



International NGO/CSO Planning Committee for Food Sovereignty

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## People's Food Sovereignty Forum 2009

Forum of people's organizations, social movements and NGOs

Rome, 13 – 17 November 2009

*"Eradicating Hunger and Poverty now!  
Nothing against us, nothing without us."*

*"One does not sell the earth upon which the people walk"  
Tashunka Witko (1840-1877)*

The world is rich yet there are a billion hungry people...

...an immoral and insufferable richness.

**Responsibility for this hunger** is concentrated in the hands of a few and in well-identified areas:

- the mantra of economic liberalization reiterated at national and international levels;
- neglect of the primary production sector with the marginalization of small-scale food providers and the transformation of food consumers from food right holders to customers in the market place;
- the commodification of food, exposing it to the agrofuel craze, to the unregulated vagaries of the financial market and to the manipulation of its basic nature (be it physical, genetic or just ideological);
- the parallel nullification of the vital status of food for people's survival;
- the privatization and patenting of knowledge, science and life;
- the fragmentation and proposed repackaging of the global governance of food and agriculture in undemocratic, opaque and non-participatory ways.

The fragile, rich world we live in is now facing a structural and **multifaceted crisis**. Climate, energy, financial and economic crises further aggravate the persistent food crisis, the only one –so far– which has triggered riots in dozens of countries, clearly underlining how essential equitable access to food is to the well-being of people and to social and political stability.

**Civil society organizations and Movements** have long denounced the blind path that has been travelled thus far and have proposed a radically different way to eradicate hunger: food sovereignty.

Food sovereignty was first launched at an international level in 1996 during the CSO/NGO Forum parallel to the 1996 World Food Summit. It was adopted as the common framework for the civil society event convened in parallel to the World Food Summit: five years later in 2002.

**We are now heading towards the 2009 World Food Summit that FAO will host 16-18 November. Promises by world leaders in the summits of 1996 and 2002 to halve hunger have led to nothing.**

**We are therefore calling on small-scale food providers (peasants and small-scale farmers, fishers, pastoralists), agrifood workers, rural youth, women, Indigenous Peoples, urban poor and non-governmental organizations to participate in a further elaboration of the food sovereignty agenda and to determine a people's way out of the continuing multiple crises.**

From **13 to 17 November 2009** hundreds of representatives from civil society, non-governmental and people's movements of small scale food providers, Indigenous Peoples, food and rural workers, youth, women and food insecure city dwellers will meet in Rome to share and articulate their findings, proposals and actions at local, regional and global levels. The timing and location are designed to facilitate interaction with the 2009 FAO World Food Summit and to bring **the voices** and the **lessons of people's organizations** to the ears of the Heads of State and Governments and to the international institutions gathered to discuss how to deal with **an increasingly hungry world.**

Over the past 25 years we have experienced how to resist in the face of structural adjustment and destructive trade liberalization policies. We have built socially and ecologically sustainable systems of production. We have resisted land grabbing and the privatization of natural resources. We have defended our rights to food and to produce food. We have built up our knowledge of the new directions which are needed by society as a whole. It is time for the Heads of State and Governments coming to Rome for the WFS 2009 to ***"Eradicate Hunger and Poverty now! Nothing against us, nothing without us."***

Among the main areas of discussion in the Forum, the following issues are proposed: rights and access to natural resources; global governance of food and agriculture, domestic and global markets, models of production and patterns of consumption,...

Particular focus will be reserved for the views of **rural youth, women and Indigenous Peoples**, who will organize their own specific gatherings.

A quota system will guarantee balanced regional and fair participation of small-scale food providers and food vulnerable constituencies coming from developing countries.

Work will be carried out in English, French and Spanish with simultaneous translation during the plenary (first and last days). Translation assistance will be also available during working groups convened to discuss specific issues that will report back to the plenary.

An **International Steering Committee of the Forum** is being set up, whose composition will take into account constituency/regional and gender balance. Representatives of the following constituencies (and regions as applicable) will form the Steering Committee:

- ❖ **Farmers:** Two main global farmers' organisations  
One regional farmers' organisation from Africa
- ❖ **Fisherfolk:** two main fisherfolk's global forums
- ❖ **Pastoralists**
- ❖ **Indigenous Peoples organisations** / Asia or America
- ❖ **Agricultural and food workers organisations** (Asia or Latin America)
- ❖ **Environmental** organisations/networks
- ❖ **Agroecological** organisations/networks
- ❖ **Urban poor organisations**
- ❖ **Youth**
- ❖ **Human Rights organisations** / Latin America
- ❖ **INGOs**
- ❖ **Women / Ad-hoc Group of INGOs in formal status with FAO**
- ❖ **IPC secretariat**
- ❖ **Italian Food Sovereignty Platform** (Italy host country)

The Steering Committee will be facilitated by the International Planning Committee (IPC) for Food Sovereignty, which will also be responsible for the organization of the Forum.

The Italian Food Sovereignty Platform will provide support for mobilization in Rome and in Italy. IPC and the Forum Steering Committee will be in charge of organising logistics for travel, visa, accommodation, meeting place and facilities.

Appropriate timing for preparing and organizing the event is crucial and respect of deadlines and organizational commitments is essential. Contributions to the process from anyone are most welcome.

**Funds are also essential for promoting and organizing the Forum** and for ensuring that organisations with fewer resources can fully contribute to the event. Fundraising is already on-going but financial support is necessary and organizations are called on to volunteer to raise it.

**With your commitment, this People's Food Sovereignty Forum 2009 will challenge those causing hunger and will provide a clear way forward to confront the dysfunctional global food system that leaves one billion hungry.**

***Join us at the "billionaire's" forum!***

***"Eradicate Hunger and Poverty now!  
Nothing against us, nothing without us."***

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