

RECIPE FOR CHANGE

The following are excerpts taken from the introduction to a cookbook published by The Rural Women's Assembly (RWA).

The Rural Women's Assembly is a southern African movement of rural women who are small-scale producers, peasants, farm workers, farm dwellers, forest workers and the landless. We are based in farm unions, small rural associations, farm workers' unions, NGOs, networks and local village group.

Since 2009 we have grown and become a movement that mobilizes rural women to act in their own interest, to campaign and struggle against unjust policies and legislation, be it agricultural policies, trade, financial, climate, poverty and inequality. We oppose corporate takeover of our seed, our land, our water, our natural mineral wealth. We shout out in a loud voice against the abuse, the violence, oppression and exploitation of women.

RECIPE FOR CHANGE

This is a recipe for everyday use; however it should be adapted to local conditions, local ingredients, patience and daily slow stirring for best results.

Ingredients

- Heaps of active, rural women in villages, communities and local farmers associations
- Large doses of committed leaders
- Buckets full of loud voice with clear demands
- Clear platform of action
- Strong critiques of the system that oppresses and exploits women
- Many kilograms of healthy rejection of patriarchy
- Fresh ideas, locally picked ingredients
- Bags of information and resources
- Bottles of alliances and partnerships

Method

- This recipe requires slow and consistent work for best results. First, bring together the ingredients into one district, one territory or a region and listen to the local voices and local issues, then add hands, feet and heads that are full of motivations and ideas that believe they can solve their own problems and bring about change. Make sure the ingredients consist of a mix of freshly picked young leaves and the leaves that have weathered several storms.

- Continue slowly and carefully pouring in popular education and consciousness-raising. As you pour, add generous hands full of local herbs that explain why we are poor and why rural women are the bottom of the pile. Then strengthen collective leadership, allow the issues to bubble and surface. Make sure the mixture understands why we are cooking a feminist brew.
- Stir until all the ingredients are well-mixed, allow mixture to settle and work together, take actions on a regular basis. Slowly add values, care about our bodies, food, the environment and well-being of our community and society.
- Grease the baking pan, pour in mixture and cook slowly. Watch all the time, this is a slow cook recipe that has proven results. From time to time you may have to turn up the heat.