and cities. It recognizes that women and marginalized communities play critical roles in food production, trading, preparation, and crisis management, yet often face barriers and discrimination in governance processes.

To combat the invisibility of hunger and poverty in urban low-income areas, we present two arguments linking inequality debates with the right to food.

Firstly, gender-sensitive urban planning reveals hidden truths. Poverty, violence, and hunger are interconnected, yet modern city designs often conceal these realities. A feminist approach amplifies the voices of marginalized communities facing hunger and systemic exclusion. In Cape Town, community kitchens, mostly run by women, act as informal security systems and play key roles in food provisioning during crises. Women are champions of family nutrition and urban agroecology solutions.

Secondly, the right to food in urban areas can be progressively realized through meaningful citizen participation in food governance. Technical innovations like greenhouses in informal settlements significantly contribute to the urban poor's food supply. And social innovations emphasize the participation of marginalized groups in policy processes.

This builds on the CFS policy work on gender equality (2023), agroecological and other innovative approaches (2021), and on inequality (2024/ongoing), pointing towards discussions on urban and peri-urban food systems (2025).

