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Rethinking Hunger, Food Insecurity, and Malnutrition in the Age of Inequality

Eşitsizlikler Çağında Açlık, Gıda Güvensizliği ve Yetersiz Beslenmeyi Yeniden Düşünmek

Abstract

Due to extreme climate events, the Covid-19 global pandemic, the war in Ukraine, and a rapid increase in the food prices 3.1 billion people were unable have access to nutritious food in 2022. Global inequalities, poverty, and social insecurities that disseminated in almost every aspect of human life have already started to challenge the social contract. As a minimum requirement to guarantee a decent life for everyone, a new social contract based on mutual obligations of concentric circles may be imagined for food security. Such a contract may offera solid framework to encounter the current agrifood system's fragilities and vulnerabilities. This study argues that a new social contract should redefine relations between the state and private sector, considering the well-being of all segments of society and, in a broader sense, humanity. Secondly, it emphasizes the necessity of reforming rules, norms, principles, and decision-making procedures to eliminate the double standards of the global trade system. Lastly, it claims that rather than falling back into the industrial agriculture production trap, "what we owe each other" is to adopt collectively resilient, sustainable, and equitable policies to eliminate hunger, food insecurity, and malnutrition.

Öz

İklim değişikliği nedeniyle ortaya çıkan şiddetli hava olayları, Covid-19 küresel salgını, Ukrayna'da savaş ve temel gıda fiyatlarının hızla artması, 2022 yılında 3,1 milyar insanı sağlıklı gıdayı karşılayamaz hale getirmiştir. Artan küresel eşitsizlikler, yoksulluk ve insan hayatının hemen her alanına yayılan sosyal güvensizlikler nedeniyle toplumsal sözleşme yeni meydan okumalar ile karşıya karşıyadır. Herkes için insana yakışır bir yaşamı garanti altına almanın asgari şartı olarak, eşmerkezli çemberlerin karşılıklı yükümlülüklerine dayanan yeni bir toplumsal sözleşme tasavvuru, mevcut tarımsal gıda sisteminin kırılganlıklarına ve savunmasızlıklarına nasıl yanıt verilebileceğine ilişkin somut bir çerçeve sunabilir. Bu çalışma, yeni bir toplumsal sözleşmenin, toplumun tüm bileşenlerinin ve daha geniş anlamda insanlığın refahını göz önünde bulundurarak devlet ve gıda şirketleri arasındaki ilişkileri yeniden tanımlaması gerektiğini savunmaktadır. İkinci olarak, çifte standartlı küresel ticaret sistemini ortadan kaldırmak için kuralların, normların, ilkelerin ve karar verme prosedürlerinin reforme edilmesi gerekliliğini vurgular. Son olarak, daha fazla tarımsal üretim tuzağına düşmek yerine, "birbirimize borçlu olduğumuz şeyin" açlığı, gıda güvensizliğini ve yetersiz beslenmeyi ortadan kaldırmak için kolektif olarak dayanıklı, sürdürülebilir ve eşitlikçi politikalar benimsemek olduğunu iddia ediyor.

Keywords
Food crisis, social contract, food (in)security, hunger, agrifood systems

Anahtar Kelimeler
Gıda krizi, sosyal sözleşme, gıda güvenliği(güvensizliği), açlık, tarımsal gıda sistemleri

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Introduction

Why billions of people go to bed hungry when there is enough food and agricultural production to feed everyone is an old question researched by economists, political scientists, and anthropologists. It is a common concern for individuals, communities, states, and global governance that necessitates collective action to overcome the pathologies of hunger, food insecurity, and malnutrition. Internationally, after Millennium Development Goals, the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDG 2 -Zero Hunger have also prioritized eliminating hunger, food insecurity, and all kinds of malnutrition worldwide by 2030. However, hunger has been increasing worldwide since 2014, and the effects of droughts, the pandemic, and war in Ukraine aggravate the situation. In the age of inequalities, insecurities, and anxiety, the fear of food insecurity has become a distinct source of desperation (Hough, 2020, p. 293-294; FAO, IFAD, UNICEF, WFP and WHO, 2022; Naylor 2015, p. 4; Orford 2015).

Heretofore, three lines of inquiry dealt with the explanations of hunger, malnutrition, and food insecurity by referencing multilevel and intersecting food relations. The first body of literature devoted to understanding food insecurity, hunger, and malnutrition is the constructivist accounts that deal with intersubjectively constructed norms, principles, rules, and decision-making procedures (Puchala and Hopkins, 1982; Margulis 2013). The second body of literature is developed through world system theory, investigating geographical specialization, historical commodities of historical food regimes, and defining problems of global poverty and hunger due to prevailing food regimes (Friedman and Mcmichael, 1989). The third line of inquiry approaches global food relations as an extension of states' relative power and interest calculations using game-theoretical explanations (Hopewell, 2012). Those three lines of explanations reflect different aspects and levels of the multilayered and intersecting global food and agricultural system. The common shortcoming of these studies is that they rarely cross-reference.

The basic premise of this study is to develop a comprehensive framework thanks to the new social contract theory which defines the necessities and responsibilities of individuals, communities, states, the private sector, and international actors through concentric circles that paves the way for cross-referencing previous theoretical explanations to frame a new social contract for food. In order to realize this, the study firstly reviews the contributions and shortcomings of the previous approaches regarding food insecurity, malnutrition, and hunger. It argues that a new social contract theory promises a comprehensive framework for understanding the intersecting relations of food production, consumption, and distribution by revealing the roles of the state, the private sector, and international institutions. It asserts that the prescriptions of an conceptualised new social contract regarding the private sector and state promise to develop a partnership to alleviate hunger, food insecurity, and malnutrition at the state level.

This study's second premise is expanding the international level of the new social contract by discussing its conceptualization of "collective solidarity." It argues that it has a thin basefor eliminating unjust rules and regulations of the global food regime that impedes the well-being of societies. In order to reveal, it layered global food and agricultural configuration and questions whether "collective solidarity" provides a concrete solution for eliminating food insecurity, malnutrition, and hunger. It argues that along with the normative base of "collective solidarity, "we owe each other" to develop and expand the international level of the new social contract to encompass rules and regulations in order to erode inequalities and insecurities among and within states(Shafik, 2022, p. 4).

Literature on Hunger, Food Insecurity, and Malnutrition

Heretofore, three lines of inquriy dealt with the explanations of hunger, malnutrition, and food insecurity by referencing multilevel and intersecting relations. The first line of research references the classical international regime studies, which regards international regimes as international institutions, namely a "set of norms, principles, and decision-making procedures that actors' expectations converge around." This line of the research emphasizes intersubjectively constructed ideas, norms, and discourses in regime formation, change, and collapse (Young, 1989: 11-30; Puchala and Hopkins, 1982: 62). In this view, the lack of institutional incoherence, (Shaw, 2007: 457) conflicting norms and identities are the sources of pathologies of the global food system (Margulis 2013, 67). As an extension of this literature, some scholars argue that changes in discourses (Lee, 2013, p. 219; Agarwal 2014, p. 1248) or emerging alternative developmental norms (Duggan, 2015, p. 16) have attained the transformative power for resilient and sustainable food systems.

This line of inquiry has provided insightful descriptions regarding intersubjectively constructed norms, principles, and rules. Moreover, it heralds a normative agenda that promises food systems which empower societies, enhance fairness, and sustain the environment. However, it does not provide a concrete base to explain why some states still suffer from hunger and malnutrition even if they adopt an alternative view on food and agricultural relations. Venezuela's case is salient in this manner; even though the state was the chief protagonist of the food sovereignty movement, people have suffered from hunger and malnutrition for several years (Economist, 2019; Global Hunger Index, 2022, p. 15). It also can not explain why some states follow wholly different political behavior even though they are protagonists of a more equitable and fair global food and agricultural system. India, for instance, after a great contestation with the United States, could convince the United Staes for a peace clause that permitted public stockholding at the Bali conference of WTO. However, it has a time clause, too. Developing states struggling with food insecurity and malnutrition could not benefit from the same peace clause (Hopewell, 2021, p. 9).

The second line of inquiry, the Marxist explanations on food regimes, traces the historical and geographical phases of international relations of food production, consumption, and distribution within the capitalist world economy. This literature explains contradictory elements within each historical period –three historical food regimes- analyzing states, transnational corporations, and global movements by focusing on crisis and transition since the nineteenth century. It prioritizes how the capital accumulation of agriculture constitutes the global power configuration that perpetuates historically constructed inequalities between the center and periphery of the global economy. (Friedman and Mcmichael, 1989, p. 95; Friedmann, 2009, p. 335; McMichael, 2017, p. 100; 2020, p.140) The strength of this approach lies behind the historicity and ability to interpret local and global change processes (Magnan, 2012, p. 371).

This literature's shortcoming is its overemphasizing of universalism, which lacks concrete empirical evidence. Furthermore, exaggerating global structural explanations fall short of understanding what variations by social policies might achieve. For instance, this line of literature cannot fully explain how the policy of Fome Zero successfully eroded hunger despite the "corporate food regime." A critical alternative account is offered by Otero, Penchlear and Gürcan to explain contemporary food regime through uneven and combined development to overcome shortcomings of this literature (Niederle, 2017, p. 1; Otero, 2016, p. 300; Otero, Pechlaner, and Gürcan, 2013, p. 263).

The third line of inquiry investigates contestation and competition for relative power among states in global food and agricultural configuration. Rather than focusing on the normative dimension, it sees global food trade and agricultural relations as an extension of power competition (Hopewell, 2021, p. 2). Unlike previous explanations, they tend to interpret industrial agriculture, land grabbing, and biofuel race as not the only reflections of the capitalist expansionism of multinationals, but state's quest for power. This line of research has provided a concrete explanatory framework to understand the behaviors of states and how states pursue wealth and power in the global food system. The shortcoming of this line of inquiry is to focus on explaining patterns and behaviors that might lead to the neglect of potential change and transformation of regimes. Practically, it overlooks irrationalities in states' behaviors, such as the securitization of food security. For instance, after the war in Ukraine, world politics concentrated a new security threat, "food security." Although hunger and food insecurity is not the case, some states, such as France, call for urgent measures for food security and even a third agricultural revolution (Struna, 2022; Fortuna et al., 2022).

As reviewed, approaches based on intersubjectively constructed norms and principles, explanations based on capitalist accumulation relations, or theories that deal only with states' power relations are insufficient to understand why hunger, malnutrition, and food insecurity have tended to persist despite the national and international efforts to tackle them. Moreover, those approaches are insufficient to make sense of the food crisis within the context of multiple global crises humanity witnessed in the last two decades.

The social contract fundamentally defines the rules and norms of governance that predates the modern state and obliges it to fulfill essential elements such as food and shelter for living. The new social contract paves the way to understanding the problems of hunger, food insecurity, and malnutrition within the multiple global crises and links the international dimension with the social theory. The next section of the study frames the new social contract by discussing the multiple global crises and clarifies the blueprints of a new social contract for food security.

A New Theoretical Framework for Food and Agriculture

Karl Polanyi commences The Great Transformation by declaring the collapse of the nineteenth-century civilization by untwisting its underlying political and economic causes and heralded transformation (Polanyi, 1944, p. 3). After multiple crises – the Great Recession, the euro crisis, the food price crisis, the migration crisis, Brexit, and democratic backsliding- philosophers interpreted the zeitgeist with The Great Regression (Geiselberger, 2017). After the years of Great Regression published, populism continued to rise, and the pandemic, the international war, and the food crisis have reiterated manifestations of pessimism for many students of international politics. Humanity has witnessed an era ridden with inequalities, insecurities, anxieties, and fear for many years (Balta, 2019, p. 11-13).

The coexistence of crises and transformations necessitates a new understanding to meet the changing realities. Taking this as a strating point, Shafik offers a new social contract in which the building block is "solidarity," a contract which addresses communities, state, and international actors. It has the potential to transform the cycle of desperation into hope for individuals, societies, and the whole of humanity (Shafik, 2022, p. 4). Today's anxieties make themselves felt in every aspect of life; no one is free from fear of losing a job, health insurance, or food security. From this perspective, the mutual obligations of concentric circles have both practical and theoretical advantages to develop a new social contract for resilient, sustainable, and equitable agrifood systems.

Theoretically, it moves beyond the classical understanding of a social contract, embodying partnerships among individuals, society, state, businesses such as food corporations, regional organizations such as the European Union, and global social movements such as La Via Campesina (Shafik, 2022, p. 4). Moreover, this framework offers a new window of opportunity for international thought (Jackson, 2005), or an international imagination, by giving room for global social movements and international organizations such as FAO, World Food Security Summit, and World Food Programme. With urging international solidarity in the face of humanitarian crises or global challenges, namely "collective solidarity," to live better together, the new social contract juxtaposes social theory with international theory.

The blueprint of the new social contract includes three principles, "security for all," "maximum investment in capability," and "efficient, fair sharing of risks." In order to frame

a new social contract for food security, the rest of the study applies three core principles of the new social contract to the global food configuration. The third section aims to apply the first principle, "security for all," it frames that states oblige to provide a minimum for a decent life for everyone, which depends on the state's capability and capacity (Shafik, 2022, p. 164). For this first principle, accepting food security as a minimum requirement for a decent life might provide a concrete base since it provides a measurable target. Food security has four dimensions: availability, access, utilization, and stability. This study argues that states are supposed to provide food security as a bare minimum. However, it reminds us of the necessity for a new definition for food security encompassing agency and sustainability pillars (Clapp, 2014, p. 206; OHCHR, 2010, p. 4).

The last part of the study unpacks the layers of the global agrifood system to investigate the implementation of the second and third principles of the new social contract. The second principle of the new social contract points out the efficient, fair sharing of risks among all society stakeholders, including the private sector. Reformulation of the private sector and state relations has two significant economic and political transformations: raising corporate taxes and international monitoring to impede the avoidance of taxes. Thus corporations' political and economic power might be balanced in favor of societies and the most vulnerable groups, such as peasants, farmers, and women in rural areas. Those economic and political transformations promise to establish resilient, fair, and sustainable food and agricultural systems (Shafik, 2022, p. 180-183).

The last principle of a new social contract obliges maximum investment to capabilities by the state and the private sector to achieve a better society. Regarding investments in agrifood systems, public-private partnerships are particularly significant (FAO, IFAD, UNICEF, WFP, and WHO, 2022, p. iv). However, the maximum investment in capacity building for the food and agricultural sector has significant international obstacles. International agricultural trade rules, particularly the Agreement of Agriculture (AoA), prohibit some states' public spending on farming sectors in the developing world. Minimizing states' presence in agricultural sectors hinders those states' capacities and capabilities to contribute to resilient and sustainable agricultural production (Margulis, 2013, p. 57).

According to theory, implementing those policies depends on states' capacities and capabilities. Nevertheless, global trade rules and global food and agricultural systems are in crisis regarding economic, political, and environmental dimensions. This crisis roots in historical developments that enhance the economic and political privileges of developed world countries in trade, the concentration of food corporations, and states' competition in industrial agriculture, particularly staple grain production. These elements lead to loss of biodiversity and environmental degradation and accelerate climate change.

Conceptualization of Food Security as an Invisible Component of Social Contract

Inspired by the first principle of the new social contract -security for all- this study places access to nutritious, affordable, and preferable food at the heart of the new social contract for food. However, environmental degradation and the need to empower vulnerable groups such as farmers, indigenous people, or rural women indicate that contemporary food security definition needs to be more inclusive to meet contemporary concerns. The definition of food security is "evolved, developed, multiplied, and diversified" in the face of changing challenges of the time (Shafik, 2022, p. 11; Maxwell, 1996, p. 155).

In the first World Food Conference (1974) that convened after the first global food crisis, hunger and food insecurity passed as a food supply problem, assuming that securing supplies could impede significant famines. However, after subsequent famines in the following years, Amartya Sen pointed out various ingredients of food insecurity, including availability, access, and utilization. The theory of entitlement, from this perspective, change the "social contract" for food security (Sen, 1981; Zhou, 2020, p. 6; Maxwell, 1996, p. 157).

In the 1990s, broadening with nutrition measurement, food security is defined as a situation that

> "exists when all people, at all times, have physical, social and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food that meets their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life (Clay, 2013)."

Recently, Wiggins and Slater discussed that in addition to the calorie intake calculations, food security should encompass a dimension to respond to the psychological implications of food insecurity, malnutrition, and hunger. In addition to achieving a physical condition, the measurements of food security ought to alleviate fears and anxieties about hunger. The implications of anxieties and fears of food insecurity and hunger are as detrimental as the physical deficiency of food (Zhou, 2020, p. 6-7; Wiggins and Slater, 2010, p. 133).

According to some scholars, food security needs to be redefined in a more inclusive way due to the conditions created by climate change and the inequalities arising from the global food system. Clapp et al. argue that agency and sustainability tenets should add to the definition of food security. Actor refers to the capacity of individuals and groups to make their voices heard and make decisions about food systems; sustainability means the long-term viability of the ecological and social foundations of food systems. The former provides an opportunity for those discontented with the global food and agricultural system, and the latter offers an environmentally sustainable global food and agricultural system (Clapp et al., 2022, p. 3-6).

From this point of view, the proposed six-dimensional framework -affordability, access, stability, utilization, agency, and sustainability- provides a concrete base for a new social

contract. This study argues that even though it assumes the current food security definition as a bare minimum, it also reminds us of the necessity of a reform in preventing further biodiversity loss, environmental degradation, and desertification. In addition, measuring agency capacity contributes to the juxtaposion of the right to food, food sovereignty, and food security. From the perspective of a new social contract, the proposed reformulation of food security promises not just material conditions; it also heralds well-being, life prospects, and capacity improvement.

Nevertheless, raising the minimum standard for food security would be insufficient unless the states redefine relations with food corporations and reformulate international rules and regulations to eliminate double-standards. In the following sections, this study investigates whether the mutual obligations of concentric circles promise redress those stalemates.

Layers of Global Food and Agricultural System

The global food and agricultural system is in crisis, and it is not new; economic, political, and ecological crises have characterized the global food system for several years The roots of these multiple crisis might be traced in four historical turning points of global food and agricultural system. After the Green Revolution, state-led industrial agriculture and the Western global market expansion manifested the transfers of food surplus from the developed world to the developing world. The second turning point was the agricultural deregulation by Structural Adjustment Policies (SAPs) during the 1980s. Agreement on Agriculture was the contentious regulation that accelerated food's corporate concentration and financialisation since 1994. All these turning points resulted in expanding developed countries' privileges and increasing food corporations' political and economic influence at the expense of the developing or underdeveloped World (Clapp, 2012, p. 11-23).

The global food system is unequal due to deregulation and liberalization policies, the state's presence in the agriculture sector is minimized, and rural populations, peasants, and landless people are impoverished in developing states. The system is vulnerable since it concentrates the food and agricultural trade and processing on multinational companies whose chief aim is to bring profit. Lastly, it is not environmentally sustainable due to the monotypifisation of grain production and competition for more production at the expense of the environment.

As an inequality multiplier, global agrifood trade is not politically, economically, and environmentally sustainable. The primary opposition resulting from these inequalities and corporate concentration is the global social movement that defends food sovereignty, directly eliminating global trade rules and corporations' power and aims to replace existing agrifood systems with local and eco-agrifood systems. The discontented are not only peasants and landless people; deadlocks of the Doha Development Round were particularly on food and

agricultural regulations. Emerging powers, in a broader sense, the developing world, struggle to reframe global agrifood trade (Lin and Favre, 2023).

This part of the study aims to unpack the global food and agricultural system to investigate the implementation of the second and third principles of the new social contract, which prescribe maximum investment in capacity building and reframing state-business relations in favor of society. Regarding public spending and regulations, it investigates how international trade regulations prevent agricultural subsidies and imposed property rights on essential food seeds and crops. Secondly, it seeks to answer whether reframing state and private sector relations by raising corporate taxes and international regulation impedes tax avoidance or tax havens. It defends that reforming relations between the private sector and the state might ameliorate the problem of hunger, food insecurity, and malnutrition. However, reformulating global trade rules and regulations requires more than a wishful thinking of collective solidarity.

Unjust Trade Rules and Regulations

Since establishing the international multilateral trade regime in 1947, food and agricultural regulations have always been controversial among food-exporting and importing states. Agricultural product exporting countries have imposed more liberalization, while net food importers have defended that more flexible financial and fiscal regulations are compulsory for agricultural commodities due to national food security concerns. During the 1980s, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank (WB) conditioned loans through structural adjustment programs to reduce government support and further liberalization of the agricultural sector. Nevertheless, before the Agreement on Agriculture (AoA), agricultural commodities had substantial exemptions from the general GATT rules regarding tariffs and subsidies on domestic and exported commodities or import quotas and embargoes (Margulis, 2017, p. 27; Clapp and Moseley, 2020, p. 1396; Gonzalez, 2002, p. 40-42).

AoA lowers tariffs or taxes, removes barriers to ease market access, and reduces domestic and export subsidies to end agricultural dumping. It has two implications for the social contract, states' capacities had diminished to guarantee national food security and social protection for politically and economically essential constituency farmers. For developed countries, the agricultural sector farmers had already had comprehensive social protection before the Uruguay Round. Thus a high level of agricultural protection in the US, Japan, or Europe, through the implementation of AoA harm directly the developing states' agricultural sector. It is not a coincidence that almost 60 percent of subsidies of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) states are defined as exemptions (Clapp, 2012, p. 70-73).

Thus the EU, the U.S., Canada, and Australia have continued to subsidize their agriculture sector at the expense of the developing states' rural populations. They have relatively solid fiscal tools to support their agricultural sector. After the engagement of the World Trade Organization, China started to violate subsidy rules to compete with the OECD states by

supporting its vast agrifood sectors. Even China has exceeded the average agricultural subsidy of OECD countries. This competition deepened inequalities and the aggravated crisis of the global agrifood system (Hopewell, 2022, p. 570-571). In the current agrifood system, for instance, the least developed countries of Africa can neither subsidize their agricultural sector nor compete with those agricultural giants.

In terms of sustainability and capacity building, for instance, the last reform of the Common Agricultural Policy would be an ideal type for a fairer and more sustainable food and agricultural system. According to the new agreement, the CAP aims to develop resilience and sustainability to climate change, biodiversity loss, and overuse of natural resources. The package includes public subsidies for the farming sector that accept sustainable and environmental agricultural production. It has different fiscal opportunities to support the rural agricultural sector with more equitable policies. CAP reflects the ideal framework regarding rural people's well-being, environmental sustainability, and resilient agrifood system (European Commission, 2021). However, the same conditions and availability are not the case for the rest of the developing states. That is why "collective solidarity" as a norm has a weak basis unless it is undergirded by international rules and regulations that aim to eliminate double standards in agricultural trade.

Corporate Control on Global Agrifood System

After the subsequent liberalization and deregulation of agricultural trade by SAPs and AoA, Trade Related Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPs)[1], the concentration of corporate power accelerated, expanded, and became the cornerstone of the food and agriculture market. Four giant companies concentrated approximately 70 percent of the globally produced grains - ADM, Bunge, Cargill, and (Louis) Dreyfus. Those companies concentrate on ingredient crops since wheat, maize, corn, soybean, and palm oil are necessary for food production, animal feeding, and biofuels. They adjust global food prices, set food standards, and influence public regulations and rules where they operate. After the Ukraine invasion, it is no coincidence that those four companies achieved record profits (Clapp, 2012, p. 96-122; Harvey, 2022).

Those corporations are accused of tax evasion, corruption, and making speculations in world grain prices. They are also not entirely transparent, and due to being operational worldwide, they are able to quickly transfer revenues to low-tax jurisdiction areas. For instance, although food prices have reached a historical peak, those companies' taxable revenues arose suspicion in Argentina after the 2008-2009 food crisis. The government accused those four companies of transferring their profits to low-tax jurisdictions for tax evasion (Murphy et al., 2012, p. 7-9; Lawrence, 2011).

For this reason, the new social contract promises a more nuanced approach that recalls state and business relations. It promises to share risk with the corporations through increasing corporate taxation and preventing avoidance of taxation by tax havens. In order to monitor

corporations, Shafik offers international regulations to tax corporations regardless of the location of their legal entity and a minimum tax rate for all multinational companies. This regulation might ameliorate competition for tax reduction and provide an opportunity to transfer wealth more equally (Shafik, 2022, p. 182). Regarding food and agricultural companies, particularly global grain corporations, international monitoring not only promises redistribution of wealth, but increased transparency and accountability for those companies.

Conclusion

Global inequalities, poverty, and social insecurities that have disseminated in almost every aspect of human life have already started to challenge the social contract. From this point of view, this study investigates whether a new social contract based on mutual obligations of concentric circles is a solid base to encounter the current agrifood system's fragilities and vulnerabilities. It starts with a conceptual framework and claims that "food security" is the minimum to guarantee everyone a decent life. However, food security must be improved by internalizing sustainability and agency pillars. Secondly, it investigates the reframing of state business relations and maximum investment in capacity building. It argues that even though collective solidarity promises a solid normative base, many agrifood relations have created unequal conditions under the binding mechanism of the Dispute Settlement Mechanism of WTO. Without the rules and regulations that support this normative base, the global agrifood system has fallen into periodic crises such as the ones in 2008-2009, 2014, and 2020. These crises reiterated the need to reform rules, norms, principles, and decision-making procedures to eliminate the double-standard global trade system for a new social contract for food. As a strand of the agrifood trade system, reformulation of corporate power and state relations may provide an equal wealth redistribution as offered in the new social contract. Moreover, international monitoring also provides transparency and may ameliorate food price speculations. These regulations contribute to the well-being of all segments of society and, in the broader sense, humanity.

1 Through TRIPs, those corporations have achieved the power to patent seeds and crops in developing and least developing states. Global social movements, such as GRAIN, address TRIPs as one of the significant threats to biodiversity and environmental sustainability.

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