

Food Sovereignty and Seed Sovereignty

“Corporations grow food in the lab and sell it to us and we can’t produce our own food anymore. I am worried that that side will win.”

Global Dialogue Participant

Global Dialogue participants expressed their desire to have control of their own food systems. Both participants from Coastal Kenya and the Philippines said that land-use planning tends to exclude communities. Groups from the Philippines and South West Scotland saw corporations as one of the actors taking food systems control away from them: “in communities across the Philippines people are suffering from ancestral land being taken with no consultation. Corporations need to work with communities, not ignore them.”

This same lack of control and its consequences were seen by other participants in relation to seed sovereignty. A member from the Oyo State group said: “it baffles me that we don’t have a local seedbank in Nigeria, that we don’t have the ability pass these down is my major worry.” Groups from Oyo State, Coastal Kenya, Molow and México City, agreed that “sustainable seeds are key to food systems, where everyone can get everything from their own land.”

The groups from São Paulo and Stellenbosch also believed that seed saving was important and had started practices like seed banks and saving small plants for the next seasons. Participants from São Paulo worked specifically with heritage seeds as they were seen to be good for the market and help with pest control.

Controlling our food systems Exchange: Philippines and Canada

Groups from the Philippines and Canada shared a strong desire to regain control of their food systems. The group from the Philippines, spoke about this by presenting the Baliti Tree (Huge Tree) as a symbol for their dream:

“Ancestors of Manobo, Kerintikin catch fish in rivers under the Baliti Tree, Baliti also symbolizes prosperity of the clan. Before there were also birds called Kalaw living in the Baliti Tree which they dream to restore it back and help mother nature so that they can win back and continue to harvest the bounty of nature and in the future, they will no longer buy products in the market because the community themselves have enough food to supply themselves.”

The group from Canada responded by sharing their passion for food and seed sovereignty, particularly: “fighting for the autonomy to create a less wasteful food system without overconsumption and energy loss through food waste and long supply chains.” As well as their dream of food systems where:

“both farmers and consumers are reconnected with the meaning and real value of food and where food producers have more power and where good, agroecologically produced food is accessible to people in cities and also supports farmers’ livelihoods.”

Many participants felt themselves to have little decision-making power within food systems. Further, some of them stressed that having this power could enable them to support more socially and environmentally just food systems.



Participants from Milpa Alta, Mexico wave hello to participants in Glasgow