

C4 | DEVELOPMENT MODEL, EXTRACTIVISM, AND ENVIRONMENT: KNITTING RESISTANCES GLOBALLY

Introduction

Such arrogance to say that you own the land, when you are owned by it. How can you own that which outlives you? To claim a place is the birthright of everyone ... And where shall we obtain life? From the land. To work the land is an obligation, not merely a right. In tilling the land you possess it. And so the land is a grace that must be nurtured. Land is sacred. Land is beloved.¹

As a working group of the People's Health Movement (PHM), contributors to this chapter have a strong critique of economic growth as the dominant paradigm of social organization. This paradigm subordinates our well-being to growth and so-called progress; inequities and poverty are reduced to economic factors, i.e., gross domestic product (GDP) and the Human Development Index (Arteaga-Cruz 2017, 909). Discussions of green energy or carbon markets that do not question the fundamental growth-centric approach will only mitigate its damage, not repair it (see Chapter A3). Thus, it is important to first address briefly the concept of development.

The Alternatives to Development Permanent Working Group says development is:

A device of power that reorganized the world, re-legitimizing the international division of labor in the capitalist context, through an enormous set of discourses and practices. Development became a public policy objective, budgets were allocated, and multiple institutions were created to promote development at local, national, and international levels ... In countries of the North, what were previously economic policies towards the colonies were re-signified in terms of 'international cooperation' for development. (Lang and Mokrani 2011, 13 as cited in Arteaga-Cruz 2017, 909; author's translation)

As the PHM Environment and Health circle, we take aim at extractivism as the system through which this development model operates. Extractivism:

Is a mode of accumulation that favors extraction of natural resources (minerals such as gold, manganese, bauxite, copper, cobalt, zinc, tin, diamonds, and uranium, and fossil fuels, and commercial farming, forest, and fishing industries) from countries of the Global South who export their resources. The extractivist project began to be structured with the conquest and colonization of

America, Africa, and Asia. (Acosta 2013, 61 as cited in Arteaga-Cruz et al. 2020, 101)

Both right- and left-wing governments across the world, especially in Latin America, are captured by the belief in this development paradigm, along with their allies in the emerging geopolitical centers of China, India, and Russia. Communities continue to experience growing displacement, the loss of social services, land, water, and livelihood, heightened militarization, violence and repression, and increased incidence of communicable diseases and health problems resulting from exposure to toxins. All of these are linked to an extractivist project, driven by global financial capital, promoting an unsustainable and inequitable development model that threatens the people's and planet's health. The right to health is not compatible with financing national health systems with revenues of activities that intrinsically destroy life (oil industry, mining, etc.).

This chapter will demonstrate the inconsistency of development policies that fund health and the right to health with extractivism, and depict examples of resistance to extractive industries. Development serves as a fundamental organizing principle of both capitalism and its particular form of the welfare state (Arteaga-Cruz et al. 2020, 101). The extractivist status quo strives to maintain itself by displacing blame to the individual rather than addressing root causes of injustice.

In a global economy predicated on the extraction of resources and the relentless pursuit of profit, systems of oppression – white supremacy, patriarchy, ableism, neoliberal capitalism – simultaneously drive health inequalities and climate change. Exacerbated by free trade agreements (instruments that increase colonial domination through unequal exchange) that protect capital mobility, this development paradigm has resulted in privatization of health services for impoverished/racialized sectors (Hardeman and Karbeah 2020) of the Global South (see also Chapters B1 and B3), with fragmented health programs for the poor population – referred to locally as *salud de pobres para pobres* (López Arellano et al. 2015, 287), loosely translated as “poor health services for the poor” – a “reward” for assimilation into a consumption economy while destroying territories and leaving sacrifice areas.

Alternatives

As a working group building a global network of solidarity, we have been learning from each other about different models with which to challenge the dominance of the extractivist development paradigm; models that promote rather than threaten collective well-being. From the group's beginnings in Latin America (Abya Yala), we have been influenced by Indigenous philosophies critiquing global capitalism. We are also aware of alternative health models emerging in other parts of the world. There is extensive work providing an excellent overview of the various paradigms from which we can learn, such

as ubuntu from southern Africa, or people's medicine from South Asia. (Loewenson et al. 2020; Kothari et al. 2019)

Case study 1: Sumak Kawsay or Buen Vivir, loosely translated as “Good Living”

Sumak Kawsay/Buen Vivir, the Indigenous philosophy of Ecuador, provides a useful paradigm to challenge extractivism's impact on people's health. This philosophy considers nature as a living being, a subject of care and rights. Health in each world view (Kichwa/Indigenous and Capitalist/Western) is perceived differently from its origins (Table C4.1).

Health in a capitalist society is a product of individual action, the submission to the medical-industrial complex, the pathologization of physiological processes such as birth, and the subsumption of people to an agribusiness dominated food system (see Chapter C5). *Sumak Kawsay* is tied to human beings and their relationships to their communities and lands: life processes are considered sacred connections with such territory; the philosophy is tied to food sovereignty as the expression of collective health (Arteaga-Cruz 2017, 911). The *Sumak Kawsay* worldview is not particular to Andean Communities (Ecuador, Bolivia); Aotearoa/New Zealand has also passed a law recognizing jurisdictional rights for the spirit that protects water, as reparation for the Indigenous *Māori*, the *Te Awa Tupua Act* (New Zealand Ministry of Justice 2017). While other Indigenous and struggling peoples hold a variety of world views, most share the understanding that development to meet human needs has been replaced by development to accumulate wealth for international capital, to the detriment of the health and well-being of people and the planet.

The commune is an ancestral urban settling present in pre-colonial Ecuador; the Spanish colonizers called them *Tierras de Indios* (Indian lands/Indigenous reservations), and these spaces shared common identity, cultural, and social

TABLE C4.1: Capitalism compared to *Sumak Kawsay* world view

Capitalism	Kichwa: Sumak Kawsay
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Property is privately held, and capital privately accumulated • Individual subject (mainly economic rights – Homo economicus) • Seeks individual economic benefit • Accumulation • Market freedom • Obsession for economic growth • Private business predominance • Natural “resources” degradation • Production towards satisfying needs (wants) created by companies (new illnesses) • Based on market rules: supply and demand 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Property is held collectively or in common, familiar property (ancient commons) • Collective subject (collective rights) • Seeks community well-being • Institutions of social reciprocity/ redistribution (nature) • Market: space of exchange of surplus and to supplement needs (<i>trueque</i>) • Human being as a part of nature (sacred reciprocity) • Based on needs satisfaction and establishment of alliances to guarantee that all community members have equitable access to resources

Source: Maldonado 2009.

characteristics. In the Kichwa commune we can witness principles of reciprocity, collective property, relation and coexistence with nature, social accountability to others, and the building of consensus. The commune, says Floresmilo Simbaña, an Indigenous Ecuadorian historian and movement leader, is a model that opposes/contradicts neoliberalism and the development/progress it entails (Arteaga-Cruz 2017, 911).

The commune-based principles of *Sumak Kawsay/Buen Vivir* offer a civilization alternative. These principles are important in our struggles for health and against a colonial extractivist development model that pillages the land, fueling climate change and social inequities.

Indigenous rights, however, are challenged even in the social democracies elevated as examples of equitable capitalist societies, such as Sweden (Case study 2). Women often bear the highest burden of the impacts of planetary destruction (Case study 3). Environmental defenders risk their lives (Case study 7) while hundreds of thousands of workers face death laboring in mines (Case study 8). As we collect these stories of extractivist damage around the globe, we also collect hope. For example, the Argentinian resistance to water contamination and proposals for a Green New Deal to reverse climate destruction while guaranteeing decent labor conditions. This hope is stitched together with the various threads of our work (the examples of PHM-Canada and our International Peoples Health Universities), which we must weave into a larger global patchwork of care – for ourselves, each other, and the planet.

Case study 2: Teaming up with the mining companies: how Swedish law violates Indigenous rights

Sweden's economy is based on the exploitation of natural resources (forest, hydropower, and ore). Mining is expanding, with estimates of a threefold increase through 2025, directly or indirectly creating more than 50,000 new jobs (SVEMIN 2020), generating tax revenue and economic growth (1.4% of total GDP), particularly in the rural north. Many criticize that Sweden's minerals are given away to foreign corporations, leaving behind ruinous landscapes. Similarly, the government's taxation argument is undercut by soft taxation schemes applied to mining companies (Af Geijerstam et al. 2011; Petersen 2013; Sámediggi 2020). Of Sweden's total ore production, more than 96% comes from the mines in the northern region/Norrland, where 10 of 12 active mines in the country are in the traditional territory of the Sámi.

The Sámi are the Indigenous people from northern Scandinavia and northwestern Russia. Traditionally, Sámi have subsisted on small-scale farming, fishing, hunting, and reindeer herding. Even though some Sámi still provide for their families through reindeer herding, those families are now a minority (10%) (Sámediggi-MAFCA 2020).

Sweden has ratified the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (ICERD), the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, and the United Nations Declaration on the Rights

of Indigenous Peoples; however, these are not legally binding. Sweden has been heavily criticized for not signing the International Labour Organization's Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention (ILO 169), which is binding on signatories (Tauli-Corpuz 2016). According to ILO 169, states commit to protect and respect the cultures and ways of life of Indigenous peoples, to recognize their rights to land and natural resources, and to define their own priorities for development. Consultation and participation constitute its cornerstone principles.

While the Sámi use of land for reindeer herding is regulated and protected by law, as a central part of Sámi culture, the Sámi do not own the land. There is a conflict between the state wanting to use the land for extractive purposes and its obligation to protect the landscape and reindeer husbandry. There is evidence that mining and reindeer herding cannot coexist (Lawrence et al. 2019). Furthermore, Sámi people are systematically marginalized in land-use planning and mining-related decisions, forcing them to continually adapt their reindeer husbandry or give up their traditional way of living, depriving them of their means of sustenance and right to self-determination. The legal framework of the approval process for mining concessions only stipulates a right to information and, in the planning stage, only indirect consultation. Finally, the Environmental Code only requires assessment of environmental – not social, cultural, or health – impacts of mining projects. A recent health impact assessment has revealed adverse mental health impacts on a Sámi community, even during the planning stage of a mining project. Future social conflicts and negative health impacts were also predicted due to pressure on traditional reindeer husbandry practices (Blåhed and San Sebastián 2020). These conflicts challenge the state to fulfill its obligations to protect the rights of the Sámi to self-determination, to consent to activities on their traditional lands, and to achieve health equity.

The destruction of the shared environment in every step of exploration, extraction, and processing practices affects women's productive work and possibilities as well as their reproduction, leading to miscarriages, birth defects, and infant illness. The "man camps" established to initiate and execute extractive processes generate violence against (often indigenous) women and sex trafficking to service the camps. The climate change disasters that result from extractivist development's death grip on our world are also gendered, affecting women differently and more severely than men.

Case study 3: Planetary destruction: gendered impacts of climate change

Climate change exacerbates the frequency and intensity of extreme weather events including floods, cyclones, storm surges, fires, and slow-onset events such as droughts and salinization of land and water resources. The ongoing loss of lives and livelihoods and decrease in the quality of life and well-being generate additional burdens for women and girls.

The dominant model of disaster recovery frames suffering as a private and individual matter, as something to be "managed effectively and efficiently" (Cox and Perry 2011). The naming of widespread interpersonal violence as a

gender/power dynamic during and in the aftermath of disasters, including during community recovery, is too often overlooked and even shunned. Women's contributions in responding to disasters are often undervalued and their needs are rarely fully incorporated into disaster planning and response in either the Global North or the Global South.

Violence against women is a well-known characteristic of post-disaster recovery globally. A systematic review of the international literature from 1976 to 2011 found “being exposed to natural disasters ... increased the violence against women and girls” (Rezaeian 2013, 1105). Drawing from an Australian example, women's accounts of the period following the devastating 2009 Victoria state fires (Parkinson 2019) described how existing violence escalated and new violence emerged. Related factors exacerbating this violence included unemployment, temporary housing arrangements, trauma, grief, rebuilding, media attention, grant entitlements, increased drug and alcohol use, and risky or “hyper-masculine” behaviors. Some health services in fire-affected communities chose to tackle the gender-based violence that emerged or increased in the post-disaster recovery. For example, Women's Health Goulburn North East in Victoria tailored gender equity training for first responders and disaster recovery workers. They also developed localized resources to prevent and respond to gender-based violence during the COVID-19 pandemic (Women's Health Goulburn North East 2021).

More climate-related bushfires are probable, if not certain, and climate change itself is accelerated by extractivist development activities (e.g., agro-industry, open-pit mining, fracking). One key lesson from post-disaster and recovery strategies for preventing and responding to gender-based violence in Australia is that applying a gender lens to our global climate crisis is essential – not optional (Alston and Whittenbury 2013).

Latin American post-dictatorship civil-military processes were characterized by systems of weak representative democracy, often subject to international corporate economic power. These wielded foreign debt as a tool for blackmail and mobilized international financial organizations to restructure regional policies. The advance of extractive models (agro-industry, open-pit mining, fracking, among others) led to a transformation of epidemiological profiles in Latin American communities, but their health systems were not prepared to address these new problems.

Case study 4: Resistance and hope: the fight for water in urban Argentina

New pathologies or unusual presentations of known diseases are part of the daily life of those who live in “sacrifice areas” (areas destined for extractivism). Mega-mining poses serious problems that result from unsafe work routines and accidents (e.g., Brumadinhos – Mina Gerais, Brazil; Veladero – San Juan, Argentina). It poisons the environment and our bodies, producing physical effects and increasing morbidity and mortality.² Workers' lifestyles are affected by economic vulnerability, an increase in serious accidents, modification of

traditional ways of life, and increased substance abuse (Chenaut 2017; Christel 2018; Lombardi 2020). Popular and community resistance is born in such conditions, trying to reverse the destruction of territories and to preserve the health of Mother Earth. Such is the case in Argentina, where struggles against mining in Chubut, against fracking in Mendoza, against agribusiness in Entre Rios, and against Monsanto in Córdoba have been permanent, regardless of whether there is a progressive or right-wing government in power.

In the Argentine province of Mendoza, water has been the engine of local economy and defending water has been a focus of struggle for a century (Wagner 2008). Over the previous decade the province registered the greatest drought in history. From 2009 to 2017, water reserves of the Andes Mountains in Mendoza lost an average of more than 8 cubic meters (Marianetti, Hinrich, and Rivera 2018). Yet oil extraction was allowed in 2018 by means of fracking (hydraulic fracturing) which requires an enormous amount of water, prioritizing a capitalist logic of big monopolies or “economic development” in the hands of the mega-mining companies (Svampa 2019, 9).

By Christmas 2019, victory was celebrated in the streets of Mendoza with the repeal of the reform of Law 7722, the Water Law. Earlier that year, a modification to Law 7722, passed in 2007, violated the prohibition of regression in environmental and human rights matters established in the Argentinean National Constitution. A historic march began on Sunday, December 22, 2019, in San Carlos; artistic events and peaceful demonstrations were held in all the departments of the province to support the defense of water and against mining and fracking operations (Simonovich 2020). People celebrated Christmas in the streets, defending common goods. On December 26, 2019, the governor announced that he would not approve the new modification, and thus Law 7722 and the protection of water remains in place. Thanks to the organization, resistance, and creativity of the people of Mendoza, its water is NOT FOR SALE.

This struggle achieved the prohibition of mega-mining through Law 7722, which stated, “the use of chemical substances such as cyanide, mercury, sulfuric acid and other similar toxic substances in the metalliferous mining processes of prospecting, exploration, exploitation and/or industrialization of metalliferous minerals obtained through any extraction method is prohibited in the territory of the Province of Mendoza.” Mining companies have filed appeals of unconstitutionality since its approval (Salamone 2017).

Case study 5: PHM-Canada and transnational resistance to Canadian mining

For decades, the global mining industry has taken advantage of Canada’s tax incentives, lax regulation, pro-mining diplomacy, easy access to capital, and impediments to lawsuits brought by affected communities. The harms of the Canadian mining industry have been well documented (Schrecker et al. 2018):

- I. physical and economic displacement through loss of land and livelihoods;

2. environmental degradation, heavy metal exposure (water, air, soil contamination), water depletion/scarcity, vector-borne diseases, and food insecurity/loss of sovereignty;
3. dangerous working conditions;
4. violence against resisters by private security and state-sponsored repression, assaults, and assassination;
5. disruption of community cohesion;
6. poverty and exacerbation of social and economic inequalities;
7. loss of traditional territories and culture; and
8. associated mental health consequences.

Communities' resistance to mining addresses an array of political, economic, environmental, and societal determinants of health. In our domestic activism and transnational solidarity, we seek to infuse health dimensions into the efforts of social movements and civil society organizations contesting mining domestically and internationally, working with organizations such as Mining Watch, Mining Injustice Solidarity Network, Working Group on Mining and Human Rights in Latin America, and PHM-Ecuador. Drawing on anti-capitalist, anti-oppressive, and anti-colonial frameworks, our activities have spanned individual and collective efforts: publishing popular and academic works; organizing to respond to community requests for campaign support and appeals for urgent actions; and participating in direct action.

1. PHM-Canada's solidarity with anti-mining resistance

Our solidarity efforts have ranged from protesting the harms of the mining industry at Canada's major mining convention (Prospectors and Developers Association of Canada-PDAC), held annually in Toronto (Image C4.1), to supporting communities in conflict with Canadian extractive firms at home and abroad, including: Indigenous activists resisting uranium mines in Saskatchewan, Canada; the Standing Rock Sioux people's struggle to stop the Dakota Access Pipeline (DAPL) in the United States; community struggles for self-determination regarding mining projects in Azuay, Ecuador; and resistance against gold mines in Rancho Grande and Santo Domingo, Nicaragua, and Halkidiki, Greece (Mukhopadhyay and Hanson 2015; Hanson 2016; 2017; PHM-CA 2016a).

2. Research and advocacy efforts

Alongside our solidarity with anti-mining resistance, we have also raised awareness through publishing, speaking truth to and about power within our own country, and partnering with academic institutions. We have, for example, published work exploring the harmful role of Canadian mining in Latin America, calling on the Canadian public health community to use their expertise to speak against these issues (Birn et al. 2018). Other published works include connecting the right to health to anti-extractive resistance globally and highlighting the role



Image C4.1 PHM-Canada members bring messages from mining-affected communities in Ecuador to demonstrations against the Canadian transnational mining industry at PDAC, the largest mining conference in the world, held in Toronto, ON, Canada. March, 2020.

Source: Photo by People's Health Movement Canada.

of neocolonial and corporate influences on global health and resource extraction research (Brisbois et al. 2016; 2019; Arteaga-Cruz et al. 2020). We have also exercised joint pressure in the form of a petition against the University of Toronto's promotion of health research funding from Vale, a \$34 billion Brazil-headquartered transnational mining corporation with a subsidiary in Canada and which is implicated in numerous human rights violations (University Worlds 2020).

Case study 6: Extractivism in the US Gulf South: everything is bigger in Texas, home of the world's biggest industrial megaplex

Extractivism to the detriment of human and environmental well-being in the pursuit of "progress" and "development" is nowhere more evident than in the "petropolis" of Houston, Texas, and its surrounding "petro-metro." Much of the United States' extracted fossil fuels and natural resources are transported to Gulf South chemical refineries geared for large-scale processing and production of innumerable chemical compounds for products, chiefly in the petroleum and plastics industries. Fossil fuels are literally presented as the fuel of "progress" and incontestably essential to meet human consumption demands.

"The industrial megaplex that begins on the east side of Houston and continues uninterrupted to the Gulf of Mexico, 50 miles away, is the largest

concentration of petroleum refineries, petrochemical companies, and storage structures on earth” (Weisman 2007). Houston prides itself as the “Energy Capital of the World” due to its command of the global energy sector. The wealth from these industries accumulates in affluent white communities, businesses, and governments, while the health of communities living and working nearby is extracted. The predominantly Black and Brown fence-line communities face environmental health inequities from exposure to lead, hazardous air pollutants, landfills, and some of the most hazardous waste sites in the country.

Residents living along the Houston Ship Channel experience an onslaught of toxic chemicals from leaks, flares, and explosions that occur during the production and processing of fossil fuels. “Fugitive” emissions, the unexpected release of chemicals into the community, in addition to legally permitted “regulated” emissions, have led to disproportionate health impacts (Horswell and Carroll 2007) in communities in close proximity to the production and processing of fossil fuels (Rosen 2020). In Houston, it is low-income communities of color who live alongside the industrial landscape and work the most dangerous jobs.

The bodies of fence-line community residents are overburdened by cancer-causing chemicals (Dellinger 2021), yet they are not provided or offered information about the same safety equipment or health insurance enjoyed by industry profiteers. They are instead expected to “get used to the smells” and accept without question and as unextraordinary recurring health ailments, such as headaches, nose bleeds, and respiratory issues. But these toxic byproducts do not go unnoticed and are cynically and commonly referred to as the “smell of money” (Owen 2003) by industry insiders.

Flooding and winds from increasingly dangerous storms, caused by climate change instigated by these very industries, destroy the already inadequate safety mechanisms that fail to protect these communities’ health (Fraser 2020). This is not limited to Houston but holds true for the entire region. The petrochemical industry has taken hold in the US Gulf Coast states of Texas and Louisiana, as well as Oklahoma and New Mexico, turning much of the region into a sacrifice area for “development.” Not surprisingly, these areas include large populations of black, Indigenous, and people of color.

In just the last decade, several mega-projects have been rushed past regulatory safeguards with disastrous results. From the Keystone XL pipeline (cancelled following the election of Biden) to the BP Drilling Disaster, from the fracking boom in West Texas and New Mexico to the lifting of the export ban and expansion of offshore drilling, this region has been beset by corporate efforts to feverishly extract every last drop of fossil fuel.

Petrochemical and mining industries are among the most dangerous proponents of environmental destruction. They are also among the most politically reactionary transnational and local corporations on the planet. In the United States, the Trump administration championed their unimpeded ability to devastate natural resources with accountability to nothing but their owners’ profits.

It rolled back close to 100 environmental rules (Popovich, Albeck-Ripka, and Pierre-Louis 2021), eroding the already minimal scrutiny of extractive industries. While the Biden administration promises a different approach, it remains to be seen whether these promises will be like those usually made to black, Latino, and Indigenous communities: largely unkept.

Skepticism about governmental will to oppose extractive industries is based on the virtually unlimited stream of petrodollars flowing to both US political parties (OpenSecrets.org n.d.) as well as to the governments that enable extraction throughout the Global South. The ideologies of white supremacy, colonialism, and savage capitalism, expressed in the violent attack on the US Capitol in January 2021, also drive the agents of extractivism, evidenced by the harassment, imprisonment, and murder of environmental defenders, often Indigenous, throughout the world.

The extractivist project is enforced by state and extrajudicial violence. In the United States, opposition to pipelines has been legally equated with terrorism in seven states and similar statutes are pending in six more (Cagle 2019).

Statistics show 2019 to be the worst year ever for environmental activists with 212 murders, primarily of people opposing mining, largely in Colombia, the Philippines, Mexico and Central America. (Global Witness 2020)

Case study 7: The struggles of environmental defenders in the Philippines

The Philippines abounds in biodiverse ecosystems. Forests host over 3,000 tree species and are home to around 25 to 30 million people, almost half of whom are Indigenous peoples living in their ancestral lands. This rich biodiversity provides the people's source of food, livelihood, and other basic needs. However, biodiversity also attracts an onslaught of neoliberal destruction. Logging, mining, corporate plantations, and other extractive activities have diminished forest cover to just 7 million hectares as of 2015, or just 23.3% of the country's land area. Large-scale mining causes deforestation, soil erosion, watershed degradation, crop damage, and forcible displacements of Indigenous communities.

According to the Kalikasan Philippine Network for Environment and the Center for Environmental Concerns, the Duterte presidency has sold off at least P773 billions (\$16 billion) worth of the Philippines' sovereign mineral, water, wildlife, and marine resources between 2016 and 2018 (Mogato 2019). The country contains huge mineral deposits, including about 20% of the world's total nickel resources (Center for Environmental Concerns 2016), as well as extensive non-metal minerals such as limestone and marble.

This is the context in which Philippine defenders of the people and environment have been struggling for years. One of the first environmental martyrs, Macliing Dulag, was murdered during the struggle to stop construction of the World Bank-funded Chico Dam on April 24, 1980 (Martial Law Museum n.d.). Since then, the violence has only intensified. In its 2018 annual report,

Global Witness called the Philippines one of the most dangerous countries for land and environmental defenders and activists, documenting 30 murders. In 2019, the Kalikasan People’s Network for the Environment (Kalikasan PNE) recorded 46 deaths of environment defenders and many cases of trumped-up charges against activists. The Network further reported that between March 15 and May 15, 2020, 57 environmental defenders were illegally arrested, detained, and hit with Strategic Lawsuits against Public Participation (“SLAPP suits”); 48 were threatened and intimidated, 15 were physically assaulted, and one was murdered. Environmental activist Jory Porquia was shot to death at home by two gunmen in Barangay Santo Nino Norte, Iloilo City on April 30, 2020. Porquia was the city coordinator of the Bayan Muna Party and a member of the Madia-es Ecological Movement, which played a pivotal role in the passage of a mining ban in Capiz and other campaigns against large-scale mining, coal power plants, and large dams.

For more than a year now, the People’s Barricade has shown the strength and resolve of the people of Dipidio, Nueva Viscaya, against the illegal operations of OceanaGold and its many violations on the people’s right to clean water and livelihood. The People’s Barricade has the support of the local government and various environmental advocacy organizations. Their opposition forced the suspension of OceanaGold operations following the expiry of its Financial and



Image C4.2 Barricade protest at the entrance of OceanaGold's mining site in Nueva Viscaya, Philippines.

Source: Reproduced with permission from Leon Dulce, Kalikasan People’s Network for the Environment. <https://globalvoices.org/2020/04/10/philippine-police-dismantle-anti-mining-barricade-amid-covid-19-lockdown/>

Technical Assistance Agreement (FTAA) renewal on June 20, 2019. On April 6, 2020, OceanaGold used more than 100 police to violently remove 29 barricaders, mostly women, and arrested community leader Roland Pulido of the Dipidio Earth Savers Movement Association (Montesclaros 2020).

In the face of hardships and challenges, threats and intimidation, arrests and murders, the struggle to defend people and the environment in the Philippines continues.

Proponents of extractivist development say it provides needed jobs and income for impoverished communities, but their concern for the poor never extends to include their health and safety as workers. It is impossible to read the daily news without learning about yet another mining accident; there are approximately 12,000–15,000 mining deaths reported yearly (Nebahay, 2010), but the actual number is considered to be much higher; mining injuries are estimated to be in the hundreds of thousands. Even in so-called developed countries, occupational health for miners is denied. A medical program reviewing compensation cases for coal companies at the prestigious Johns Hopkins University found not a single case of black lung in more than 1,500 cases reviewed. (Mosk and Kreider 2015)

Case study 8: Workers and environment struggles in India

Occupational health and safety of informal workers is grossly neglected in India. Ninety percent of the sub-continent's workforce comes from the informal sector, producing almost 50% of the national income (National Statistical Commission 2012). Nearly 48,000 workers in India die every year from hazards and precarious work environments (PTI 2017). Recent estimates suggest over 3 million workers are exposed to silica dust, while an additional 8.5 million are exposed to construction dust (Sharma et al. 2016). A survey by the National Institute of Miners' Health shows a 40% prevalence of silicosis among miners equating to at least 94,000 workers who are either affected or exposed (Rajavel et al. 2020). Silicosis can manifest in several ways and is often underdiagnosed due to its similarity to tuberculosis.

Although some legislation has been passed to compensate families of people who have died of silicosis, the most vulnerable workers remain unprotected. Silicosis is a notifiable disease under basic labor law, specifically the Factories Act of 1948, which intended to protect the rights of workers in the organized sector and is included in the list of diseases for which compensation can be claimed under several other laws. But significant gaps remain, addressed by the sustained work of several civil society organizations. For example, Silicosis Peedit Sangh uncovered deaths of migrant informal Adivasi (Indigenous) workers from Madhya Pradesh who contracted silicosis from quartz crushing installations in Gujarat; many of these migrant workers are employed in factories and mines that are not actually covered by legislation. In absence of evidence

such as required identity cards, the workers could not establish proof of their employment, depriving them of relief from the employer or the state. No formal department, program, or structure accounts for occupational health in the informal sector.

Civil society organizations have taken judicial action to ensure compensation and rehabilitation for silicosis victims along with continued advocacy. In its 2011 “Special Report to the Parliament of India on Silicosis,” the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) called on the Government of India “to pass a suitable legislation having provisions for immediate relief and suitable compensation in all reported cases of silicosis” (NHRC 2016). The Supreme Court of India referenced a 2016 Silicosis Peedit Sangh report which surveyed 743 households with 1,721 silicosis-affected patients, either deceased or alive, in 105 villages across Madhya Pradesh. The report, revealing the sorry state of compensation and rehabilitation provided by the government, also highlighted the multiple layers of silicosis’s impact, including the fact that 65% of deaths were people 19 to 35 years old (Shuruwat 2016). Most families lost between two to eight members at peak productive age, becoming landless or heavily indebted as the costs of medical treatment in India’s highly privatized health system compounded the loss of income. Small children who traveled with their parents also contracted silicosis, on occasion becoming orphaned by the illness.

Between 2009 and 2019, several cases relating to the harms of silicosis have been heard in the Supreme Court as well as in specific states. In 2009, the courts recognized severe violations by the industries and issued a ruling in favor of the NHRC to facilitate compensation for families impacted by silicosis. In 2016, Supreme Court passed a landmark order applicable nationally that “a compensation of Rs 3 lakh each to be awarded for 589 cases.” As of December 2020, 555 persons have received compensation according to civil society organizations.

But the legislation passed to compensate affected families has not been sufficient. In 2019 the Supreme Court, responding to a report by the Central Pollution Control Board outlining significant health problems for workers and habitats, issued a show-cause notice to all states to provide compensation where these polluting industries were functioning.

Death and disease due to these conditions are preventable. Specific worker health and safety issues, especially those of migrant workers, are absent from government discourse, and so is adequate recognition of silicosis as an occupational health issue. The decades-old struggle to recognize environmental health in India continues with a focus on protecting workers rights through community mobilization, policy advocacy, and judicial activism.

As the example of India demonstrates, extractivism has a direct impact on the lives of people who are compelled into exposure against their will. Judicial intervention alone is not sufficient to protect them. Coordinated action from civil society is required to achieve the right to health in the face of extractivism.

Case study 9: Health justice and the Green New Deal

The idea of radically restructuring our economies away from fossil fuel capital by means of central planning has its roots in the nascent movement for ecological justice in the 1970s. However, it wasn't until 2007 that the term "Green New Deal" (GND) would be coined (The Green New Deal Group 2019) (see Chapters A1 and A3). In response to the 2008 global financial crisis, the UK GND Group proposed a worker-led "just transition" that would simultaneously decarbonize and democratize the economy through the creation of millions of well-paid, secure green jobs. By 2019, the GND had reached the mainstream in the UK with endorsement from the Labour Party. In the US, the GND came to be associated with the progressive wing of the Democratic Party, with Alexandria Ocasio Cortez and Ed Markey quick to link it to President Franklin Delano Roosevelt's "New Deal" that helped lift the country out of the 1930s Great Depression.

The movement for a GND, typified by the Sunrise Movement, has captured the imaginations of many by demonstrating that it is possible for us to respond rapidly to prevent a "worst-case" climate change scenario (IPCC 2018) and fundamentally change our society and economy to prioritize justice. Among those delivering this call to action were public health experts who had borne witness to widening health inequalities. Physician and former health director of the city of Detroit Abdul El-Sayed noted that "by eliminating the local consequences of fossil fuel emissions, and lifting whole communities out of poverty, the Green New Deal will also be a Public Health New Deal" (El-Sayed 2019). Michael Marmot has called for a "bringing together" of the health inequality and climate change agendas (Marmot et al. 2020). This is even more starkly evident as we seek to respond to and recover from the injustices exacerbated by COVID-19. As Guppi Bola highlights, we need a "transition centered on health and sustainability; which addresses the root causes of wealth, power and income inequalities; and pursues a democratic economy that prioritises self-determination" (Bola 2020, 3).

At first the GND, with its promise of green jobs and infrastructure, seems like the solution to our ills. This thinking risks overlooking a key tenet of "climate justice." Without a firm grounding in the principles of global solidarity, a GND for the wealthier former colonial powers of the Global North will reproduce many of the same injustices we face today. An increase in mining for the raw materials needed for new "green" technologies, as many activists and Indigenous communities have pointed out, would mean maintaining high rates of ill health for those on the frontlines as well as perpetuating the denial of sovereignty to those least responsible for the climate crisis.

As we continue to navigate the COVID-19 pandemic, we must place health and well-being at the heart of the social policies that will help us build anew, and build differently. A transformative GND offers us the chance to reverse the ever-widening health inequalities of the last few decades. Large-scale investment

in jobs and infrastructure, while simultaneously decarbonizing our economy, will help us tackle a range of social ills, from the mental health crisis exacerbated by precarious, poorly paid work to the physical impacts of polluting emissions and a lack of services. Our transition must be just *globally* as well as domestically. We must call for climate reparations from industrialized former colonial powers as much as we campaign for green jobs (Burkett 2009). We must also seek to understand and build a platform for Indigenous traditions and theories that address the interconnectedness of human life and the rest of the natural world. It is our responsibility, regardless of where we are in the world, to ensure that internationalism is compatible with our vision of an ecologically sound future.

Final thoughts

The reports from specific places and struggles presented in this chapter are not unique, rather they are representative of hundreds of other stories that could (and should) be told. They demonstrate how extractivism harms our health, which is tied to the health of the planet, by destroying Indigenous livelihoods, polluting and depleting water sources, increasing violence against women, violating people's human and political rights murdering those who oppose it), and denying safe and decent employment to workers. They illustrate how those who are physically closest to and economically benefit least from the extractivist project are those who bear the harm most intensely, whose health and lives are confined to "sacrifice areas." This inversion of benefit and harm is the reality of capitalist development in today's world.

This sharply contrasts with the paradigm of *Sumak Kawsay/Buen Vivir*, which strives instead for reinstitution of the commons, recognition of collective rights and community well-being, redistribution of wealth and health, and respect of the sacredness of relations among people and between people and the earth we inhabit. Honoring the peoples' ancestral knowledge, and our own belonging to the territory, is the way to counter climate change and build a society we want to live in. The urgent question the People's Health Movement (PHM) Environment and Health circle hopes to contribute to answering is: how can we get there from here?

PHM-Canada shows how international solidarity is a necessary component of that transition, and so is a Green New Deal that emphasizes a redistribution of power as well as the decarbonization of power production. As the Mendoza water defenders demonstrate, a unified, uncompromising, and steadfast confrontation with power can stop the extractivist project in its tracks. When we defend health and connect our struggles nationally and internationally into a respectful movement of equals, we can change the world.

In trying to connect these disparate struggles in this chapter, we have amplified the silenced voices of women and sewn together stories from eight territories and most continents. We need more voices from Africa and Asia, and we acknowledge this limitation as we look forward to working in collective and horizontal ways,

using opportunities such as this chapter contribution to strengthen our outreach and capacity for resistance.

At the PHM Extractive Industries Circle, we have promoted an International People's Health University, partnering with the Training School of the Socio-Environmental Health Institute at Universidad Nacional del Rosario (Argentina). Attended by 240 health workers (nurses, doctors, auxiliary personnel) from 13 Latin American countries, we used a participatory process designed to understand the impact of extractivism on health services in sacrifice areas. This training generated a Latin American network of exchange among resistances in Venezuela (Observatorio de Ecología Política), Ecuador, Argentina, and the Environmental Network of ALAMES, among others. PHM-North America is promoting a series of webinars focusing on extractivism, and Medact (PHM-UK) has co-organized a People's Health Hearing in the People's Summit lead-up to the 2021 United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP26). Testimonies have been presented that bear witness to the public health impacts of extractive industries and the systems driving climate breakdown and health inequities. The hearing created a space to connect people's struggles and construct a vision for intersectional, transformative climate justice.

As we completed this chapter, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) 2021 report was launched, stating that the future is not promising (IPCC 2021). PHM's and similar efforts must help build an urgent understanding of why structural changes in the way development is carried out are needed at national and global levels to protect the rights of Indigenous peoples, and the health of us all and the planet we share. We are running out of time. We must challenge and jettison the "development" myth and its components: progress, economic growth, and modernization.

Notes

1 This quote is from Macliing Dulag, a Butbut tribe Elder, in addressing the struggle against the Chico Dam Project in the Philippines. See <https://www.wowcordillera.com/2017/05/the-great-macli-ing-dulag-cordilleran.html>.

2 See *Mapa del cuerpo territorio*, "Map of the Body Territory." <https://rosalux-ba.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/Poster-Cuerpo-territorio.pdf>.

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