

The global food system is in crisis. Decisions about what is produced, what is consumed and who has access to food are defined by multinational corporations that control the entire food chain. These companies have continued to make billions even as unprecedented numbers of people go hungry. Food giants such as Cargill, Unilever and supermarket chain Tesco have reported record profits in the midst of global food crisis.

Food sovereignty is the positive alternative to this crisis. It is a model that guarantees people's right to food, ecologically sustainable farming and an end to corporate control of the global food system. Food sovereignty goes far beyond the failed model of food security, which treats food as just another commodity to be traded on open markets. Food sovereignty is nothing less than a revolution in the way we produce, consume and distribute food.

War on Want is committed to building the global movement for food sovereignty. Together with our partner organisations and other allies within La Via Campesina, we call on all people to join the millions of small farmers, fisherfolk, pastoralists, indigenous peoples and consumers across the globe who are demanding adoption of the food sovereignty framework. We call on all national governments and international institutions to endorse and implement the framework. We urgently need a new global system for how we produce, distribute and consume food.

**Join the food sovereignty revolution**

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FIGHTING GLOBAL POVERTY  
Registered Charity No. 208724

**JOIN THE**

**FOOD SOVEREIGNTY**

**REVOLUTION**

- Food, land, seeds and water for all
- Farmers before agri-business
- Yes to agro-ecology, no to GMOs
- Think global, buy local





# FOOD SOVEREIGNTY

Taking back control of our food system

*“Food sovereignty is the right of peoples to healthy and culturally appropriate food produced through ecologically sound and sustainable methods, and their right to define their own food and agriculture systems... Food sovereignty promotes transparent trade that guarantees just incomes to all peoples as well as the rights of consumers to control their food and nutrition... Food sovereignty implies new social relations free of oppression and inequality between men and women, peoples, racial groups, social and economic classes and generations.”*

– Declaration of Nyeleni.org, 2007

Food sovereignty is a comprehensive framework for a new global food system that deals with production, distribution, access to and control of food. The principles underpinning the food sovereignty framework were introduced by La Via Campesina at the World Food Summit in 1996, and take into account not only the technical aspects of food production but also socio-political issues that need to be considered in order to develop a sustainable and democratic food system.

## FOOD SOVEREIGNTY PRINCIPLES

### 1. Food: A basic human right

Everyone must have access to safe, nutritious and culturally appropriate food in sufficient quantity and quality to sustain a healthy life with full human dignity. Each nation should declare that access to food is a constitutional right and guarantee the development of the primary sector to ensure the concrete realisation of this fundamental right.

### 2. Agrarian reform

A genuine agrarian reform is necessary which gives landless and farming people – especially women – ownership and control of the land they work and returns territories to indigenous peoples. The right to land must be free of discrimination on the basis of gender, religion, race, social class or ideology; the land belongs to those who work it.

### 3. Protecting natural resources

Food sovereignty entails the sustainable care and use of natural resources, especially land, water, seeds and livestock breeds. The people who work the land must have the right to practise sustainable management of natural resources and to conserve biodiversity free of restrictive intellectual property rights. This can only be done from a sound economic basis with security of tenure, healthy soils and reduced use of agro-chemicals.

### 4. Reorganising food trade

Food is first and foremost a source of nutrition and only secondarily an item of trade. National agricultural policies must prioritise production for domestic consumption and food self-sufficiency. Food imports must not displace local production nor depress prices.



### 5. Ending the globalisation of hunger

Food sovereignty is undermined by multilateral institutions and by speculative capital. The growing control of multinational corporations over agricultural policies has been facilitated by the economic policies of multilateral organisations such as the WTO, World Bank and the IMF. Regulation and taxation of speculative capital and a strictly enforced code of conduct for multinational corporations is therefore needed.

### 6. Social peace

Everyone has the right to be free from violence. Food must not be used as a weapon. Increasing levels of poverty and marginalisation in the countryside, along with the growing oppression of ethnic minorities and indigenous populations, aggravate situations of injustice and hopelessness. The ongoing displacement, forced urbanisation, oppression of smallholder farmers and increasing incidence of racism against them cannot be tolerated.

### 7. Democratic control

Smallholder farmers must have direct input into formulating agricultural policies at all levels. The United Nations and related organisations will have to undergo a process of democratisation to enable this to become a reality. Everyone has the right to honest, accurate information and open and democratic decision making.