



THE NETWORK
TOWARDS UNITY FOR HEALTH



Health as a Bridge for Equity and Change

By Maria Clara Moreira Carvalho

I believe that health is more than a biological state—it is a human right, a bridge for social justice, and a powerful force for equity. My journey through law, nutrition, and human rights has shown me that true transformation happens when knowledge meets action, when interdisciplinary collaboration creates systemic change, and when we empower communities to shape their own well-being.

From researching human trafficking and advocating for women's rights to volunteering in nutrition-focused initiatives, I have seen firsthand how deeply health intersects with justice, dignity, and opportunity. Working in the Second Domestic and Family Violence Court exposed me to the harsh realities of social inequities, reinforcing my belief that policies and systems must be restructured to serve the most vulnerable. Addressing food insecurity, for example, is not only about nutrition but also about understanding people's lived realities and ensuring sustainable, culturally sensitive solutions.

My academic and professional journey has been shaped by my passion for advocacy, research, and leadership. Studying law gave me a critical understanding of policies that influence public health, while my transition to nutrition allowed me to focus on the direct impact of food security, dietary habits, and well-being. I have also gained valuable experience as an English tutor, which has strengthened my ability to communicate complex ideas effectively and mentor others. Additionally, my research on human trafficking and constitutional law has equipped me with strong analytical skills, helping me approach health challenges from a systemic perspective.

TUFH's mission deeply resonates with my belief in health as a socially accountable practice—one that transcends disciplines, borders, and backgrounds. I see in TUFH a reflection of my commitment to merging knowledge with practice, fostering interprofessional collaboration, and ensuring that communities are at the center of solutions.

I am passionate about learning and continuously challenging myself to grow in my field. My experiences have strengthened my ability to work across disciplines, think critically, and find creative solutions to pressing health issues. I believe that leadership is not about authority but about action—empowering others, fostering dialogue, and ensuring that every voice is heard in shaping health policies and practices.

I am committed to being part of a global movement that doesn't just discuss change but actively builds it. This I believe: health is equity, health is justice, and health is a right worth fighting for.