

May, 2025

COORDINA
DORA



FLOWER TIME, TIME OF RIGHTS



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Human rights are the foundation for dignity and justice for all people. Nevertheless they are continuously and systematically violated around the world. This photographic project for Girona Temps de Flors 2025 wants to visibilize these violations and, at the same time, vindicate the role of activists and organizations that struggle to guarantee fundamental rights from the regions of Girona. These human rights defenders bring us the necessary hope to fight for the respect of each of these rights.

Each image brings together a person committed to the defense of human rights and a plant or flower that represents a value or a struggle: the olive tree as a symbol of peace; the violet, whose color adorns the fight for gender equality; the orchid, whose beauty confronts the violence of female genital mutilation; wheat, a source of food, resilience, and hope for the migrant who has to leave their home seeking a better future; the fern, which warns us of the health of our ecosystem; or aloe vera, present in many homes and used to heal wounds.

With this exposition, we want to highlight the living and essential associative activism of the Coordinadora d'ONG Solidàries. They are anonymous faces for the majority of citizens, but they hide courage, struggle, and inspiring stories to continue dreaming and working for a better world.

Flower time, time of rights, time of activism and collective resistance for social justice!





Dialla Diarra
Legki Yakaru, of Banyoles

ORQUID AND FGM

Empowerment. Dialla is the president of Legki Yakaru, an association whose name means "**women of today**" in Sarankule. Originally from Mali, she settled in Banyoles, Girona, in 1993. After the sudden death of her husband, she felt the compelling need to assert herself and make her own decisions, an awareness that led her with determination to create her association.

Having herself undergone Type 1 FGM, the least severe form, Dialla is deeply convinced of the importance of supporting women who have experienced this practice to prevent them from perpetuating it on their own daughters. Thanks to her personal experience and the knowledge she has acquired, she created Legki Yakaru to raise awareness about the devastating consequences of Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) in girls and women originating from sub-Saharan Africa and other regions of the world where this practice persists. Her commitment has led her to give countless conferences, workshops, and training sessions throughout the territory to inform and denounce these acts. She collaborates closely with various local actors (particularly in the health and education sectors) to identify potential victims, ensure the implementation of established protocols, and defend the rights of girls. In the last 10 years, 38 cases of FGM have been detected in the Girona region, a serious violation of women's right to control their own bodies, a fight that Dialla tirelessly carries out from Banyoles. Through her commitment, Dialla is a face of courage and resilience in Banyoles and beyond, embodying the struggle for women's rights and the hope for a future without violence.

Orchidaceae. The meaning of the orchid's name and its symbolism is pure contradiction. In reality, the name comes from the greek *orkhis*, which means testicle. And although in ancient times it was also associated with virility and the capacity for fertilization, its unmistakable and delicate form has ultimately been adopted to represent female sexual organs and the integrity of a woman's body. The orchid, exotic and with a thousand and one possible colors, symbolizes natural beauty and the diversity of femininity. With more than 25,000 known species, wild or cultivated, they form one of the most diverse plant families in the world. Their beauty contrasts with the violence of female genital mutilation, which seeks to control and modify the bodies of millions of girls and women to prevent their full sexuality. Today, the orchid is often associated with the fight against this violation of the right to one's own body, the right to health, safety, and physical integrity, which affects more than 230 million women and girls in various regions of Africa, the Middle East, and Asia.



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M. Carme Bernat
Plataforma per la Pau Lloret

OLIVE TREE AND PEACE

Pacifism. This woman from Lloret de Mar has always been an activist. In 2003, like so many others, she took to the streets to say NO to the Iraq War. From there, and together with a friend, they decided to create an entity that would work on the culture of peace in Lloret de Mar. Four years later, Plataforma per la Pau Lloret (Platform for Peace Lloret) was born, with just over a dozen nonconformists who remain active. The platform began to organize activities **"always to raise awareness among people, that violence leads nowhere"** says Mari Carme. Since then, they have been networking through the Coordinadora d'ONG Solidàries (Coordinator of Solidarity NGOs), with Justícia i Pau (Justice and Peace), and with FundiPau, a sister entity of which she is currently a member of the Board of Trustees.

Plataforma per la Pau Lloret has joined various international campaigns: for the abolition of cluster bombs, 'Arms Under Control'; to abolish nuclear weapons (a campaign that received the Nobel Peace Prize in 2017), anti-racist campaigns, against armed banking, to demilitarize education, against military spending... Currently, the entity calls the municipality to a weekly minute of silence for the victims of all wars. Thanks to the activity of this entity, Lloret is now part of the Network of Mayors for Peace in Catalonia.

Olea europaea.

"The Mediterranean ends where the olive tree stops growing," said the French doctor and writer, George Duhamel. This tree embellishes our landscapes and unites the peoples of the Mediterranean coast gastronomically and culturally.

Throughout history, we find multiple references to the olive tree as a symbol of peace, wisdom, and reconciliation. In Greek mythology, the olive tree was the gift that Athena - goddess of intelligence - gave to the people of Athens as a symbol of peace, harmony, and progress. The Bible (Genesis 8:11) also mentions it. After the Great Flood, a dove returned to Noah with a branch in its beak, as a sign that the waters had receded and that God had restored peace with humanity. In Ancient Rome, wreaths made of olive branches signified an offer of peace to enemy armies and were used to seal pacts and agreements, symbolizing reconciliation. This peaceful symbolism has reached our times, and today, an olive branch is one of the symbols of the UN, the organization that seeks to promote world peace and security. It is also used in flags, seals, and emblems of various institutions related to diplomacy and peace.



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Karim Sabni
Social Project 4.0 and Girona Acull

WHEAT AND MIGRATIONS AND REFUGEES

Dignity. Karim defines himself as a Banyoles resident by adoption from Girona, born in Tetouan, Morocco. He is a social worker and currently directs the Idària cooperative for socio-labor insertion, sustainability, and anti-racist struggle. From this entity, he promotes transformative initiatives within the social economy, such as the first cooperative photovoltaic installer in the territory or the Coosir project in Salt, focused on community inclusion.

With a perspective deeply rooted in human rights and social justice, Karim is an expert in migratory movements, especially at the southern border. He has been a driving force behind various social initiatives, among which Social Project 4.0 stands out, focusing on the mental health of young people who have migrated alone, and Girona Acull (Girona Welcomes), which defends the rights of migrants and refugees from an anti-racist perspective. He actively participates in spaces such as the Coordinadora Obrim Fronteres (Open Borders Coordinator), the Red de Acogida Estatal (State Reception Network), and the governing council of Coop57.

For twelve years, he led the Immigration department of the UGT (General Union of Workers) in Girona, from where he began to pave the way for fairer and more inclusive policies that placed the dignity of migrant people at the center. He firmly believes in political advocacy as a tool for transformation. Currently, Karim continues to promote alliances between social movements throughout the State with the aim of improving laws and public policies, **"so that all our neighbors can live with rights and with a dignified life"**, he says.

Triticum. In many cultures, wheat is a basic and essential food. This makes it a symbol of survival and hope for many people who are forced to leave their homes in search of a better future. With wheat, we make bread, one of the most universal foods shared by almost all cultures. This is why we associate it with welcome, solidarity, and community, fundamental values in supporting immigrants and refugees. Unfortunately, the right to food today remains an unresolved struggle, neither here nor in the Global South.

Adding to this symbolism of wheat and the rights of migrant people is the fact that it is a plant that has traveled all over the world throughout history, just like the people who are forced to migrate. Since its "domestication" in the Mediterranean basin and the Middle East, it has spread across the entire planet, following trade routes and human movements.



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Flora Ridaura
Càritas Diocesana of Girona-Salt

ALOE, HOUSING AND CARE

Life. In 2008, Flora began working at Caritas Diocesana of Girona as the coordinator of a temporary shelter apartment project for women with young children who were in a vulnerable situation due to lack of housing. After a few years, the social rental housing project was initiated with apartments provided by owners which allowed families with limited resources to have decent housing at a symbolic price during a transition period towards a non-protected rental apartment. This is how the Housing Program was built, which Flora coordinated until 2015. Within the same organization, she has also worked on other projects to promote awareness campaigns, training, and to collaborate on advocacy and denunciation tasks regarding rights.

Later, she began working in Salt, where she realized that one of the main problems is housing. With the Caritas team, they convened families who shared this problem to offer them collective support: this is how the Rights Group was born, to share problems, receive support, and seek joint solutions. Since then, many families have been accompanied, efforts have been made, door standoffs have been organized to prevent evictions, marches and rallies have been held to denounce the situation, joining forces with the Housing Union... **"There has been a lot of solidarity! Many moments of sadness, indignation, and helplessness... and also moments of joy for the small-great victories, for the families who have obtained their affordable rental apartment"**, says Flora.

Aloe Vera. Aloe vera, also known as true aloe or garden balsam, is a plant present in many homes because it is very easy to care for and has multiple benefits. This makes it a symbol of resilience and dignity in the domestic space. Its name derives from the Greek "alóe," which likely comes from the Arabic "alloeh" or the Hebrew "halal," meaning bitter and shiny substance; the word "vera," on the other hand, comes from Latin and means true. We link aloe vera to the fight for housing because it is a plant that can survive in extreme conditions, with little water, in poor soil. This connects it to the struggle for decent housing, especially in precarious situations or social exclusion. Furthermore, we link housing with a space for care, and here aloe also plays an important role, a plant with many healing and regenerative properties that heals skin wounds, as well as the social wounds caused by the lack of access to decent housing.



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Moisès Mont
Salvem les Valls.
Olot, Les Preses and la Vall d'en Bas

FERN AND SUSTAINABILITY

Love for the Territory. His parents were already involved with Salvem Les Valls (Save the Valleys), so his move into activism came naturally from a young age. **"We could say that I've been an activist for over 30 years, and linked to the defense of the territory and agriculture"** explains Moisès. Ten years ago, he took over the reins of Salvem les Valls at the beginning of the negotiations for the Les Preses and Olot bypass.

Currently, the struggle of Salvem Les Valls is at a critical point because the Generalitat (the Catalan government) and the town councils of Olot, Les Preses, and Vall d'en Bas have agreed on a route for the construction of a new bypass that is very harmful to the territory and to the region's agriculture. **"The new bypass will also have a major impact on the well-being of the region's inhabitants, with a road that will involve unnecessary traffic and affect the Vall aquifer, which supplies water to practically the entire region"** explains Moisès. The environmental organization is in the process of preparing an administrative appeal to demonstrate that this proposed alternative is not viable and to **"demonstrate that we need a change in the mobility model adapted to the capacities of the territory, which guarantees the well-being and viability of all who live here. That truly benefits the environment"**.

Pteridium aquilinum. Did you know that ferns are also known as "living fossils"? They are one of the oldest plants on Earth, present even before the dinosaurs. A plant with a great capacity for adapting to changes, which makes it a symbol of resilience and adaptation to climate change throughout history.

Today, many ferns are vulnerable due to deforestation and the destruction of ecosystems, making them an emblem of the need to preserve biodiversity, such as the need to preserve the Vall d'en Bas, threatened by roads, bypasses, and mass tourism. Ferns contribute to maintaining ecological balance by absorbing CO₂, regulating humidity, and protecting the soil against erosion. In many cultures, the fern represents renewal, rebirth, and connection with nature. This resonates with the environmentalist message of regenerating ecosystems and transforming our relationship with the environment.



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Laura Quintana
Kemonik ONGD. Girona

AFRICAN VIOLET AND GENDER

Weaver of Commonalities. Laura is a journalist by training. She entered activism because she saw many injustices and believed that doing nothing was being part of the "problem." Convinced that both what we do and what we fail to do have a direct impact on other people, she believes that **"we must act with awareness, responsibility, and empathy."**

One of the issues that concerns her most is the situation of women around the world. After working with indigenous communities from London for an international NGO, she began a volunteer experience in Guatemala that allowed her to connect with other realities. During this stay, she participated in a community initiative to create a shelter for women victims of gender-based violence. Seven months later, with the shelter already up and running, she returned home with a clear idea: to continue collaborating with the shelter. With this goal, she created Kemonik ONGD in 2017.

In Guatemala, more than 20 ethnic groups coexist, and more than 20 languages are spoken. One out of three women lives in poverty, and in just one year, more than 47,000 reports of violence against women were registered. Impunity, racism, and poverty hit indigenous women hardest. At Kemonik, they work side-by-side with Maya Kaqchikel women and their families. They are all from rural areas and live in contexts where the State is almost absent, but where the community has a lot of strength. **"My activism is 'weaving'"** Laura acknowledges, because **"it is alongside them, intertwining voices and struggles, that everything makes sense".**

Saintpaulia. We symbolically associate the African violet with the fight against gender-based violence for several reasons related to its color, cultural symbolism, and even some social reinterpretations. The violet color of its flowers is one of the most emblematic colors of the feminist movement. It refers us to dignity and self-respect. It was adopted by British suffragettes at the beginning of the 20th century, and in recent movements, it represents the fight for gender equality. It is often used in marches and campaigns against male violence, and many demonstrations and events on November 25th, the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women, dye the streets violet with banners and t-shirts. Despite its fragile appearance, the African violet is a very resilient plant that can flower throughout the year, even in low-light domestic environments. A resilience in difficult environments that leads us to evoke the strength of women who have suffered violence but who, even so, continue to grow and flourish.



TEMPS DE FLORS, TEMPS DE DRETS

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