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Inception workshop report

Project acronym:

SWIFT

Project title:

**Supporting Women-led Innovations in
Farming and rural Territories**

Grant agreement No.:

101084561

SWIFT Consortium

| Organisation | Country |
|---|---------|
| Agencia Estatal Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas (CSIC) (Spanish National Research Council) | SP |
| Universitat Politècnica de València (Affiliated, UPV) (Valencia Polytechnic University) | SP |
| Universität für Bodenkultur, Wien (BOKU) (University of Natural Resources and Life Sciences, Vienna) | AT |
| Wageningen University (WU) | NL |
| Réseau International Urgenci (URG) | FR |
| European Coordination Via Campesina (ECVC) | BE |
| Oxfam Solidarité - Oxfam Solidariteit (OXFAM) | BE |
| Fundació Universitària Balmes (UVIC) (University of Vic) | SP |
| Instytut Rozwoju Wsi i Rolnictwa Polskiej Akademii Nauk (IRWIR) (Institute of Rural and Agricultural Development - Polish Academy of Sciences) | PL |
| Centro de Estudos Sociais Universidade de Coimbra (CES) (Centre for Social Studies of the University of Coimbra) | PT |
| Centro Internazionale Crocevia Onlus (CIC) | IT |
| Gender Centre, Graduate Institute for International and Development Studies, Geneva (IHEID) | CH |
| Friends of the Earth Europe Asbl (FoEE) | BE |
| AGROPERMALAB | PL |

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Glossary of terms

| | |
|--------|---|
| BOKU | Universität für Bodenkultur, Wien |
| BP | Boerenpartij (Farmers party in the Netherlands) |
| CAP | Common agricultural policy of the European Union |
| CES | Centro de Estudos Sociais Universidade de Coimbra |
| CIC | Centro Internazionale Crocevia Onlus |
| CNA | Confederação Nacional da Agricultura |
| CSIC | Agencia Estatal Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas |
| e.g. | Exempli gratia (for example) |
| ECVC | European Coordination Via Campesina |
| ELKANA | Biological Farming Association Georgia |
| est. | Established |
| etc. | et cetera |
| EU | European Union |
| FoEE | Friends of the Earth Europe Asbl |
| GRB | Gender Responsive Budgeting |
| IHEID | Gender Centre, Graduate Institute for International and Development Studies, Geneva |
| IRWIR | Instytut Rozwoju Wsi i Rolnictwa Polskiej Akademii Nauk |
| LGBTQ+ | Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender plus other |
| MARP | Associação das Mulheres Agricultoras e Rurais Portuguesas |
| MST | Movimiento de los Trabajadores Rurales Sin Tierra |
| ÖBV | Österreichische Berg- und Kleinbäuer_innenvereinigung |
| Q&A | Question and answer session |
| RAMA | Rede de Apoio a Mulheres Agroflorestoras |
| SLG | Sindicato Labrego Galego |
| SOF | Semperviva Organização Feminista |
| SWIFT | Supporting Women-led Innovations in Farming and rural Territories |

| | |
|--------|---|
| UNDROP | United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Peasants and Other People Working in Rural Areas |
| UPV | Universitat Politècnica de València |
| URG | Réseau International Urgenci |
| UVIC | Fundació Universitària Balmes |
| WLI | Women-led innovation |
| WMW | World March of Women |
| WP | Work Package |
| WU | Wageningen University |

Executive summary

Introduction and context

The project *Supporting Women-led Innovations in Farming and rural Territories* - in short SWIFT - is an action research project aimed at fostering transitions to sustainable, balanced, and inclusive development in rural areas in Europe. SWIFT applies an intersectional, feminist and human-rights based perspective and promotes gender equality in rural areas to support existing women-led innovations (WLIs) who are acting for change in agriculture. We further envision to strengthen the articulation of diverse identities within the agroecology movement, including in the European Coordination Via Campesina (ECVC).

SWIFT is funded by the EU HORIZON programme under the call 'Research and Innovation Action' for resilient, inclusive, healthy, and green rural communities. The SWIFT consortium comprises 13 partners from academia and civil society from nine European countries, and 19 WLIs that are central to all activities and interactions within SWIFT.

The project inception workshop took place in Agres, Spain from 29th-31st March 2023. All project partners participated in the inception workshop, as well as 12 WLIs.

Objectives of the inception workshop

The workshop focused on the co-creation and co-design of project aims, research questions and ways of working together, building on the project proposal.

Specific aims were:

1. discuss shared values and develop a common understanding of core concepts that will be applied in SWIFT;
2. identify and co-develop emerging areas of interest and plan project outputs;

3. facilitate partnerships among WLLs and their allies for deeper exchange and gauge the interest to collaborate on specific themes or in particular policy spaces;
4. identify participants able to commit to further in-depth analysis and action-research in specific topics and geographical contexts.

Participatory feminist approach

Given SWIFT's commitment to advancing feminist approaches in food and agriculture through action-research, the inception workshop was organized and implemented using participatory feminist methodology. A team of external feminist facilitators created dynamic interactions and spaces to build trust and connections among the diverse participants. This initiated an organic and participatory process of mapping out shared goals, resonating with the transdisciplinary and co-creative approach which is at the heart of SWIFT. Actors from diverse backgrounds expressed their visions and needs and co-designed research aims and methodologies to be applied in SWIFT. The workshop was as much about identifying commonalities and synergies, as it was about recognizing, de-constructing, and, in some cases, accepting differences. Only through talking openly about different expectations, relations and roles in the project was it possible to collaboratively map a way forward.

Main workshop outcomes

The workshop highlighted the achievements initiatives have already made in building alliances and creating innovative practices grounded in feminism and agroecology. It was mutually agreed that SWIFT will support systematizing these initiatives, enhance their visibility and provide opportunities for sharing experiences and networking. This effort aims to influence policy spaces at different scales. Storytelling and creating alternative narratives were identified as key means in this process.

Furthermore, workshop participants emphasized that the co-creative outputs that will emerge from SWIFT should live on in the network of WLLs and contribute to

strengthening relationships within and among ECVC members and other participating organisations. SWIFT is committed to supporting individual women-led innovations independent from institutions to which they are affiliated. The project remains open for additional WLLs who are interested in participating in SWIFT.

Foundational principles of feminist action-research are ethics of care, mutual recognition, respect and reciprocity. It was agreed that these principles are central to our praxis in SWIFT, in all project/research activities and interactions, at all levels.

SWIFT key areas of research and action

Central topics for **research** were identified to be

- participation of women and diverse farmers in food and agriculture policy-making at different scales;
- re-claim, re-construct and re-frame language around agriculture/peasants, agroecology and feminism in public discourse, in order for these spaces to become more sensitive to diverse approaches and experiences, changing the narrative and influencing policy;
- women and diverse farmers' access to and control over land and natural resources;
- education and training, in a spirit of co-learning and sharing diverse knowledges;
- working conditions in the agricultural sector, including for women migrant workers;
- social protection schemes.

Topics that were identified for **amplification** include

- implementation of feminist agroecology schools (inspired by and learning from the example of feminist agroecology schools in Brazil);
- scaling up social movements;
- collaborative research and training.

Next steps and way forward

To ensure inclusivity and incorporate the perspectives of WLIs unable to attend the inception workshop, it was agreed to host a webinar with these WLIs to integrate their perspective, and to allow for a deeper conversation with them on views and perceptions of key concepts applied in SWIFT. Input and feedback on this report was received from the project consortium and included in the write-up of this report.

Concluding remarks

This report provides a comprehensive account of the interactions and exchanges that took place during the SWIFT inception workshop in Agres, Spain from 29th–31st March 2023. The rich materials and discussions from the workshop will be further analysed and inform the action research process. The insights will serve as foundations for literature review, further research, and support the networking activities that are central to SWIFT.

Meeting in person and being able to discuss different perceptions and motivations, as well as sharing diverse personal and professional backgrounds, were vital in building a common understanding and clarifying key concepts among project partners involved in SWIFT. Most importantly, the inception workshop fostered trust and laid the groundwork for collaborative work in the future. It served as an inspirational moment that shaped the shared vision and values that are central to SWIFT's co-creation and co-development.

Acknowledgements

We thank everyone who was involved in the initial planning and conceptualisation of this inception workshop, with contributions from the whole project consortium. Special thanks go to Marta Rivera Ferre and the coordination team for bringing everyone together in Agres and for coordinating the overall organization of this workshop.

We are also grateful to our hosts from Riera d'Agres for a wonderful stay and delicious food and to the team from l'Argila for their energy and skills in feminist facilitation.

1. Context and objectives

Project context

SWIFT is a research-action project aiming to foster transitions to sustainable, balanced, and inclusive development of rural areas in Europe by supporting women-led innovations¹ (WLIs) that are acting for change. SWIFT is funded under the EU HORIZON programme under the call 'Research and Innovation Action' for resilient, inclusive, healthy, and green rural communities. The SWIFT consortium consists of 13 project partners from academia and civil society from nine European countries. SWIFT builds on the work of 19 WLIs.

This first workshop between all project partners and WLIs was framed as an inception workshop that would enable the co-development of project aims, research questions and ways of working together. The inception workshop took place from 29th - 31st of

¹ This project was framed under the call "Women's innovations in rural areas". We respect and embrace diverse sexual identities. It is our aim to pay attention to being inclusive and respectful. We emphasise that, when talking about Women-led innovations, this includes different sexual identities.

March 2023 in Agres, Alicante, Spain. The report serves to document and share the experiences and findings of the project participants.

Aims of the inception workshop:

- 1) Agree on a set of shared values and develop a common understanding of the underlying theoretical concepts and practical applications guiding SWIFT;
- 2) Identify and co-develop key emerging research foci and project outputs;
- 3) Facilitate partnerships with and network-building among WLLs for deeper bi-/trilateral exchanges;
- 4) Identify WLLs that are able to commit to further in-depth analysis and action-research on specific topics and in particular geographical contexts.

The report is structured as follows: after an outline of the context and preparations in sections 2 and 3, the discussions and workshop formats are described in detail in sections 4, 5 and 6. This serves to hold on to valuable discussion inputs and contributions for further work. The outcomes of these discussions are summarized in section 7 and put into the context of the workshop objectives. The Annex provides additional background insights and photo recordings of the discussions and presentations.

Feminist methodology

The organisation and implementation of the inception workshop was grounded in a participatory feminist paradigm. Given the transdisciplinary and co-creative approach envisaged in SWIFT since the very beginning (including the process of writing the project proposal), we were able to initiate an organic and participatory process. This allowed actors from diverse backgrounds to express their needs and co-design the specific research aims and methodologies to be applied in SWIFT. This led to open and productive exchanges as well as a deeper understanding of the motivations, visions, and concerns of everyone involved. The workshop was as much about identifying

commonalities and synergies, as it was about recognizing, de-constructing, and, in some cases, accepting differences². Only through talking openly about different expectations, relations and roles in the project was it possible to collaboratively map a way forward. It was also important for us to extend the discussion beyond the inception workshop in order to include the ideas and priorities of partners who were unable to be present in Agres. In line with this understanding and principle of cooperation, the first draft of this report was compiled from a collection of notes taken during the workshop. The draft report was shared for an extensive feedback period with the project consortium, a condensed version was shared with the WLIs by the European Coordination Via Campesina (ECVC). The report describes the interactions and exchanges that took place. To demonstrate links to the formal project structure, work packages and clusters were added in brackets by work package leaders.

Involvement of external facilitation

The inception workshop was facilitated by an external facilitation organisation in order to enable all project partners to actively participate in the workshop formats. This seemed especially important as a way of breaking down any perceived hierarchies between project participants/project partners/activists and academia.

The facilitators Júlia Barba Solé and Teresa Sempere García from [L'Argila](#), an association that specialises in feminist facilitation, were contacted by the WP1 coordination based on prior experiences in facilitating processes for social movements, food sovereignty movements and intersectional feminism in particular.

² Dupuis, C., Harcourt, W., Gaybor, J. and van den Berg, K. (2022). Introduction: Feminism as Method—Navigating Theory and Practice. In: Harcourt, W., van den Berg, K., Dupuis, C. and Gaybor, J. (Eds.) “Feminist Methodologies”. Palgrave Macmillan, Cham, Switzerland.

2. Venue

The inception workshop took place at Riera d' Agres, located in the Spanish countryside in the province of Alicante. It was organized directly after the project kick-off meeting at the same location two days earlier (please refer to the separate workshop report that has been compiled by work package 1). Riera d'Agres provided accommodation, meals, and indoor and outdoor spaces for all workshop activities.

During the two events - kick off meeting and inception workshop - the SWIFT team were supported by two external facilitators from L'Argila. Simultaneous interpretation was provided in English and Spanish so that everyone was able to participate and engage. This was possible as four interpreters were engaged by European Coordination Via Campesina (ECVC), all of whom had worked in similar contexts before. In some situations, translation was also provided from and to Portuguese, when needed.



Photo 1: The Riera d'Agres © Mar Calvet

Overview of program

- 29th March 2023: Getting to know each other. Who are we and what are our expectations for the coming days
- 30th March 2023: Getting to know SWIFT and what we want to do together.
- 31st March 2023: How do we go forward, what is our action plan?

The detailed program is provided in the Annex - 1 Detailed programme. The specific activities are described below.

Participants

All 13 project partners were present at the inception workshop. WLIs were contacted and invited via their host institutions, with 11 WLIs from 7 clusters being represented. Additionally present were representatives from Action Aid (Italy) as actors in social movements that are working closely with women led innovations, in particular with migrant women workers in Italy as part of the Bright project (a SWIFT WLI). The Secretariat of the World March for Women (Georgia), as part of the advisory board and working with the feminist school led by the agricultural organization ELKANA (another WLI of SWIFT) was also represented (*see Annex 2 for the detailed participants list*).



Photo 2: Participants at the SWIFT inception workshop © Mar Calvet

3. Preparations

The location of the inception workshop was organized by the WP1 coordination. The WLI were contacted via their host institutions and invited to participate.

Coordination among work packages

Online planning meetings were held prior to the workshop with WP2, WP3 and WP1. The meetings served to discuss the aims, structure, and format of the workshop along with the roles of the WPs in presenting the objectives of SWIFT. These activities formed part of our project deliverables:

D2.1. Organization of inception workshop and report

D3.1. Exchange formats, one of which is planned to take place at the inception workshop.

Our priority was to ensure that the inception workshop provided space for co-creation and co-conceptualisation, while also establishing a structure that we can build upon

to develop the activities that were planned in the grant agreement, as well as prioritization of tasks as preferred by the WLI. This circular logic was challenging to implement with respect to the definition of exchange formats (WP3) as, based on our feminist participatory methodologies, we did not want to pre-empt the topics and methods of interaction and communication that we were hoping to co-create with the WLI prior to the inception workshop.

Plans for the inception workshop were also discussed in a SWIFT consortium meeting where all project partners were represented. Some concerns were raised regarding:

- Expectations of the WLI at the workshop. It was pointed out that many of the innovations did not have a clear idea of the aims of SWIFT, what they can/should contribute and what is the benefit for them. It was noted that it would be necessary to spend some time during the workshop to clarify these doubts in order to create a sense of ownership and purpose.
- Time resources of WLI for any prior preparation. We realised that we should not expect that everybody will have the time to look at information beforehand or prepare videos/information material about themselves.
- Dynamics and potential power imbalances between WLI and researchers. We wanted to make sure that we create an atmosphere of trust and enable mutual exchanges.
- Prior negative experiences of social movements regarding cooperating in research. Concerns were raised about extractive research, where non-academic actors do not see the benefits after the project ends.
- Making sure the programme for the workshop enables adequate space and time for informal exchanges to allow participants to get to know one another.

During the preparatory meetings it was already recognized that, given the diversity of actors and institutions, communication and transparent structure are key. A meeting with the facilitators was coordinated prior to the inception workshop to define

priorities and expectations and to jointly outline a flexible programme that could be adapted in Agres, taking into account and acknowledging the preferences and specific needs of participants. It was also agreed that project partners co-facilitate some thematic sessions in order to enable more small group discussions.

4. First Day (Wednesday, 29th March)

The first day was designed to encourage everyone to make connections, share experiences as well as our expectations and hopes for the SWIFT project. For this reason, ample space was given to dynamic trust-building activities where participants engage and interact in various team building activities.

4.1. Introductory session and getting to know each other

The morning session started with an introduction of the feminist approach and ethics of care by the facilitators, outlining the principles for respectful interactions during the workshop. Following a round of short introductions, the project coordinator Marta Guadalupe Rivera Ferre (CSIC) and ECVC representative Sonia Vidal introduced the SWIFT project, its genesis and development, and shared some of the objectives for the coming three days. In the following, the key aspects that were introduced are summarised.

The SWIFT project was developed over several years by a group of people passionately committed to promoting food sovereignty, feminism, and agroecology. It is the result of previous project proposal processes as well as the creation of shared spaces among women and diverse farmers, researchers and social movements. This process has shaped the objectives, activities and approaches of SWIFT. As stated in the Grant Agreement, SWIFT aims to foster transitions towards sustainable, balanced, and inclusive development of rural areas in Europe by favouring the deployment of women-led innovations (WLI) acting for change in agriculture, promoting gender

equality in rural areas from an intersectional, feminist and human-rights based perspective. The vision of SWIFT is to strengthen the articulation of women and diversity within the agroecology movement, particularly in the European Coordination Via Campesina (ECVC).

The SWIFT team is committed to supporting the women led innovations and not only the institutions to which they are affiliated. The project is open to adding WLIs if there is a desire to do so within the consortium. Another goal is to create synergies with other networks to create more visibility for WLIs (WP3) and policies to promote them (WP5 and WP6). This will also ensure that the work of SWIFT continues beyond the lifetime of the project.

Feminism has had a strong urban connotation, with rural feminisms often disregarded or ignored in society, institutions and within the feminist movement itself. Further, there has been little academic research which considers the rural perspective on feminist struggles. SWIFT aims to fill this gap by working closely with rural organizations that experience these struggles and are active in creating new narratives around gender, food, and agriculture.

The main goal of this workshop is to get to know each other and each other's work. This is crucial for developing strong partnerships between academia and the civil society organisations and social movements involved. These action research collaborations have the potential to increase the visibility of barriers and challenges faced by women and diverse peasants and rural workers (e.g. access to land, decent work, education and political representation). To succeed, feminist action research requires mutual respect and empathy throughout the collaboration to ensure that all partners are actively involved in defining the scope and content of the work, and in validating its outcomes and conclusions to enact change.

4.2. Exchange of ideas on SWIFT: networking, expectations, and inspirations.

After the introductory sessions, groups were formed to determine the different objectives and expectations for the upcoming days, to share our vision for the project and to gain insights into personal inspirations and motivations. Three topics were discussed in the smaller groups:

- **What is a network to me? What does a network do? What is important for a network?**
- **What do we expect from the project and the inception workshop?**
- **What inspires us?**

The results were presented in the plenary.



Photo 3: Brainstorming around networks, expectations, and inspirations © Mar Calvet

What is a network to me? What does a network do? What is important for a network?

As SWIFT aims to create a stronger network of women-led innovations in Europe, this set of questions served to gather different perceptions of what networks might mean

to different people. This provides a basis for future activities within SWIFT, how we cooperate and organize our structures.

Concerning their explanation and purpose, various forms of networks were identified. While informal networks have a lower barrier to entry, formal networks were seen as providing more security. It was also observed that links to a network can occur at various scales and in different spaces, over different time spans. Generally, a network is seen as a community of people, actors, institutions with a similar aim, objective, or interest. A network provides a community of support, exchange, and mutual learning.

A network should serve to create and provide a sense of community, enhance each other's strengths by sharing information, knowledge, and experiences, while also providing a space to share fears, worries and concerns. Networks were seen as especially important in strengthening capacities for political advocacy. They were viewed as reducing the feelings of loneliness that may arise in a personal struggle and can give a feeling of solidarity from a larger community. Additionally, being part of a network can provide energy to individual movements through feelings of solidarity with a larger group or by sharing commonalities of struggles and successes in other locations.

It was considered important that a network includes a diversity of people and perspectives and that it remains open and flexible while also using an agreed-upon structure with an awareness and understanding of possible tensions. It was also viewed as crucial to link to already existing networks with similar causes to create synergies.



Figure 1: Word Cloud highlighting key words regarding networks

What do we expect from the project and from the next three days?

Centrally, the participants had the expectation to get to know each other as well as our methods and ways of working, to build trust and also have fun.

The three days were viewed as essential for generating a sense of belonging and ownership of the project that we will be involved in for the next four years. Part of this was to get a better idea of the goals and objectives of SWIFT and how this project can assist the WLIs in the work that they are already doing (keeping in mind that the work and time burden for the WLIs should be minimized).

It was observed that the workshop was necessary for co-developing feminist action research that is relevant and useful for the WLIs. It was further expected that there is clarity about the roles of the project partners, and to define some key characteristics of the network we are building. It was also pointed out that we must ensure that the results of the project go beyond the four-year project duration and that we build a joint movement and process that strengthens each other's capacities where we learn from each other for long term transformation.

On the other hand, negative experiences, such as the lack of rights, concerns for the future, the need to create new food systems based on food sovereignty, the outdated narratives based on status that perpetuate the challenges for marginalized peasants were seen to be a driving force to act for change.



Figure 3: Word Cloud highlighting key inspirations



Photo 4: Setting of WLI introductions in the comedor space © Mar Calvet

4.3. Presentation of each WLI and Q&A on the WLIs

The afternoon session was dedicated to getting to know the WLIs in more depth. The representatives of innovations were invited to introduce themselves, their work, approaches, solutions, and struggles. This session served to form the basis for future exchanges in the following days. Additionally, throughout the three days, project team members (WP6 and WP2) were recording short videos of all WLIs present to be shared online after the workshop. These videos will also enable the innovations that were not in Agres to see the people in the project and hear about some of the work that is being done. WLIs that could not attend also committed to create a video so the other WLIs can get to know them.

The brief introductions were not pre-prepared, nor were the presenters asked to answer any specific questions. The presentations demonstrated that while the clusters outlined in the grant agreement served as a starting point to ensure and illustrate the diversity of innovations, in fact many of the WLIs cover several themes. How these clusters overlap and develop as our understanding of the WLIs grows is something to

keep track of throughout the project process. Visual summaries of the introductions can be found in the Annex.

| Innovation | Toekomstboeren (NL) |
|--|---|
| Cluster | 2: Access to means of production |
| Representative | Els, a new entry farmer, part of a community supported agricultural (CSA) farm 'Aardig'; the farm is run by Els and volunteers: Els teaches them how to farm and in exchange volunteers participate in production. |
| Context | Farm Aardig is a place where local people can come and do self-harvesting. Volunteers to help in the production process. There is a mutual exchange of knowledge and experience, volunteers do not get paid, but benefits from farming (e.g. mental health) are visible. Farm becomes a space for caring and personal reflection. Toekomstboeren serves as a network of agroecological farmers. Frequent exchange and farm visits between the different farmers (cluster 4 and 5) |
| Specific circumstances (country specific issues) | Agroecology oriented farmers are a minority in NL; Growing farmer movement in the NL with Farmers party (Boerenpartij, BP), this serves mainly to protect the large conventional farms in the face of growing environmental regulation. Sectoral policies in the NL, agriculture is not connected to health, community planning. There is also a tension between agricultural jobs and agroecological living, producing and learning. Limited and difficult to access land also due to increasing demand for renewable energy (solar) projects, especially for the new farmer entrants (cluster 2). Often the land is rented, which results in low motivation of farmers to nourish and maintain healthy land; the owners of lands are often hesitant to sell the land to farmers because they want to rezone to housing land, which is worth |

| | |
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| | more; collective land rights have not been well established although there are some cases pending. |
| How they address the topic of the cluster | Involved in public protests that call attention to the land issues, working on commoning land through a foundation. |

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| Innovation | Rock Steady Farm (USA) |
| Cluster | 7: LGBTQ+ farmers |
| Representative | Maggie, involved in farming since childhood. Currently one of the owners of Rock Steady farm. This farm is part of local LGBTQ+ farm cooperative. |
| Context | The cooperative Rock Steady Farm is run by LGBTQ+ people, which provides access to healthy and high-quality food for their local community and especially to people who cannot afford such food in supermarkets. Currently the CSA counts 500 members. |
| Specific circumstances (country specific issues) | There is limited access to healthy food for people with low income; high levels of discrimination against LGBTQ+ people (currently there is a lot of national legislation being passed that is very anti-transgender); lack of housing for farm workers in rural areas. Due to lack of public policies and funding, they are reliant on fundraising and grants, frequently with other non-profit entities. |
| How they address the topic of the cluster | The CSA uses a sliding scale pricing approach to ensure accessibility to low income persons (70% of the consumers are low income). They hold regular storytelling nights; recently they were involved in creating a documentary about LGBTQ+ farmers (cluster 7); training activities, sometimes also pay people to take part in training activities to reduce barriers to participation |

| | |
|--|--|
| | (cluster 4); part of feminist, LGBTQ+ and racial justice movements across the USA. |
|--|--|

| Innovation | CNA (PT) |
|--|---|
| Cluster | 1: Social security schemes |
| Representative | Laura, she is not a farmer, but she is involved in advocacy for rights of small family farms. The main motivation for her to be an advocate, is that her grandmother, who produced wine and corn, had to quit her farming due to the hard situation for farmers at that time. |
| Context | CNA is a confederation of small family farmers associations and cooperatives. One of CNA's member associations is the MARP Association of Portuguese Rural Women and Women Farmers, focused on defending women's rights in the countryside. This is a national-wide organisation, but has more presence in the Northern regions, where family farms are concentrated. For the first time, MARP is part of the National Monitoring Committee of the Strategic Plan of the CAP |
| Specific circumstances (country specific issues) | 90% of agriculture in Portugal consists of family-owned farms. Low prices for produce; subsidies for large farms, excluding small farming; no specific measures for women in the Family Farming Law; no participation in policy making; unfavourable access to pensions, gap in gender equality and women's participation in decision making processes and policy making. Women and their work are invisible in national policy frameworks related to family farming (e.g. 2018 estatuto de agricultura familiar). Public policies dealing with social security are not responding to the needs of farmers (WP5). |

| | |
|---|--|
| How they address the topic of the cluster | <p>Formation of MARP group and membership in CNA to lobby for women's rights, evaluations of the CAP, using UNDROP as a tool to lobby for gender equality.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Would like support in constructing measures for public policies regarding retirement and social security (WP5 and Cluster 1). |
|---|--|

| | |
|--|--|
| Innovation | EHNE-Bizkaia (ES) |
| Cluster | 5: Mutual support |
| Representative | Ade is part of this agricultural union within the Basque country where she works as a technician. |
| Context | <p>EHNE-Bizkaia supports agroecology within the Basque country. Does not have a specific group for women but follow gender parity in their structure. They focus on reviving traditional communal work sharing 'aizolanes', this has been taken up by a group of women that are both producers and consumers. It is also open to other interested people and has created a strong network. They have just recently (end of 2022) established a feminist agroecology school for women producers that would like to join the sector (cluster 4). Also work to integrate migrant women and support the diversity of agricultural producers (cluster 6).</p> |
| Specific circumstances (country specific issues) | <p>They experience a division of feminist movements in urban and rural space, perspective of rural feminists is not so present. Access to land is a big problem especially in their region and more so for young women. Difficulty in receiving grants/subsidies and in selling agroecological products due to few local marketing opportunities. Have started to integrate products into schools, but this is still a small initiative. Urbanization and bureaucracy are also key challenges.</p> |

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| How they address the topic of the cluster | <p>Organizing auzolanes communal working times where they support each other physically but also create community.</p> <p>Auzolanes allow intergenerational gathering and exchange of rural women producers and consumers through the communal work. EHNE-Bizkaia also focuses on recovering and maintaining local and traditional knowledges through exchange formats (WP3). Involved in political actions such as the care strike. Focus on topics of care, care work and valuation of care work.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Would like to make care work and caring principles more visible in the CAP and public policies (WP5). |
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| Innovation | ELKANA and Secretariat of the World March of Women (GE) |
| Cluster | 8: Central and Eastern Europe farmers |
| Representative | Mariami (currently in Turkey) and Marika (GE) |
| Context | In Georgia they are using the space in the World March of Women to bring together women from different countries to share theoretical and practical knowledge about being peasant women, agroecology and feminism (cluster 4). They focus especially on combining the concepts of agroecology and feminism. Work with academics in this context. Cooperate with ELKANA (part of Via Campesina), a grassroots organization focused on agro-biodiversity and uniting farmers across the country. Based on grants for funding, so finances are precarious, and there is currently little support from the government. |
| Specific circumstances (country specific issues) | Soviet background in Georgia, much traditional knowledge about farming got lost during this time. They also work in earthquake hit regions of Turkey. Climate change is causing a lot of heritage seeds to disappear. Certification prices are very high for farmers, so many small-holder farmers do not get an organic certification. |

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| How they address the topic of the cluster | <p>They use demonstration plots to show farming practices and to demonstrate and preserve seed variety. They also have a seed bank with heritage plants that farmers can use seeds from. They have established an alternative certification system which is being implemented e.g. by hazelnut producers in Georgia. They have also created a network of agroecology schools where people can receive training and information (WP3 and cluster 4) – this is also a cooperation with Via Campesina and Nyeleni forum. Cooperation with World March for Women serves mainly to build network to neighbouring countries.</p> <p>– Organizing a training in May and would like to organize a feminist agroecology school in Georgia soon (WP3).</p> |
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| Innovation | Sindicato Labrego Galego (ES) |
| Cluster | 3: Participation/representation in agr. organizations |
| Representative | Maria, farms cattle in Galicia and dedicates the rest of her time to her work within the peasant's union. Has been a long standing active member of the union. |
| Context | Initiative of women inside the peasant women started in the 80s-90s. Mainly focused on salaries, fair remuneration, access to land and ideal of male bread-winner and farmer. Discrimination was also in the laws so they went to court and managed to get discriminatory law repealed in 2000s. Start of a network women within the peasants union. |
| How they address the topic of the cluster | Network that served to create a women's movement within the peasant farmers union – Women's secretariat within the Sindicato Labrego Galego (est. 2000). Aims to consciously create a space for women within the organization. Work on 4 central areas: – look at how the CAP affects women peasants differently (WP5), training |

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| | <p>and exchange on theories of feminism and working to empower each other, increasing visibility and participation of women in organizations, work, and awareness of different forms of violence. Have established equality in leadership positions of the union (keep one space free for a woman) and parity for participation in external meetings (in case a woman cannot participate, here space is not occupied by men). Combining feminist and human rights perspectives has allowed an advance in the struggle of the recognition of land titles for women.</p> |
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| Innovation | ARGOPERMALAB (PL) |
| Cluster | 8: Central and Eastern Europe farmers |
| Representative | Klaudia, grandparents were farmers and left agriculture, and Wioletta born into a family farm |
| Context | Established in 2020 by long-term food sovereignty activists, farmers, food cooperatives and others connected to the Nyeleni forum. They have established a CSA network. Aim to build capacities and strengthen the voices of peasant farmers and women in Poland. |
| Specific circumstances (country specific issues) | Difficult political situation, neo-liberal economics, little assistance from the government for organic food/women farmers and little awareness in government of issues of organic production or gender equality (also no gender-responsive budgeting). Farmers are reluctant to cooperate through history of collectivization in Soviet Union. Challenges in language and narrative: trust, cooperative, transparency, collective work, feminism – these do not fare well in Polish context. Starting to build some good contacts into public institutions which are also interested in |

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| | agroecology. Yet there is a need and urgency to change the narrative on a larger scale. |
| How they address the topic of the cluster | They focus on providing new entrants with education in agroecology and permaculture (cluster 4), organize workshops on seed sovereignty, create a network of CSA initiatives in Poland to strengthen each other (WP3). Try to build synergies with other projects to share knowledge and experiences |

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| Innovation | Cascina Malerbe (IT) |
| Cluster | 7: LGBTQ+ farmers |
| Representative | Alessandra, small producer from northern Italy running a family farm near Turin. Also a member of ECVC and Nyeleni seed group. |
| Context | The farm was started out of the need to have short food chains and diverse food near the city. They also have different processing steps, start with the seed and end with the final product. It was difficult to access a loan or buy land as a collective. One person had to buy the land and form the collective around that (cluster 2). Health standards are very strict, which makes selling processed goods more difficult, they have stopped doing many activities because of this. There is also difficulty with having enough customers for fresh products. Faced with discrimination and lack of acceptance of queer/LGBTQ+ community in the countryside |
| Specific circumstances (country specific issues) | Hard to buy land collectively, in Italy collective public land is being sold by the government for housing. No initiative specifically for women, supposedly the housing should serve young people. |
| How they address the | Through participation in different networks-national, local, regional which empower and motivate them to keep on farming. |

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| topic of the cluster | They sell their produce at local markets and deliver baskets of fresh and preserved food. |
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| Innovation | ÖBV – Österreichische Berg- und Kleinbäuer_innenvereinigung (AT) <i>Were not present but shared a short statement from the group via E-mail. This statement was read during the session.</i> |
| Cluster | 1: Social security schemes, 2: Access to means of production, 3: Participation and representation in agricultural organizations |
| Representative | Monika and Kirstin |
| | <p>“We are the womens group of ÖBV-Via Campesina Austria, which exists since the end of the 1970s. We deal with different feminist topics, that are relevant to us as women farmers and activists. Our vision is a good life for all (Buen vivir). We are working and fighting for self-determination of women in agriculture - on their farms, in their communities and for just and feminist policies (interconnection of agricultural, climate, rural, women policies etc.). For us it's important to support and enable each other, to use creative methods and to fight joyfully.</p> <p>Within the SWIFT-project we want to learn from other innovative feminist groups and we offer to share our experiences and knowledge. We are currently dealing with gender budgeting (WP5) and financial security for women (cluster 1) and are happy to exchange ideas about that. Furthermore, we want to create awareness to think of innovation as social innovation and not only technological innovation. We hope that the SWIFT-project offers resources for exchange, networking and for building up political pressure. We are further hoping for low-threshold meetings and</p> |

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| | exchange between rural women to empower them to engage for feminist social innovation.” |
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The innovations from Brazil **SOFAgroecology training program**, **RAMA-women agroecological farmers network**, and **MST (Landless Movement)** were introduced in more detail on the following day. Innovations that were not able to take part are listed in the annex.

Key commonalities of present innovations



Figure 4: Word Cloud showing commonalities among WLIs

5. Second Day (Thursday, 30th March)

The second day aimed to build on the introductions from the first day and to gather more concrete insights into the WLIs and SWIFT. In the afternoon, first steps were taken to start defining collaborative actions in research, amplification, and articulation.

5.1. Introduction of the Brazilian collectives and Q&A for the Brazilian initiatives:

To start the second day and to introduce the work of the Brazilian initiatives, the group joined together to partake in a **Mystica**. This is a collective performance and ceremony which is frequently used by the Brazilian initiatives when occupying lands or protesting. The ceremony involved a short parade with a variety of instruments and objects, which were collected in a central space. A large circle was then formed around this collection for singing together and sharing poems. All participants were also invited to write personal barriers on a note card, which were then burned to symbolize us overcoming our barriers together.



Photo 5: Mystica ceremony introduced by RAMA, MST and SOF © Mar Calvet

After the Mystica ceremony, the group reconvened inside for more insights into the work of the Brazilian innovations. Brazilian innovations have the role of inspiration (lighthouses) for European WLIs.

Innovation: RAMA - Cluster 5: mutual support

Representative: Nilce

RAMA (Rede de Apoio a Mulheres Agroflorestoras) is a network of female agroecological farmers in Brazil. The visiting representative was also a member of the World March for Women and of the rural black community.

RAMA has a national coordination with four central areas: education, health, environment, and identity struggle. Additionally, there are regional coordination teams across the country. The network works towards more inclusive rural areas and national development. There is an emphasis on black communities and indigenous peoples. It was mentioned that the feminist movement has not been as present in rural areas.

Farmers in Brazil, especially female agroecological farmers struggle to prevent agribusiness grabbing their land. They note that this frequently occurs in rural areas where the communities may be more vulnerable to exploitation. Nationally there is a trend towards land transfer and commercialization of agricultural land for large companies. RAMA organizes collectives to support female farmers in protecting their livelihoods. They aim to protect local agricultural systems to preserve traditional knowledge and nature (especially the forests). In their understanding there is a strong link between the land, the body, and memory. Agroecology, for them, is a way of promoting this knowledge. For them, this is linked also to the discourse of colonization, which has not yet sufficiently been incorporated into agroecology and feminism. RAMA also works with native seeds to build up seed banks and to work towards seed sovereignty. They have also expanded their work into the urban context, working with communities in urban settings to produce their own food.

Nilce noted that in Brazil there is a false narrative that farmers are obstructing economic development, yet family farming provides a large proportion of the food for the population. This contrasts with the soybean plantations, which only serve to be exported as few Brazilians eat soy.

Innovation: MST (Landless movement) Cluster 7: LGBTQ+ farmers

Representative: Irineuda

Begins by citing a poem about the struggles of the peasants and the hope they share for a better future.

MST (Movimiento de los Trabajadores Rurales Sin Tierra) movement was born during the military dictatorship in the 1960's. It connects landless farmers across the country.

It follows three main goals: to fight for land, land reform and social transformation. MST is a network that aims to be active on a national level and take on political responsibility. Irineuda shares that few movements in Brazil have lasted longer than 40 years, so MST can be considered long lasting.

To unite a diversity of people, it was necessary to form different sectors with specific goals. MST now has sectors concerning among others: production, communication, youth, international relations, gender, LGBTQ+ and healthcare. There is a national secretariat that coordinates activities. Irineuda shares that she is currently part of the LGBTQ group.

The MST movement has thus far worked with about 450 thousand families and united them in a common movement to achieve agrarian reform. The movement is also active in conveying information about human rights and training (WP3) for youth through their magazine and the radio, this serves to also enable cultural transformation. Currently LGBTQ+ culture is a big topic within MST.

MST also organizes occupations, where land is occupied so that the government buys it. The movement has managed to establish 60 different cooperatives and around 100 associations. These cooperatives sell agricultural products such as coffee, corn etc.

MST is also active in school education and further training as they believe in education as a valuable tool to fight the prejudice of uneducated rural communities. They are active in public schools and also in universities. They also want to use this to become more involved in governmental and agricultural institutions (cluster 3).

There is an internal aim to address gender within the movement to formulate gender policies. The first female meeting of the movement was organized in 2019 for women to get together and exchange about their realities and experiences. This is also a space where they exchange about peasant feminism or agro-feminism. Concerning agroecology, they believe that free territory and land reform are a prerequisite for this.

Innovation: SOF Agroecology training program Cluster 4 Access to training

Representative: Miriam

Miriam, the visiting representative, states that she is sharing her experience from a women's group the Semperviva Organizaçao Feminista (SOF). The group has been active in constructing a political agenda and objective for women in agroecology and social and solidarity economy. When the agroecology movement started in Brazil, it was very masculine, and women were under-represented (cluster 3). The first thing the group did was try to visualize and systematize women's experience and bring this to the fore. They did this by looking at the spaces that women occupy, this was frequently the house or the kitchen for example, yet these spaces are also essential for the production system. They participated in a project that used agroecological notebooks 'Cadernetas' as a tool to make the women's activities and time visible. Around 200 women were involved in taking notes on their daily activities, their production and where it ended up. Each month the notes were discussed to interpret the data. They found that self-consumption and donations of products made up to 40% of the production. This finding lead to changes in production, the women's perception of the value of their production and relations within the family and the community. For example, it showed that whole families living in the cities were being supplied by women producing with agroecological practices. The women were also supporting churches with their produce. Another central finding concerns the selling of the products. While before the conception was that women were not selling enough products, the notes showed that it was sold but according to the familial needs. Women's marketing was more fluid with variable prices, measurements and swapping depending on who they were selling to. The notebooks also showed that the more diverse the production, the higher the income – despite government subsidies rewarding monoculture. Central questions remained concerning the opportunity cost of self-consumption and the possible price range for products.

In Brazil there is an ensemble of policies related to family farming, these have a very nuclear, hetero-normative family in mind. Notebooks were important in countering

this narrative and stereotypes in public policies by making women's work visible. They could also be used to create socio-diversity maps showing different perceptions of space and farming territories.

SOF is also involved in organizing training courses on feminism and agroecology together with the Federal Institute of Education, Science and Technology of Sao Paulo.

Discussion

After the introductions of the innovations, there was space for discussion in the plenary. This served to clarify specific contexts and also to share more insights into the organization of the movements. Participants expressed that the shared experiences were very inspiring. While not all questions could be addressed in the larger group, there were lively interactions and discussions continuing during the lunch break. Some central concerns were:

- The use of the term '**peasant**' was addressed, as in Europe this is frequently used pejoratively. In Brazil this term has become a unifying identity between different marginalized groups (indigenous and quilombolas) united in a common struggle. The peasant identity here relates to a way of caring for the land and the struggle to access land that has been grabbed. It was noted that in Europe, ECVC is leading the way in changing the narrative around the peasant identity. There are already over 30 organizations in Europe that are working towards changing the meaning and perception of peasant farmers.
- There was also interest in the changing national conditions in Brazil **due to the leftist Government under Lula** and their planned land reform. While this could not be exhaustively answered, it was noted that it is a challenge for social movements to defend democratic processes but also pressure the government to move forward with land reform. More effort is also being placed on putting people that are aligned with the movements into public government positions in order to gain more power.
- There were also questions concerning the organization of **seed banks, training, and political formalization** within the movements.

5.2. Introduction of SWIFT, Q&A for the project.

After the lunch-break we reconvened outside to introduce the SWIFT project in more detail. Emphasis was put on introducing work packages (WP) 2 (Analysis of WLIs) and WP 3 (Amplifying WLIs: co-learning and sharing of knowledge) as these are the WPs that will engage closely with the WLIs. A central aim was also to demystify some of the rather abstract terminology that is used by project partners and break this down into very concrete actions that can be taken together.



Photo 6: SWIFT presentation © Mar Calvet

Work package 2 is introduced by the co-lead Stefanie Lemke (BOKU). Caring and ethical relations are introduced as the basis for all activities within the project, from research to other interactions. WP 2 serves as the space where more in-depth understanding of the different contexts, experiences, challenges, barriers, and opportunities is collected and systematized. This relies on close exchanges with the WLIs, as the aim is to focus on making visible and support what is already happening. SWIFT and the outcomes that it creates should in the first place benefit the WLIs and outlast the lifetime of the project.

Different ethnographic, policy analysis and advocacy tools had been outlined in the initial concept note as research methods. Our aim is to co-construct the research

process, for example co-researching and co-writing research articles. We could also envisage other, rights-based processes such as advocacy training to enable the WLIs to bring information to the attention of the United Nations human rights mechanisms as well as to policy-makers and legislators at the national and European Union level.



Photo 7: Graphical presentation of WP2 © Greta Capaité

Work package 3 is introduced by the co-lead Lorenz Probst (BOKU). The central idea of WP 3 is to support and facilitate exchange formats and mutual learning among the initiatives involved. For example, this could be advocacy, creation of policies or policy proposals. Ideas include participatory video, social simulations, experiential games. Space should be created for meetings, support and exchange. The SWIFT provides support regarding financial, technical, and logistical aspects. More concrete ideas will be collected in the afternoon session.



Photo 8: Graphical presentation of WP3 © Greta Capaité

Further work packages:

Other WPs were also introduced to convey the breadth and interlinkages SWIFT provides by representatives from each WP. WP1 is taking care of the overall organisation and coordination. WP4 has a focus on alternative indicators of farm viability, which are gender responsive and in line with the realities of small-scale farmers, following agroecological practices. WP5 highlighted their work on gender-responsive policies, policy dialogues and policy briefs. WP6 (Dissemination, Communication and Exploitation) was not presented, as the main activities closely interlink with all other WPs. Also, main activities of WP 6 will be relevant at a later stage in SWIFT.

Discussion

After the presentations there was a lively discussion that brought forward central concerns from the project partners and innovations.

- One concern was raised regarding the nature of research activities and the fact that these should not be ‘extractive’ and overly burden the WLLs without providing them with any benefits in return. In this context, the topic of remuneration for farmers that are involved in research activities or that dedicate time to research activities was raised. It was noted that this ‘compensation’ could potentially be provided in the form of support and training for WLLs in advocacy and policy analysis as well as sharing of data and other information to provide arguments for transformative action. Additionally, the need for transparency, for example regarding duration and expectations of research interactions, but also concerning data collection and sharing results was emphasized. In this light it was emphasised that the WLLs must be actively involved in and have ownership of the research process.
- The question was raised whether one aim of SWIFT is to build a movement like in Brazil, which was very inspirational to the initiatives present. As no such network exists in Europe, this would be one central aspect we can work on together. This would require other measures, such as political education and extending beyond the farm level.
- Regarding exchange formats, concerns were raised about virtual formats and if these are sufficient to convey the experiences and struggles of the WLLs. This was taken up by the WP2 team with the note that virtual formats may be interesting to complement other forms of exchanges, or in cases where in-person meetings are not possible at all. In this light, it was highlighted that exchanges on different scales would be valuable (local, regional, national, and international and global).
- Some questions also addressed concrete next actions and how to start these administratively (e.g. AGROPERMALAB is already starting to organize an

Agroecology School in Poland). Concerning concrete actions and activities these were referred to the project coordinator Marta Rivera Ferre, who is in charge of communicating with the project officers in the European Commission.

5.3. World Café: collective research; exchange formats and WLI's articulation.

To co-create more concrete research topics, amplification formats and joint activities, a World Café was organized in the afternoon. The World Café was organized in three tables, each table co-facilitated by a team of two. The process allows for rich discussions, as participants move from one table to the next and add to the exchanges of the respective previous group.

1. **Collaborative research:** This table was aimed at defining principles of how we will conduct research together so that everyone involved feels comfortable. Central topics for research and methods were also identified. The table was hosted by the WP2 team.
2. **Amplification:** At this table, the aim was to determine what should be the topic and formats of learning exchanges, when and how these should be conducted. In addition, participants and hosts who volunteer for the upcoming exchange formats were identified. The table was hosted by the WP3 team.
3. **Articulation of women and diversity in ECVC:** This table was hosted by two members of ECVC and served to collect ideas about which activities should be undertaken by ECVC to strengthen the articulation of women and diversities within the organization.

The results of the World café were presented in the plenary and revisited on the following day for prioritization.



Photo 9: World Café setting outside. Table discussing activities of the ECVC articulation © Mar Calvet



Photo 10: World Café setting outside. Table discussing amplification activities. © Mar Calvet



Photo 11: World Café setting outside. Table discussing collaborative research activities. © Mar Calvet

The following table shows the outcomes of the World café. These points are also summarized for the prioritization on day 3.

| Table | Harvesting of results |
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| Collaborative Research | <p>What do we want to learn about?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Reclaim, reconstruct, and reframe language about gender, food and agriculture as political language to have influence over policies and laws. – Links between feminism and agroecology – More-than-human interactions. Giving voice to those that do not have one. – Understand why women and diverse farmers don't actively participate in institutions. Care burden and invisibility of women in public spaces and policies. – How can we systematize the experiences that are already there? |

- Migrant workers, female and diverse farmers – how can we link them and identify common issues to make them stronger?
- Can we work with women and diverse farmers in larger agricultural holdings/industrial farming and get them involved in the research using agroecology as an entry point?
- Grassroots popular education around feminist collectives and cooperatives. Building networks – How do we find initiatives and include them?
- How to make women and diverse farmers realize that they have human rights?
- Commoning practices – culture and activities beyond intellectual
- Language around peasants

Methods?

- Storytelling can be powerful in changing public policies – look at what works in terms of shifting debates and building feminist policies/laws.
- Social science tools and debates
- Systematizing existing information
- Observation as a method, not necessarily participating as this may require more time from the producers.

What's important in research activities?

- Clear and transparent goals and objectives
- Overcome researcher/producer/activist divides
- Farmers should be reimbursed for the time that they spend contributing to research
- There is a lack of time to engage. Research can help to gather information when there is no time

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Ethics and security issues around engaging in research. Especially regarding migrant workers there are security issues related to making their voices heard – Open access to data and results – Making use of what is already there to not be repetitive – Make sure the outcomes and work last beyond the 4 years of the project <p>There were more questions around how to network – practical issues around contacting people and organizing.</p> |
| <p>Amplification</p> | <p>What do we want to learn from each other?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Learn more about the situation of migrant women farm workers – Exchange experiences on the situations of women and diverse persons in the agricultural sector – Share successes, learn from what worked well somewhere else in terms of equal participation – Getting to know each other’s realities and scenarios. – Understanding what motivates us to be involved. Understand what is going on and map it – How to understand agroecological production for the whole population and not just for rural people? – Feminist agroecology – Management challenges and sharing these with each other – Capacity building in activism – Popular agroecology – in schools and training centres – Good food in communities – How to make the movement more intersectional <p>How do we want to exchange?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Train the trainers in rural areas |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Short documentaries (about food sovereignty) to exchange information – Educational modules – Mixed methods – Podcasts (selected topics, non-academic language) – In-person meetings – Webinars / Zoom – Manuals/games for public policy making. – Academia can contribute by writing articles, reports etc. publications should be disseminated widely. Use recording infrastructure that academia already has (cameras etc.) – Learn from the Cadernetas (notebooks) that Miriam from SOF shared. – Bring more empathy and passion to policy debates – Focus on self-care – TV-Serial in broadcasting like Youtube (women and diverse farmers explaining their experiences) – Visit the Brazilian initiatives and experience their work <p>Who/When?</p> <p>Representatives of several WLIs and project partners indicated their interest in contributing to the development of exchanges and cross-initiative learning.</p> |
| <p>Articulation of women and diversity in ECVC</p> | <p>How can we strengthen the articulation of women and diversity in ECVC?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – How can we make the links to the SWIFT project and outside? – Systematization of existing documents within the WLIs – Systematization of processes within organizations (e.g. Sindicato Labrego Gallego) to support organisational change. |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Identify what are the oppressions, synergies between different WLIs. To clarify which topics, we can collaborate – Education and training on feminism and agroecology. – Recognition of what motivates us as farmers – What are the participation challenges for women and diverse farmers? Need to consider participation of women and diverse farmers on different levels e.g. Sindicato Labrego Gallego with mandatory parity – Women and diverse farmers in Brazil mobilizing around questions of oppression and alliance forming. Idea that this could be something that’s mirrored at different levels – Incorporate human rights to land and access to land, specifically for women and diverse farmers – Caravan: visiting each other – We have to change the system as well, integration into public policies and policy discourse. Critical mass necessary for advocating around policy change. What motivates organisations to come together and push for systemic change? – Opening agricultural space for feminism |
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It was noted that there is a strong link between the outcomes of the discussions on the three tables. For example, **storytelling** was seen to be a valuable tool for research, and at the same time, sharing stories and experiences is also an important way of learning from each other and amplifying each other’s voices. Concerning how we engage in research and interact there was an emphasis on **empathy, care, and compassion**, both in research and amplification. It was clear that the values we are committed to within the project are also values we wish to further in public and policy spheres. It became clear that the activities we wish to see within SWIFT, either through research activities (systematization of existing work, understanding barriers to

political participation) or through amplification (learning and training around feminist agroecology, in-person exchanges and visits) are also the activities that can strengthen the articulation of women and diversity within ECVC. This underlined the significance and importance of ensuring that SWIFT establishes a good base for further **activities beyond the project duration**. The overlap also underlines the importance of creating and using synergies between the different work packages and participants.

6. Third Day (Friday, 31st March)

The third day served as a synthesis of the activities and the ideas that were formulated during the workshop. It also provided open spaces for final questions and sharing of personal notes about the process and inspirations that emerged from the meeting.

6.1. Feedback on research paths, exchange formats and WLI's articulation

In order to get a first impression on which topics may be relevant for the project collaboration, participants reflected on the results of the World Café and indicated their priorities. The results, reported below, will be taken up again in upcoming project activities such as the webinar and meetings related to research and amplification activities.

The number in brackets represents the number of times the topic was prioritized.

Amplification & training

Emerging topics:

- How to establish feminist schools (activist training, agroecology training) (24)
 - How to connect agroecology/feminism/intersectionality (5)
- How to scale into public institutions
 - How to influence/shape policy - effective lobbying (13)
 - Human rights related advocacy and policy training concerning the CAP and UNDROP (3)

- How to collaborate and co-research (practice and academia) (11)
- How to expand and reach communities (2)
 - How to build successful movements.

The how and the who were again summarized but not voted upon as these were considered to be dependent on the topic and context of planning.

Articulation of women and diversity in ECVC

Emerging topics:

- Feminist agroecology school (13)
- Barriers to participation of women and diverse farmers (12)
- Caravan - multicultural meetings (10)
- Mapping of existing innovations and new methods of mapping (6)
- What motivates us? What patterns of oppression exist? (6)
- Systematization of organizational processes within WLIs and different organizations (5)
- Human Rights and access to land (2)

Collaborative research

Emerging topics:

- Systematization of existing documentation of women's and diverse farmers experiences and drawing on these (16)
- Investigation of how to reclaim/re-construct/re-frame the language: changing narratives and increasing political influence (14)
- Barriers to female and diverse farmers participation in agriculture and in organisations (11)
- Identification and potentially inclusion of organizations that do not consider themselves to be feminist or as practising agroecology (even if they may practice it) (6)

- Solving/bridging language issues and other divides between migrant women workers and women or diverse farm owners (3)
- Investigating and clarifying the influence of feminist agricultural Movements on policies (2)
- Investigate existing documents on conventional women or diverse farmers (1)

Main methods:

- Storytelling and documentary methods (dissemination to advocate and influence policies) and invitation of journalists to spread the word (23)
- Provide free access to data of SWIFT (10)
- Non-participant observation (6)
- Advocacy and lobbying on national and local level (5)
- Make SWIFT useful after 4 years (3)

Principles of collaborative research were highlighted and taken as a prerequisite for the further work.



Photo 12: World Café results and prioritizations © Greta Capaité

6.2. Clarification of SWIFT project team

To make the actors behind upcoming communication and activities more visible and transparent, the project coordinator: Marta Rivera Ferre gave an overview of the project consortium, and who will be working in what areas or work packages. This provided transparency on available financial resources and time commitments.

6.3. Space for questions and closure

To close the inception workshop, the space was opened for final questions, information, and concerns.

- **A webinar** will be organized after this workshop, to recap on formal information and to include the WLIs that were not present in Agres.
- An **online space for questions** will be created that may arise after this workshop. Later we will also launch an **online platform** to share documents.
- A reminder was shared by Louise from Oxfam, that there will be a **workshop on Gender Responsive Budgeting (GRB)** in Brussels at the end of November. Innovations that are working on this topic and would like to be more involved are invited to join as (there may be some resources for travel).
- Marta Rivera Ferre called attention to the opportunity to organize a **conference on the topics agroecology and feminism**. This conference takes place every three years, the last one was held in Brazil, the next will be in Mexico. One conference could be organized in Europe towards the end of SWIFT.
- Mariami and Marika once again voiced their interest in collaborating in the planning and organization of a feminist agroecology school in Georgia.
- Larissa (IHEID) and Sonia (ECVC) introduced a **Letter of Commitment** that they had drafted to summarize the joint agreement for our future work together. The letter is to be sent to all members for comments and signing off by their respective institutions. At the time of writing this report, this statement is still in the process of being finalized. The current draft can be found in Annex 3.

7. Summary of contributions to workshop objectives and next steps

The inception workshop aimed to 1) agree on a set of shared values and develop a common understanding of the concepts used in SWIFT, 2) identify and co-develop key emerging research foci and project outputs, 3) facilitate partnerships and network building among innovators, 4) agree on the WLIs that are interested in participating in research activities. The contributions to the specific aims are outlined below:

1. Our understandings of central concepts

- **Feminism** and **agroecology** are linked, one cannot be considered without the other. We share an **intersectional** understanding of feminism, which takes into consideration different axes of discrimination such as gender, age, sexual orientation, ethnicity etc.
- **Collaborative transdisciplinary research** needs to be based on transparent and honest communications. The interactions should consider the lived realities of all parties involved and seek to rethink hierarchies and minimize inequalities. The objectives and results of the research should benefit all actors involved and be shared in appropriate formats.
- **Care** was seen to be relevant both within the project, to share supportive spaces, to approach each other with understanding and empathy and to work together collaboratively. Furthermore, care was also seen as an important value to convey in political advocacy, on the one hand through valuing the care work that takes place in rural communities but also by broadening narratives and language in public discourse, in order for these spaces to become more sensitive to diverse approaches and experiences.

2. Key emerging research foci

The key research foci were identified through the World Café activity but also through contributions and discussion questions that were raised throughout the workshop. These topics are not final, as not all WLIs were able to take part in the

workshop. Further input will also be collected at the upcoming webinar, as was mentioned earlier.

- One central activity is the **collection and systematization of existing work** that has already been done on collecting and analysing the experiences of diverse farmers and peasants. This should include academic and grey literature.
- **Mapping of women-led innovations** and organizations that may not identify as feminist or agroecological even though they share the same values. It was considered important here to also systematize and build on the work that already exists.
- **Changing narratives and language** in agricultural politics. There is a demand for new narratives around peasants and agroecological practices and for finding more caring language. This also included increasing the discourse and understanding around **rural feminisms**.
- **Barriers to political participation** for women and diverse farmers are of central interest. What impedes women and diverse farmers from getting involved in political activity on different levels (within and beyond organizations)?
- Tracing the **impact that feminist agricultural movements and discourse has had on policy** in order to strengthen advocacy work and better utilize existing policy structures.

Who is committed to work on these themes?

- These research foci will be discussed within the work packages and the cohort of PhD students and post-docs as they plan their research within the project.

3. Networking results

- The initial brainstorming session on the purpose and characteristics of a network were valuable to guide future cooperation and organization of

activities. It became clear that a strong network serves to strengthen the various partners by providing a space to share positive and negative experiences, express solidarity and create synergies for joint objectives. It was seen that a transparent and jointly agreed upon structure was considered to be essential for a network to be successful while barriers to entry should remain low.

- WLIs participants confirmed the relevance of the SWIFT networking objectives regarding amplification and articulation. Several WLIs representatives committed to proactively contributing to exchanges between WLIs, so that the content and format of these exchanges will be tailored to the interests and capacities of WLIs. The SWIFT team will support this process over the project period, and follow-up meetings were scheduled.
- There was a strong shared interest in staying connected with the innovations from Brazil and the USA in order to further learn about their experiences. The consortium will explore possibilities to mobilise resources for cross-continental capacity building.
- A network of PhD students and post-docs across project partners was initiated to stay in contact and exchange as research interests and plans become more concrete after the workshop. Here also ideas were exchanged on what different perspectives and topics could be addressed.

Who is committed to work on this further?

- There is interest from the Georgian WLI to collaboratively organize a feminist agroecology school. Members of other WLIs have been invited to join.
- There will be an agroecology school organized by AGROPERMALAB in Poland in autumn 2023.
- There is also a workshop on Gender Responsive Budgeting being organised in late-2023 by Oxfam (Task 5.1. of SWIFT).

Open questions to address in further process

Some open questions remained in the project consortium, which are recorded here to be further discussed.

- How to integrate further WLIs, that may not call themselves feminist or agroecological or are not a member of ECVC?
- How do we engage fruitfully with the two sister projects in this call, how do we build on earlier activities?
- How do we honour and appreciate previous and ongoing efforts in the field of agroecological and feminist activism, while allowing for new ideas?
- How do we overcome essentialist concepts of roles and identities (e.g. “women”, “men”, “researcher”, “farmer”, “policy maker”) also within the SWIFT community and create space for fluidity, complexity and change?
- How do we make sure we use inclusive language that is not limited to gender but also addresses intersectional aspects, including diversity of sexual identities and the barriers experienced by different marginalized groups³?

³ The publication *Embracing rural diversity: Genders and sexualities in the peasant movement* that was published 2021 by European Coordination Via Campesina (ECVC, www.eurovia.org) and Sindicato Labrego Galego (SLG, www.sindicatolabrego.com) can provide useful guidance how to make sure to use inclusive and respectful language.

Annex

1. Detailed program

Wednesday 28.3.2023

09.00-10.30h: Presentation of the house rules; “getting to know each other”: dynamic cohesion; introduction why are we here?

10:30-11:00h: Coffee break

11.00-13.30h: Initial exchange and expectations: What is a network for you and what does it mean to be part of it?; what expectations do you have for today?; What inspires us? Sharing of the outcomes in a plenary session.

13:30-15:00h: Lunch Break

15.00-16.45h: Presentation of each WLI and Q&A on the WLIs

16:45-17:00h: Wrap up and closing

Thursday 29.3.2023

09.00-09:15h: Good morning and opening words

09:15-10:45h: Mystica ceremony and introduction of Brazilian experiences

10:45-11:15h: Coffee break

11.15-12.15h: Introduction of SWIFT WP2 and WP3

13:30-15:00h: Lunch Break

15.00-17:00h: World Café and exchange in plenary

Friday 30.3.2023

09.00-09.30h: Dynamic cohesion

09.30-11:00h: Voting on the World Café results and clarification of capacities

11:30-13:00h: Space for questions regarding the project and closure of the workshop

13:00 – open: Lunch and departures

2. List of participants

| Partner | Representative | Country of partner |
|-------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------|
| Ingenio (CSIC-UPV) | Marta Rivera Ferre | ES |
| | Marta Maicas | |
| | Graeme Dean | |
| | Cristina Galiana | |
| | Mar Calvet | |
| | Maria Nieto | |
| UVIC | Marina Di Masso | ES |
| | Michela Tudini | |
| | Laia Baró Gómez | |
| AGROPERMALAB (also WLI) | Klaudia Kryńska | PL |
| | Wioletta Olejarczyk | |
| CES | Rita Calvário | PT |
| WUR | Jessica Duncan | NL |
| | Georgia Diamanti | |
| IRWiR | Ruta Śpiewak | PL |
| | Michał Dudek | |
| FOEE | Annelies Schorpion | BE |
| CIC | Stefano Mori | IT |
| | Francesco Panié | |
| ECVC | Sonia Vidal | BE |
| | Teresa Maisano | |
| OXFAM | Louise Legein | BE |
| BOKU | Lorenz Probst | AT |
| | Charlotte Voigt | |
| | Stefanie Lemke | |
| | Greta Capaité | |
| | Fatima Canseco-Lopez | |
| Urgenci | Isabel Álvarez | FR |
| | François Guiton | |
| | Sam Holder | |
| IHEID | Joanna Bourke-Martignoni | CH |
| | Larissa Da Silva Araujo | |
| FAO (advisory board) | Emma Siliprandi | BR/IT |

| | | |
|--|------------------------|----|
| World March for Women (advisory board) | Mariami Gaprindashvili | TR |
| Interpreter | Ariadna Grilo de Canda | - |
| Interpreter | Maria Girona Illescas | - |
| Interpreter | Ana Hernandez | - |
| Interpreter | Betty Stoakes | - |

| Partner | Representative | Country of partner |
|--|------------------------------------|--------------------|
| SOF | Miriam Nobre | BR |
| RAMA | Nilçe de Pontes Pereira dos Santos | BR |
| MST | Irineuda Monte Lope | BR |
| Toekomstboeren | Els Hegger | NL |
| ELKANA | Marika Kapanadze | GE |
| Cascina Malerbe | Alessandra Turco | IT |
| Action Aid | Isabella Orfano | IT |
| CNA | Laura Tarrafa | PT |
| EHNE-Bizkaia | Adelaida Gonzalez | ES |
| Sindicato Labrego Galego | Conchi Mogo | ES |
| | Maria Ferreiro | ES |
| Rock Steady Farms | Maggie Cheney | US |
| AGROPERMALAB <i>also listed as project partners</i> | Klaudia Kryńska | PL |
| | Wioletta Olejarczyk | PL |

Organizations that were not present: TVE (Hungary), Sindicato Mujeres Fresa Huelva (Spain), Ramadares (Spain), Les Josiannes (France), de Federatie van Agro-ecologische Boeren (NL), SWITZ Uniterre (Switzerland), ÖBV-Via Campesina (Austria).

3. Letter of commitment - DRAFT

Draft version 15.5.2023. The process of finalizing the formulation is still ongoing.

Carta compromiso – proyecto SWIFT

Entre los días 27 y 31 de marzo de 2023, nos encontramos en Riera Albergue Rural, Agres, para conformar una red de organizaciones campesinas e instituciones académicas europeas y socias con el objetivo de realizar investigación-acción comprometida con promover los derechos de los y las campesinas, impulsando enfoques feministas de la soberanía alimentaria y facilitando la transición hacia y consolidación de prácticas y consolidación de sistemas agroecológicos.

Durante esos días, empezamos un proceso que debe durar los próximos 4 años de colaboración entre organizaciones sociales, academia e innovaciones lideradas por mujeres y disidencias . Definimos que los valores que sustentan tal colaboración serán la inclusividad, horizontalidad, la transparencia y el compromiso con la transformación social. Así, esperamos generar, a través de SWIFT, procesos y productos útiles y aplicados a los contextos específicos y contribuir a la conformación de una red que promueva la agroecología feminista en Europa.

Nuestro proceso, que ha empezado en Agres, continuará sobre la base del aprendizaje mutuo y respetuoso, así como de la ética del cuidado, y nos comprometemos a defender tales principios.

Engagement letter – SWIFT project

Between March 27 and 31, 2023, we met at Riera Albergue Rural, Agres, within the framework of the Horizon Europe project Supporting Women-Led Innovations in Farming and Rural Territories (SWIFT). Our aim is to develop a network of peasant organizations and European academic institutions and partners to carry out action

research committed to advancing the rights of peasants, promoting feminist approaches to food sovereignty and agriculture, and facilitating the transition towards and consolidation of agroecological practices and systems.

During those days, we began a process that should last for the next 4 years of collaboration between social organizations, academia and innovations led by women and LGBTQIA+ persons. We decided that our collaboration will be based on the principles of inclusivity, horizontality, transparency, and commitment to social transformation. Hence, we expect to generate, through SWIFT, processes and products that are useful and applicable to specific contexts, and which also contribute to the formation of networks, practices and policies to promote feminist agroecology in Europe.

Our process, which began in Agres, will continue to be based on mutual and respectful learning as well as on an ethic of care and we are committed to upholding these principles.

¿QUÉ ES PARA TI UNA RED Y FORMAR PARTE DE ELLA?

- WHAT IS A NETWORK FOR YOU?
 Being part of it?
- Mutual learning / knowledge exchange
 - Vivir en los espacios que nos da
 - Different types (long-term, short-term)
 - Sentiments of comrades
 - Support
 - Diversity; acceptance of it
 - AWARENESS, different perspectives
 - Common objectives 
 - Activación por la base
 - TRUST, SOLIDARITY, MEDIATION
 - issues of individual & collective *dejarlos / que / unity*
 - Empathy, commitments, regular connection
 - Fortalecer el trabajo y dividir tareas
 - Sr/Date
 - Horizontalidad, energía, confianza

¿QUÉ EXPECTATIVAS TENGO DE ESTA JORNADA?


- WHAT EXPECTATIONS DO I HAVE & WHY?
- to be here ~~with awareness~~ *with awareness, ability, trust, respect, and the responsibilities* more focused
 - to be an *equal ally* *NOT A CLIMBER ON ANYBODY'S BACK*
 - to learn what other people are on, what are similarities & differences, at local level
 - to understand how the project works, what are the objectives
 - how WLI work; these stories; how communication teams can raise the awareness of WLI
 - Sentiments de pertenencia, retroalimentación
 - to manage to strengthen the capacities of WLI, so WLI do not need to go through the same as what we gathered for today
 - the relevance of *networking* work to
 - show the sensitivity & vulnerability in situations WLI face / experience

¿QUÉ NOS INSPIRA? (luchas, colectivos, referentes, experiencias locales...)

- WHAT DO INSPIRE US? *from struggle, from collective action, from experiences*
- to see people's determination *to be in AGROS*
 - MST
 - Experiencias locales
 - Mujeres productoras de alimentos
 - Anger for dysfunctional food system
 - Fairness experiences, feminist practices
 - Global struggle for food sovereignty
 - NAGELANI 2025
 - Marcha mundial de las mujeres
 - Lucha
 - Sindicato Labores Celso
 - Multiplicar y compartir experiencias

¿QUÉ ES PARA TI UNA RED Y FORMAR PARTE DE ELLA?

WHAT IS A NETWORK FOR YOU
 TRY TO BE PART OF IT? ^{learning}
 (mutual support, strength, solidarity, experiences)

sharing
 horizontal (equality)
 common objective 
 joy & energy (for work, being together & understanding)
 Strength
 Community & inspiration
 a way of living & communication
 Care (sharing resources/training)
 fluidity & informality
 diversity, openness (different knowledge, skills)
 debate
 transformation
 power
 efficiency ^(less wasteful of energy)

¿QUÉ EXPECTATIVAS TENGO DE ESTA JORNADA?

WHAT EXPECTATIONS DO I HAVE FROM THIS DAY?
 tangible, concrete ideas or how our project can support the initiatives (not to waste the will to do)

What we are going to do in terms of the project?
 what's our starting point? ^{clarification}

to get to know each other ^{integrate the spread whole on one with women}

to create trust ^{commitment}

sharing the experiences (using cooperation) to understand the project

what I can bring to the project?

having fun!
 common understanding of feminism & agroecology
 solving needs to learn from each other ^{meeting the locals}
 cooperation ^{trying to understand how European people can work together}

¿QUÉ NOS INSPIRA? (luchas, colectivos, referentes experiencias locales)

WHAT INSPIRES US?
 (struggles, collective, references & local experiences)

- BY PEOPLE WITH DIFFERENT EXPERIENCES
- CHILDREN
- ANCESTORS
- BEING A PART OF A BIGGER GROUP THAT CHANGES THE WORLD (SPRING SEEDS THAT WILL SPREAD ALL OVER THE WORLD)
- PEOPLE WHO DESPITE TOUGH CONDITIONS, STILL FIGHT & CHANGE THE NARRATIVE
- TRYING TO CREATE A SYSTEM OF FOOD SOVEREIGNTY
- FEMINISTE, TRANS FEMINISTE, CARING & RADICAL TRANSFORMATIONS
- THE IDEA OF CREATING A NETWORK
- OLD STRUCTURES & NARRATIVES
- DECIDED ONLY ON STATUS
- PARTNERSHIP
- SPIRITUALITY (DIGNITY, MOURNEMENTS OF LIFE)
- A NEED TO RECOVER A SPACE OF CARING THAT WE LOST

OVERCOMING INEQUALITIES
 LACK OF RIGHTS (LGBTQ+)
 FRIENDLY RESULTS (SOL ANTI-TRUMP RESULTS)
 AUTHENTICITY
 BIODIVERSITY





Day 2: Thursday, 30th March.

Summary of SWIFT presentation, © Teresa Sempere García (l'Argila)

#WP2

INNOVACIONES (sin reinventar rueda)

RELACIONES ÉTICAS y TRANSPARENCIA! HUMILDAD y HONESTIDAD

TRABAJO CONJUNTO - COCREACIÓN / SINERGIAS

DIFUSIÓN (AMPLIFICACIÓN VISIBILIZACIÓN) INVESTIGACIÓN (artículos informes)

CONOCIMIENTO ANCESTRAL en agricultura (IMP!)

#WP3

RED?

✓ Compartir conocimientos/experiencias políticas - valor añadido

✓ Particip. política / Representatividad

MÉTODOS

- Base Datos
- Observ. participativa
- Entrevistas/cuent.
- Foto/Videos (Radio/TV)
- Artículos científicos
- Juegos Rol

EL TIEMPO

DIFICULTADES desde productores

- Atender a la investigación "la virtualidad"
- Negociar/necesidades [INTERCAMBIO]

TRABAJO como TODO de VIDA

ROLES que se espera?

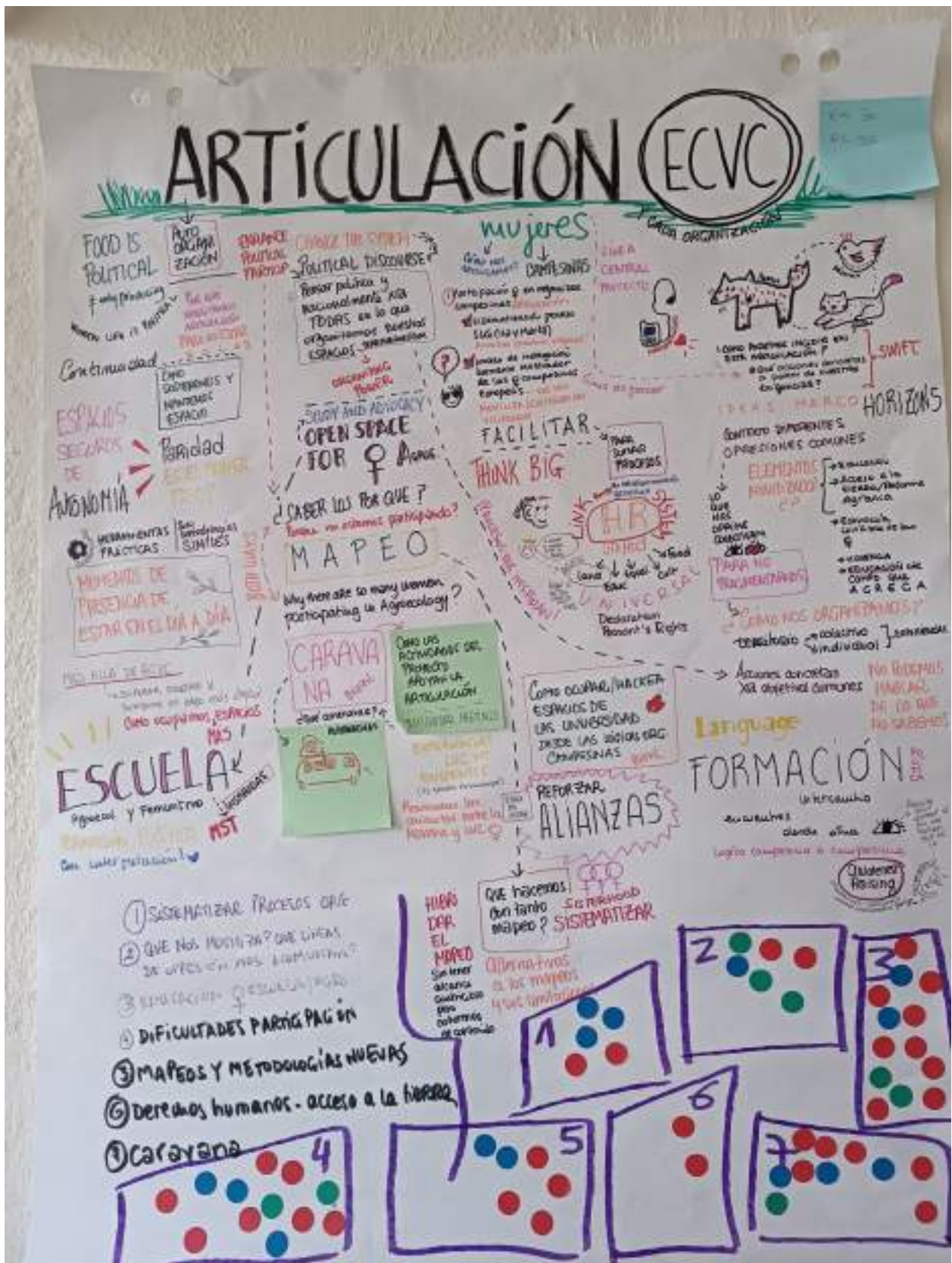
FLEXIBILIDAD

HUMILDAD

++ JUSTICIA ESTÉTICA

Day 3: Friday 31st March.

World Café results and prioritization



- COLLABORATIVE RESEARCH -

