

# **South African Food Sovereignty Campaign Assembly**

## **Report**

**28 February-1 March 2015**

**Stay City, Johannesburg**

## Contents

1. Introduction and Background .....	2
2. Objectives of the South African Food Sovereignty Campaign .....	3
3. Objectives of the Assembly .....	3
4. The Context of the Need for a Food Sovereignty Campaign and Alliance: The Food and Climate Crisis and the Food Sovereignty Alternative .....	4
5. Why a Food Sovereignty Campaign and How? .....	6
6. Challenging the Corporate-Controlled Food System and Advancing Alternatives.....	8
7. Campaign Planning to Challenge the Corporate-Controlled Food System and Advance Alternatives .....	14
8. Advancing Food Sovereignty Through State Regulation.....	25
9. Coordinating the Alliance .....	25
10. Food Sovereignty Campaign Guiding Principles.....	27
11. Way Forward .....	27
12. Declaration of the South African Food Sovereignty Campaign and Alliance .....	28
13. Photos.....	32

## 1. Introduction and Background

The Food Sovereignty Campaign Assembly took place in Johannesburg on 28 February and 1 March 2015, co-hosted by the Solidarity Economy Movement (SEM) and the Cooperative and Policy Alternative Centre (COPAC). It brought together over 50 organisations from across South Africa, including small farmers, the landless, urban community based organisations, the unemployed, waste pickers and the children's movement to develop a campaign platform for campaigning against hunger in South Africa and for food sovereignty.

The Assembly was opened by a representative of the SEM, Simon Mbata from the waste pickers movement, who welcomed everyone to the assembly and gave an overview of who was present. After Thobeka Finca from the community organisation, Ntinga Ntaba Ka Ndoda in Keiskammahoek in the Eastern Cape, gave an overview of the programme, Dr Vishwas Satgar, the Chairperson of the COPAC board, gave a brief background to the Food Sovereignty Campaign and Assembly. He explained that food sovereignty emerges from the crisis of the broken corporate-controlled food system. 1 billion people go hungry in the world today and 2 billion are food stressed. This is occurring at the same time as the climate crisis, which has massive implications for food production because of droughts, flooding and increasing temperatures – and southern Africa is already being, and will be, hit hardest. Food sovereignty is therefore an alternative by and for the people, to provide healthy and nutritious food and the basis to control the food system.

Satgar continued to explain that South Africa is one of only 23 countries in the world that has the Right to Food in its Constitution. However, 14 million South Africans go to bed hungry every day and almost half of South Africans are food stressed. As such, we need to fight for an alternative food system grounded in food sovereignty. He explained that the Solidarity Economy Movement (SEM) began the process for the Food Sovereignty Campaign in 2011 when it first tabled the food sovereignty campaign, as a way to challenge the causes of hunger in South Africa and to present solutions through cooperatives and so on. Furthermore, a Right to Food Dialogue process began in late 2013, in which dialogues were held in all 9 provinces in order to understand people's experiences and challenges around the right to food. These processes have laid the basis for our coming together to develop a South Africa Food Sovereignty Campaign to challenge hunger and the corporate-controlled food system in South Africa. This was confirmed by Zakiyya Ishmail from the African Centre for Biosafety (ACB). The ACB had organised the National Dialogue on the Right to Food that took place in late November 2014 and which brought together all 9 provinces with whom the provincial dialogues had taken place. Overall, said Zakkiya, there was an agreement at the national dialogue that there had been enough talk and that **now it was time for action**. Vishwas Satgar had therefore outlined the objectives of the campaign.

## 2. Objectives of the South African Food Sovereignty Campaign

- To tackle the systemic roots of hunger and the climate crisis. With 14 million people in South Africa hungry, we need to confront the state, capital and false solutions like food security;
- To advance food sovereignty alternatives from below to sustain life and survive the climate crisis;
- Provide a unified platform for all sectors, movements, communities and organisations championing food sovereignty;
- To build a South African Food Sovereignty Alliance led by the hungry, landless and workers.

Thus with the above broader campaign objectives in mind, Satgar went on to outline the objectives of the Food Sovereignty Campaign Assembly.

## 3. Objectives of the Assembly

- To affirm the need for a united and national Food Sovereignty Campaign;
- Agree on a rolling programme of action for the campaign to attack the unjust corporate-controlled and state supported food system and advance food sovereignty alternatives from below;
- To clarify how the Food Sovereignty Alliance should work, in terms of co-responsibility, independence, democratic decision-making, and sharing of resources.

Lastly, Vishwas showed the following picture, which was drawn by an artist comrade in Bolivia especially for this Assembly. It is a heart illustrating seeds as the centre of life, with a diverse and wholesome world, the one we are fighting for, emerging out of this.



With this in mind, the Food Sovereignty Assembly kicked off!

## **4. The Context of the Need for a Food Sovereignty Campaign and Alliance: The Food and Climate Crisis and the Food Sovereignty Alternative**

This opening panel of the Assembly was a chance for four speakers to give their perspectives on the food crisis and the need for food sovereignty.

### **Nnimmo Bassey: The food and climate crisis in Africa and the food sovereignty alternative**

Nnimmo Bassey is a long time human rights and environmental justice activist in Nigeria. He is currently a director of an ecological think-tank, Health of Mother Earth Foundation (HOMEF) and Coordinator of Oilwatch International. He chairs the Board of Environmental Rights Action/Friends of the Earth, Nigeria. He was chair of Friends of the Earth International (2008-2012) and Executive Director of Nigeria's Environmental Rights Action (1993-2013)

- The starting point for Bassey was the climate crisis: the fact that climate change is worsening, little is being done by the world's governments to stop rising greenhouse gas emissions, and what little is being done are largely false solutions. As such, we have to advance the solutions, and food sovereignty is a key tool to do so.
- Africa will be worst hit by the impacts of climate change, with massive implications for food production due to drastic weather changes. But at the same time the world sees Africa through the frame of resources to be extracted rather than the point of view of its people.
- Furthermore, the impacts of climate change are not just weather changes, but these weather changes are stimulating conflict as people battle over ever-dwindling resources like water.
- As such, the only way forward is for the people of Africa to protect our environment; to chart food sovereignty as a key way forward out of the crisis; and to recover our narrative of solidarity.

### **Bridget Mugambe: The state of the food sovereignty struggle in Africa and the importance of alliance-building**

Bridget Mugambe is a food sovereignty activist and a social scientist by profession with a Bachelor and Masters Degrees in Social Sciences. Bridget has over 9 years experience in policy analysis, advocacy, community mobilization and sensitization around issues of seed, Intellectual Property Rights and farmers rights. She is also experienced in Trade policy analysis and advocacy. She is based in Uganda and currently working with the Alliance for Food Sovereignty in Africa (AFSA) as a policy advocate.

- Bridget explained what the Alliance for Food Sovereignty in Africa (AFSA) is and what it does. It is a pan-African platform comprised of food sovereignty networks and farmer organisations working in Africa. Its core purpose is to influence policies and to promote African solutions for food sovereignty. It therefore champions small African family farming and production systems based on agroecological and indigenous approaches, resisting corporate industrialisation of African agriculture; and African-driven solutions to African problems.
- On the continent AFSA is currently battling against myths being pushed by corporations and Western governments, in collaboration with African governments, like the green revolution paradigm, that small scale farmers are backward and unproductive, that agriculture need big private sector investment, and so on. To support and promote these myths, laws are being changed and new approaches based on private sector investment are being promoted.
- AFSA is building an African grassroots voice on seed policy, creating political space for civil society participation, engaging with regional bodies on seed, land and production systems, promoting agroecology alternatives, and building partnerships across the globe.
- She ended by arguing that the challenges to food sovereignty are increasingly becoming regional and so food sovereignty struggles should be more tightly integrated across the region and continent. Hence the current Assembly is a crucial space to build alliances within South Africa, but also to link to the struggle for food sovereignty on the African continent.

### Jacklyn Cock: The need for food sovereignty in South Africa

Jacklyn Cock is a Professor of Sociology at Wits and a long standing environmental justice activist. She has undertaken a considerable amount of research on the South African food system, especially on the wheat to bread value chain. She is a member of the COPAC board.

- Jacklyn Cock argued that there are three reasons that we need food sovereignty in South Africa. These are because the existing food system is 1) unsafe; 2) unjust; and 3) unsustainable.
- **The food system in unsafe:** our diets are becoming increasingly unhealthy because the corporate food system promotes sugar, salt, high fat, and food processed with toxic chemicals. She used a number of examples, such as that the highest number of sugary soft drink adverts are in Soweto near primary schools so that the soft drink manufacturers try to hook people onto sugar drinks when they are young. The food system is unsafe and does not have our health at its heart.
- **The food system in unjust:** Half of the South African population is officially food insecure. A quarter of all children under the age of five experience stunted physical and mental growth, which is producing a stunted generation who will not reach their full potential. This is accompanied by enormous food wastage and overconsumption by the rich.

- **The food system is unsustainable:** Industrial agriculture depends on oil-based chemicals and fertilisers which destroy soils and pollute rivers. Food travels long distance thus emitting greenhouse gases, and industrial agriculture as a whole emits a large amount of greenhouse gases as well. Agroecology is thus a crucial alternative to making the food system sustainable.
- Because of the above three reasons, Jacklyn argued that we have to build food sovereignty in South Africa to safeguard the future!

### John Appolis: Message of Support from the United Front (UF)

John Appolis is currently the United Front Interim Campaigns Co-ordinator. He is the former chairperson of the Anti-Privatisation Forum (APF), and works for an independent trade union called GIWUSA.

- John Appolis delivered a message of support from the United Front. He argued that the current Assembly comes at a crucial time, when almost half of the population does not have secure access to sufficient food and when inequality is growing.
- He argued that reasons for this hunger include corporate control over the food system (and thus essentially capitalism), failed land reform policies, the ANC's neoliberal agricultural policies which have opened the agricultural system up to financialisation and speculation.
- He argued that a crucial issue for the Food Sovereignty Campaign to address is food prices. He said that while this is a campaign, it should also see itself as part of the building of a new mass movement to challenge the structural problems that the above problems reflect.
- We should see cooperatives, income generating projects and the like as part of the campaign, as important in building self-financing to drive our struggles. The United Front sees food sovereignty as an alternative mode of production for distributing products and services in the country – food sovereignty is part of an alternative logic that shows that a different system based on democracy and collective control is possible. Appolis ended by saying that the United Front wishes the Assembly a successful deliberation.

## 5. Why a Food Sovereignty Campaign and How?

After the stimulating opening inputs and subsequent discussion, the participants at the Assembly broke up into 5 commissions to get to know each other, each other's work, and the basis for why we need a national food sovereignty campaign. These commissions were asked to report back on two key questions: Why do we need a national food sovereignty campaign? And, what programmes and struggles is your organisation or movement involved in?

There was wide consensus on the need for the food sovereignty campaign, the reasons including:

- We need to build our power. If we are small groups operating on our own then it is difficult to challenge the government and corporations. But as a united force we have more power to do this;
- To make sure that every household in South Africa has enough food on the table;
- To challenge high food prices;
- To challenge the unequal land and agrarian system;
- To raise awareness in society about the food and hunger crisis, its causes, and solutions;
- To highlight the problems with our current food system, namely its profit-driven nature, its negative impacts on the environment and so on;
- To create alternative means of food supply that is separate from the corporate-dominated system as one way of challenging capitalist control of food;
- To use the campaign platform to share knowledge, experiences, problems and successes. In other words, to network and unite;
- Promote alternatives, like agroecology and the solidarity economy;
- To advance proposals for a Food Sovereignty Act for South Africa, which would be aimed at creating the conditions for food sovereignty in South Africa and mandating the state to undertake certain actions to support this.

The second question related to what initiatives and struggles organisations and movements are currently engaged in. The purpose of this was to get a sense of the range of struggles and initiatives in order to understand how they could feed into and strengthen the campaign. A wide range of initiatives are underway, including:

- Struggling against genetically modified organisms (GMOs) in the food system and educating small farmers and communities about GMOs
- Struggles for land access, water rights and agricultural support and infrastructure
- Organic food production and markets
- Small scale farmer associations promoting agroecology, the rights and needs of their members, and food sovereignty
- Local mobilisation work with small farmers and cooperatives for food sovereignty and the solidarity economy
- Rural women organising around land, seed and climate change
- Struggling against dispossession of land and resources by mining activities
- Promotion of and capacity building in agroecology
- Research and monitoring on food prices
- Promotion of local household and small scale agriculture
- Grassroots mobilisation and education work
- Worker cooperative promotion and solidarity economy movement building



- Assistance to farm workers in terms of struggles for land tenure rights, improved working conditions and pay, and assisting land reform beneficiaries with training and capacity building, production and so on.

The above discussion made clear that there is a significant level of enthusiasm and support for a national campaign that brings together the wide range of existing activities that are happening on the ground and takes forward a campaign programme that brings existing capacities, knowledge and resources behind a unified campaign platform.

## 6. Challenging the Corporate-Controlled Food System and Advancing Alternatives

The proposed Programme of Action (POA) of the campaign proposed that the campaign have two key components: 1) Challenging key problems with the current food system, and 2) highlighting and promoting alternatives to each problem. The two need to go together in the campaigning process. Through the last few years of engagement and dialoguing key issues came to the fore that are undermining food sovereignty in South Africa. For ease of reading and programmatic purposes, although planning for the ‘Challenging’ part and the ‘Promoting Alternatives’ part happened in different sessions, this section covers the inputs that were given by resource people on both the problems and the alternatives. The following section then details the planning that happened in separate sessions on challenging the problems and advancing alternatives.

For these sessions, resource people gave a brief input on each issue to remind us of the facts and context for each, before the Assembly participants broke up into commissions. A later session then comprised input from resource people on alternatives to each problem being discussed. The tables below summarise the inputs of each.

### 1. Rising Food Prices and Corporate Control

#### The Problem We Need to Challenge

Because rising food prices had emerged as the most wide ranging problem affecting communities, we had three people present on the issue of rising food prices and corporate control in South Africa. **Katherine Joynt, a PhD student from Wits University** who is studying power in the wheat-to-bread value chain, spoke about how rising food prices hit the poor the hardest. This is because the poor spend most of their income on food, and because some of the highest price rises have been on basic food stuffs. The reasons for why food prices are rising include corporate greed, corporate concentration and power in the food value chain, neoliberal capitalism, climate change, the switch of production of staple crops mostly for human consumption to biofuel production, and rising oil and chemical prices.

**Madelitso Mtine from the Pietermaritzburg Agency for Community and Social Action (PACSA)** gave an input on the crisis of food price affordability for the poor and working class in South Africa. She said that there is more than enough food in South Africa, but economic and political choices affect food price affordability. Households cannot afford to buy enough food and often the food that they do buy is not nutritious. One solution for those who buy their food is that we need to get more money into their pockets, for example through a liveable minimum wage of R8000.

**Imraahn Mukaddam, who blew the whistle on the bread price-fixing cartel**, spoke about the profitability of the big four food corporations in South Africa. He said for one company, the division that produces basic food stuffs which the poor buy most of contributes more than half their profits. He argued that this means their basic foodstuffs division cross-subsidises their luxury goods divisions and that it is therefore a case of the poor subsidising the rich. He said the poor also often pay more for their food because they buy smaller units at a time, on which the mark-up is higher. Furthermore, he argued that so-called service delivery protests can sometimes be classified as food riots, because it is hunger that is driving people's desperation.

### **Promoting the Alternative: Alternative Production, Cooperatives etc**

As an alternative to high food prices, **Anique van der Vlugt from the Ethical Coop** in Cape Town, spoke about how cooperatives are an important part of lowering food prices by creating different relationships of control over the food system. She used the example of the Ethical Coop in Cape Town, which only buys organic produce from small farmers in and around Cape Town. It also deals with herbs, spices, seeds, and natural body products. The cooperative creates new markets for small scale farmers and supplies affordable organic produce to consumers. It cuts out all the middlemen that take profit off of each stage that conventional food goes through and creates a closer relationship between the producer and consumer. It provides a glimpse of a fairer food system where profit is not the sole motive and so there is not the ever-present pressure towards increasing food prices.

## **2. Declining Nutrition in Our Food System**

### **The Problem of Declining Nutrition in Our Food System**

**Karen Hoffman from the Wits School of Public Health** spoke about how consumption of less nutritious food stuffs is increasing in our food system, largely driven by corporate interests. She focused largely on the question of sugar consumption and how this is leading to a global epidemic. The irony is that obesity therefore most often does not represent over-

consumption of food, but consumption of the wrong types. Therefore often obesity is highest amongst the poor because the cheaper foods are less nutritious and higher in starches and sugar. Furthermore, child malnutrition is very high in South Africa because of poverty. When a child is malnourished when young, they are much more likely to become obese when older. Obesity is therefore often a sign of malnutrition.

On average South Africans consume 24 tea spoons of sugar per day, whereas the average recommended by the World Health Organisation (WHO) is 6 tea spoons. The strategy of big food and soda companies to get people to consume more of their junk food is availability, affordability and acceptability. The result is that in South Africa 3 times more Coca-Cola is consumed than the global average, and KFC has 3 times more market penetration than in the United States, where it originates! The role of marketing and media in shaping people's dietary choices therefore needs to be challenged.

### **Promoting the Alternative: Nutritious and Culturally Appropriate Food**

While we need to challenge the food companies that are promoting unhealthy dietary choices, we need to show practically how people can switch to and access nutritious food. **Zayaan Khan from the Surplus Peoples Project (SPP)** spoke about ways to think of how to return to nutritious, locally-based and culturally appropriate diets. We need to adopt an agroecological perspective to food by linking it to our surrounding natural environment. Indigenous foods are acclimatised to an environment so they do not need external inputs, which reduces their environmental impact. So we need to return to nutritious eating, like locally-grown vegetables, but we also can look towards our broader environment for sources of nutrition, like the oceans, insects, plants, as well as historical ways of treating and enhancing food. We need to promote active citizenship and revivalism – reviving old methods and recipes, eating together and sharing knowledge, transmitting knowledge to the youth, and reasserting cultural identity linked to food.

## **3. Corporate Takeover of Seeds and GMOs**

### **The Problem of Corporate Takeover of Seeds and GMOs**

**Gareth Jones from the African Centre for Biosafety (ACB)** gave an input on corporate control over seeds and GMOs. This is a crucial issue as control over seed by small farmers and communities themselves is crucial to food sovereignty. He looked at the history of the seed industry in South Africa and how it developed since the early 1900s. The agenda for the development of hybrid seeds was largely driven by corporations with government support, and by the 1980s 6 companies controlled the seed industry. 4 of these 6 were multinational companies. In the 1990s Pioneer and Monsanto entered the seed market and the first genetically modified crops were grown in 1998. The seed industry is characterised by concentration and almost all of our maize seed planted is genetically modified. The current seed legislation in South Africa favours corporations and the seed system is geared towards large-scale mono-cropping, which is highly dependent on external inputs and access to high

levels of finance.

### **The Alternative of Seed Saving, Banking and Sharing**

While corporations are currently gaining control over our seed supplies, for most of the 10 000 years of agriculture farmers kept and saved their own seed, shared with others, and improved and selected their seed based on local environmental conditions. **Nomasoni Mjacu, a small farmer from Ilizwi Lama Fama Farmers Union** in the Eastern Cape, spoke about the need for small farmers to protect, save, store and share their own seed. This is important because it ensures that seed, and therefore the basis of the food system and life, is kept in the hands of small farmers rather than corporations. She explained the process of seed saving and banking and showed how it is not just an individual exercise of each farmer, but it is a social process integrated with local participation, learning and sharing. We must establish, grow and share these seed saving practices and knowledge as part of the campaign to promote the alternative to corporate control of seeds and GMOs. She ended by emphasising the importance of women in this process, as they are usually the people that feed their families and communities. Viva women!

## **4. Lack of Land and Agrarian Reform**

### **The Problem of Lack of Land and Agrarian Reform**

**Boyce Tom from the Trust for Community Outreach and Education (TCOE)** covered the problem of concentration of land ownership in South Africa and the lack of agrarian reform. The South African government has enacted a number of policies and programmes for land reform after 1994, but have mostly been a failure, and are largely aimed at creating a black commercial class of farmers. Planning has been top-down, there is inadequate post-settlement support, there has been a large-scale collapse of agricultural projects and farm infrastructure. The programmes have been disempowering and preserve the existing agrarian order.

### **The Alternative of Small Scale Farming and Agrarian Reform**

**Reinette Heunis from Mawubuye Land Rights Movement** spoke about the importance of small scale farmers for food sovereignty and feeding our people. She explained that in the Western Cape for example, small farmers don't get access to land. Rather big commercial farmers have land and use it to produce wine for export, rather than food for those who need it. Government provides little support, especially in terms of access to land and water. We need to campaign together for agrarian reform, and in this it is important especially for women to stand together, to be empowered to lead projects, as it is very often women who are growing food for their families and communities. We need to campaign for land and agrarian reform so that small farmers can play a bigger role in our food system.

## 5. Negative Impacts of Industrial Agriculture

### **The Problem of the Negative Impacts of Industrial Agriculture**

**Karen Read from Biowatch SA** argued that industrial agriculture is the ‘agriculture of death’. A key moment in the development of industrial agriculture was when the leftover chemicals and infrastructure for making weapons was turned towards agriculture. Industrial agriculture poisons the environment with chemicals. Multinationals benefit from this model through seed and chemical sales. Monocultures deplete soils and create pests, thus needing pesticides. GM crops threaten food and seed sovereignty. The huge amount of animal waste generated in industrial animal feed lots poisons the ground water and the environment, and most of the animals eaten are fed with antibiotics to try and control diseases arising out of the industrial model. 80% of antibiotics produced in the world are given to animals! This food system is completely unsustainable and needs to be transformed towards agroecology and local food production for local consumption.

### **The Alternative of Agroecology**

**Karen Read from Biowatch SA** also spoke about the alternative of agroecology, as Biowatch has a great deal of capacity in agroecology and is doing crucial work in practically promoting this alternative. Agroecology supports seed and food sovereignty and is about protecting indigenous knowledge systems, ensuring farmer control of agricultural resources, and securing farmers’ rights, while working in harmony with nature. It uses natural processes to ensure the fertility of the soil and so productivity and building trust between humans. Importantly, ‘What you feed the soil, you feed the plant; what you feed the plant, you feed the people.’ In short, Karen argued that agroecology can feed the world, is sustainable, ensures diversity, respects the knowledge of farmers, has a positive impact on health and climate change, and has an empowering impact on women.

## 6. Labour Exploitation on Farms

### **The Problem of Labour Exploitation on Farms**

**Vasco Mabunda from Nkuzi Development Association in Limpopo** spoke about the challenges experienced by farmworkers. Farmworkers are some of the lowest-paid workers in South Africa. The very people who produce our food often can't afford to buy enough food to feed themselves and their families. Vasco argued that farmworkers are paid slave wages and often experience no overtime remuneration, lack of protective work gear, deductions from their wages for services not provided, and threats of violence. A key issue for farmworkers is also that of land tenure. Since 1994 over 2 million farmworkers have been kicked off the farmland on which they lived. Most farmworkers therefore want to know that they have a secure place to live, and secure access to land for their own farming.

### **The Alternative of Farmworker Rights and Worker Cooperatives**

**Brand Nathako from Nkuzi Development Association** spoke about the need to fight for farmworker rights and to construct the alternative of worker cooperatives, which ensures farmworker control over production. Nkuzi has been working with farmworkers to pressure the state to enact policies and regulations and introduce new ones to protect farmworker rights of those in employment relationships. But he used the example of a case that Nkuzi is working on, of a farm in Baltimore that they got the government to buy for farm dwellers. Instead of them working for a farm owner, they are setting up the farm as a worker cooperative and promoting the solidarity economy. They brought the African Farmers Union in to train the people on agroecology, and they have started some production, and Nkuzi has been training them on the worker cooperative with the training they have received from COPAC. A process to establish these farm dwellers in a worker cooperative where they control their conditions of work and life is therefore underway, and will hopefully show the alternative for overcoming exploitation on farms by farm workers controlling production themselves.

## 7. Lack of Finance for Small Scale Farmers and Food Alternatives

### **The Problem of Lack of Finance for Small Scale Farmers and Food Alternatives**

**Nomsa Selebano, a small scale farmer from Randfontein,** West of Johannesburg, told the Assembly about the challenges experienced by small scale farmers like herself in accessing finance for production. She argued that there is supposedly a lot of finance available from the state for farmers, but it does not reach small scale farmers. This is because of a number of reasons, including corruption. Sometimes officials will tell farmers that they must give them some of their cows in exchange for funding. Other times they will simply say that there are no funds left, or local governments and agriculture departments will give out funds based on political relationships. How to access finance for small scale farmers is therefore a key issue that the campaign should deal with. We have to have finance if we want to expand our alternatives.

### **Alternative Financing for Small Scale Farmers**

**Vishwas Satgar from the Cooperative and Policy Alternative Centre (COPAC)** argued that we need to develop alternative forms of finance to meet the capital needs of small scale farmers and cooperatives. Currently under capitalism finance controls us rather than us controlling finance to use as a tool to achieve our objectives. We need to look at internal sources, where finance comes from members, from shares purchased by members, and from reinvesting the surplus into the enterprises rather than just sharing all of it out amongst members. We also need to look at creating external sources of finance like cooperative banks, solidarity economy funds, localised buyer funds, and various buying arrangements (like direct farm sales, local markets, pension points, e-markets etc., activities that generate finance).

## 7. Campaign Planning to Challenge the Corporate-Controlled Food System and Advance Alternatives

After each session of the above inputs, the Assembly participants broke into 7 commissions, with each commission dealing with one of the above issues to develop campaigning tactics. The following is an outline of the campaign planning that emerged from these commissions, and which form a basis for the future planning and roll-out of the campaign.

## 1. High Food Prices and Corporate Power

Challenging the Problem	Promoting the Alternative
<p><b>Those responsible for the problem and who need to be targeted are:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Government for not regulating food corporations and for liberalising the agricultural sector</li> <li>• Corporations that control the food system. For example in the maize value chain: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Seeds: Monsanto, Pioneer and Hi-Bred (Du Pont)</li> <li>- Fertiliser: Sasol, Omnia and Yara</li> <li>- Storage: Senwes, Afgri and NWK</li> <li>- Trading: Cargill and Louis Dreyfus</li> <li>- Milling: Tiger Brands, Premier Food, Pioneer Food</li> <li>- Retail: Shoprite/Checkers, Pick n Pay, Spar, Woolworths, Massmart</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Agri-business</li> </ul> <p><b>Main demands of this phase of the campaign:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Food produced in South Africa should be directed towards feeding our people first rather than exported</li> <li>• State regulation of food corporations and food prices</li> <li>• State support to small scale farmers so that they can produce cheaper food to feed our people</li> <li>• Corporations to stop profiting off basic foodstuffs</li> </ul> <p><b>National campaign tactics to challenge the problem:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Roles and actions should be decentralised, so that we undertake tactics in our specific spaces suited to the context</li> <li>• Social media will be an important tool</li> <li>• Use of music to raise awareness and mobilise</li> </ul>	<p><b>Examples of existing alternatives:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Somali traders who work cooperatively to reduce prices: one person buys bulk on behalf of group to reduce price; low profit, high turnover; diversify ownership to reduce cost etc.</li> <li>• Bakery cooperatives that sell bread cheaper than main producers</li> <li>• Farming cooperatives and local gardens that are low input and therefore low cost</li> <li>• Marketing cooperatives like ethical cooperative, Siyavuna and local community markets that are governed by transparent standards that benefit communities</li> </ul> <p><b>How to profile alternatives locally:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Educate consumers about moving away from brand loyalty and supporting local food producers</li> <li>• Developing pamphlets listing all the places that people can buy food locally to support local producers, retailers, cooperatives and the solidarity economy</li> <li>• Develop local market places for local food producers and sellers to sell</li> <li>• Promote local fairs and markets</li> <li>• Establish local forums</li> </ul> <p><b>How to profile alternatives nationally:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Video and photography</li> <li>• Writing stories about alternatives that are distributed nationally, printed in newspapers etc.</li> <li>• Promote local markets e.g. made demand on local governments to build market infrastructure for local producers</li> <li>• Promote the idea of solidarity economy and cooperatives as the way to achieve food sovereignty</li> </ul>



<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Education to make consumers aware of rising food prices and who benefits</li> <li>• Coordinated nation-wide actions on food prices, for example on World Food Day</li> <li>• Public tribunal to put on trial those responsible for high food prices</li> <li>• Expose food corporations profiteering off basic foodstuffs and challenge them publicly</li> </ul> <p><b>Local campaign tactics to challenge the problem:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Local forums to mobilise key forces</li> <li>• Pickets at local supermarkets</li> <li>• Education on high food prices and the alternative</li> </ul>	
--	--

## 2. Declining Nutrition in Our Food System

<b>Challenging the Problem of Declining Nutrition</b>	<b>Promoting the Alternative</b>
<p><b>Those responsible for the problem and who need to be targeted are:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fast food companies in particular, but the main food companies in general who are promoting processed and low-nutrition food</li> <li>• Globalisation more broadly</li> <li>• The state for allowing the uncontrolled expansion of fast foods and unhealthy foods</li> <li>• The media for their role in promoting these unhealthy foods</li> <li>• We should also acknowledge the role of consumers in accepting what is fed to them by food companies and the media. We should target them in a positive way.</li> </ul> <p><b>Main demands of this phase of the</b></p>	<p><b>Examples of existing alternatives:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Small scale fishers who fish for themselves but don't sell, or sell locally to their communities</li> <li>• People that still cook traditional recipes, and using local produce. Especially older people.</li> <li>• TCOE's recently produced cookbook</li> </ul> <p><b>How to profile alternatives locally:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work to link small scale fishers to markets so as to support the fishers and link people to sustainably fished and nutritious sea food</li> <li>• Encourage community gardens, keeping of chickens for eggs, and other small scale operations, and profile them</li> <li>• Workshops on nutritious cooking and indigenous food</li> <li>• Local radios, flyers, newspapers and</li> </ul>

***campaign:***

- Demand that the media stop advertising unhealthy food
- For the state to regulate advertising of unhealthy food, especially in poor areas
- Education on nutrition in schools
- For cooperatives engaged in agroecology to supply school feeding schemes
- For local food sellers to buy their food from small farmers and cooperatives
- Protection of our seeds and knowledge so that we can promote alternative and healthy eating

***National campaign tactics to challenge the problem:***

- Produce educational materials and undertake popular education
- Mass mobilisation such as marches in coordinated day of action
- Pickets at fast food outlets
- Campaign with slogans that promote returning to nutritious alternatives, such as 'Bring back our soil/we need soil, not oil'

***Local campaign tactics to challenge the problem:***

- Promote food gardens as sources of nutritional food – community gardens, school gardens etc.
- Promote sharing of knowledge between youth and elders, especially around indigenous crops and eating patterns
- For activists to act and illustrate the change
- Hand out leaflets and talk to people at fast food outlets
- Local nutritional education and

use poetry to talk about this

- Conduct interviews with old people about what they used to eat and what recipes they have. Also idea is to use children to do these interviews, so that they learn directly

***How to profile these alternatives nationally:***

- Social media e.g. trending on Twitter. Sharing indigenous recipes on social media
- Writing articles on food consumption alternatives for the media, sharing these amongst ourselves as well
- Short films about alternatives
- Compile a campaign recipe book, containing recipes that are based on research, but also those recipes that have come from interviewing people and researching within the campaign itself (largely from the local campaigning). I.e. have process of collecting recipes from local campaigning. In the book, not just give the recipes, but give the story behind the recipe as well, so linking to culture.

cooking workshops	
-------------------	--

### 3. Corporate Control of Seeds and GMOs

Challenging the Problem of Corporate Control of Seeds and GMOs	Promoting the Alternative
<p><i>Those responsible for the problem and who need to be targeted are:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The government, and specifically Department of Agriculture, for promoting corporate control and GMOs</li> <li>• Government programmes that are trying to get small farmers to adopt GMOs</li> <li>• The corporate seed companies themselves, like Monsanto</li> </ul> <p><i>Main demands of this phase of the campaign:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ban GMOs in South Africa</li> <li>• Protect the right of small farmers to save and share their seed</li> <li>• Stop building the power of commercial seed breeders through legislation</li> <li>• Demand Monsanto and its allies like the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation leave South Africa</li> </ul> <p><i>National campaign tactics to challenge the problem:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A National Tribunal on Land and Hunger</li> </ul>	<p><i>Examples of existing alternatives:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Household and village seedbanks (e.g. Ilizwi Lama Fama, farmers linked to Biowatch, Mupo Foundation etc.)</li> <li>• Seed recovery programmes</li> </ul> <p><i>How to profile these alternatives locally:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Local resource centres to educate and promote seed saving and banking to farmers. Even without resources centres, local knowledge sharing and community awareness raising</li> <li>• Speak at community meetings</li> </ul> <p><i>How to profile these alternatives nationally:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• National exchange visits for capacity building</li> <li>• National seed exchanges</li> <li>• Radio</li> <li>• Plays</li> <li>• Film to profile seed banks</li> <li>• Use website as source of information and connect people</li> </ul>

#### 4. Lack of Land and Agrarian Reform

Challenging the Problem	Promoting the Alternative
<p><b>Those responsible for the problem and who need to be targeted are:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mainly the government's neoliberal policies on land and agrarian reform</li> </ul> <p><b>Main demands of this phase of the campaign:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Land audits to identify unused land at local, provincial and national level</li> <li>Monitor and prevent land concentration in the country</li> </ul> <p><b>National campaign tactics to challenge the problem:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify and occupy unused land for food production</li> <li>Education, networking and advocacy</li> <li>Shadow government's land audits at all levels of government to strengthen critique of ANC state land reform</li> <li>Strategically target key political moments to profile the issue e.g. intensify the campaign leading up to the elections</li> <li>A People's Tribunal on Land and Hunger</li> </ul> <p><b>Local campaign tactics to challenge the problem:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Engage local government and traditional leadership to challenge them on ensuring land access for landless people</li> <li>Undertake people's land audits, rural and urban, to identify unused land and make official claims for it</li> </ul>	<p><b>Examples of existing alternatives:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Small scale farmer organisations promoting food sovereignty and agroecology</li> <li>Small scale farming that is happening in various places</li> <li>Agroecology and permaculture alternatives</li> </ul> <p><b>How to profile these alternatives locally:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establish food sovereignty and solidarity economy forums to educate communities about hunger, its link to land and agrarian crisis and the need for food sovereignty. Use resources supplied on information sticks.</li> <li>Declare communities as 'food sovereignty zones' through declarations by communities and community organisations, people commit to only consuming food that they know the details of, origins, do not contain GMOs etc.</li> <li>Participatory land audits, where the land hungry walk around their community and market open spaces of land and what they are being used for, then campaign to access that land, or even occupy that land, for food production. Plan food production through agro-ecology and establish worker cooperatives as part of the solidarity economy.</li> <li>Have community days at existing small farms and gardens, where they are promoted, undertake education and knowledge sharing, awareness raising to get local community to support</li> <li>Pamphlets</li> </ul> <p><b>How to profile these alternatives nationally:</b></p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Short film clips</li><li>• Articles in media</li><li>• Public tribunal on land</li><li>• Exchange visits (national and international)</li></ul>
--	---

## 5. Negative Impacts of Industrial Agriculture

Challenging the Problem	Promoting the Alternative
<p><b>Those responsible for the problem and who need to be targeted are:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Capital that is promoting industrial agriculture, including the seed corporations</li> <li>• Government and in particular the following Departments: Agriculture, Mineral Resources, Water Affairs, Land Affairs, Land Reform and Rural Development</li> </ul> <p><b>Main demands of this phase of the campaign:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demand appropriate legislation for agroecology</li> <li>• Demand that extension officers be trained in agroecology and that greater support for agroecology farming is made available</li> <li>• Demand Departments ensure compliance by industrial agricultural activities</li> <li>• That SA government comply with Maputo Declaration and devote 10% of GDP to agriculture, particularly to shifting to sustainable agricultural system</li> </ul> <p><b>National campaign tactics:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Research to develop quality case studies of impacts of industrial agriculture in SA</li> <li>• Awareness raising and capacitation</li> <li>• Exchange visits</li> <li>• Marches and demonstrations</li> <li>• Social media</li> <li>• Radio stations</li> <li>• Engage media</li> </ul>	<p><b>Examples of existing alternatives:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Nation-wide examples – all movements and organisations that are alliance partners to assist with finding and building a national map of such examples.</li> </ul> <p><b>How to profile these alternatives locally:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop the alternative of agroecology in cooperatives, urban farming, seed-banking etc. to show as examples to communities</li> <li>• Local learning exchanges</li> <li>• Local food sovereignty festivals</li> <li>• Local seed exchanges</li> <li>• Local newspaper and radio profiles</li> <li>• Photo exhibitions</li> <li>• Advocate for municipal by-laws that compel local government to support small scale, agroecological farming</li> </ul> <p><b>How to profile these alternatives nationally:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Build a national database of alternatives linked to website and cellphone application. All alliance partners to play a role in this</li> <li>• Challenge Department of Agriculture on where they get seed, fertiliser etc.</li> <li>• Pressure Department of Education to include agroecology rather than industrial farming technologies in curricula</li> <li>• Profile through food sovereignty festivals</li> <li>• Also go to other festivals, such as art festivals, to sell agroecological produce and promote agroecology</li> <li>• Website, cell phone application and Facebook</li> <li>• Research on successful case studies</li> <li>• Exchange visits</li> </ul>

***Local Campaign Tactics:***

- Community-based research activities
- Local capacity building and training on agroecology
- Lobbying of local agricultural support departments for agroecology support
- Local education on impacts of industrial agriculture

## 6. Labour Exploitation on Farms

Challenging the Problem	Promoting the Alternative
<p><b>Those responsible for the problem and who need to be targeted are:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Farmers</li> <li>• Government (and Department of Labour)</li> <li>• Labour brokers</li> <li>• Multinational corporations that drive down price paid to farmers</li> </ul> <p><b>Main demands for this phase of the campaign:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Joint inspections of farmworker conditions between government and relevant stakeholders</li> <li>• Government must impose penalties for non-compliance with sectoral determinations</li> <li>• Government establish a toll-free number for reporting abuses</li> <li>• CCMA must be de-centralised</li> <li>• Farmers must comply laws and minimum wages</li> </ul> <p><b>National campaign tactics:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Education programme for farmworkers on their rights</li> <li>• Empower farmworkers how to take up their issues</li> <li>• Mass mobilisation and international solidarity</li> <li>• ‘Who produces your food?’ campaign raising awareness on farmworker conditions</li> </ul> <p><b>Local campaign tactics:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establish Farmworker Forums</li> <li>• Information dissemination</li> </ul>	<p><b>Examples of existing alternatives:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Baltimore worker cooperative, Limpopo</li> <li>• Worker cooperative bakeries (e.g. Tswelelane in Ivory Park)</li> <li>• Phakamani Siyephambili farmworker campaign in Eastern Cape</li> </ul> <p><b>Ways to profile alternatives locally:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pamphlets to educate farmworkers about worker cooperatives</li> <li>• Education workshops</li> </ul> <p><b>Ways to profile alternatives nationally:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Newspapers and other media</li> <li>• Activist schools</li> <li>• Sell products of worker cooperatives at big shows, like Rand Show</li> </ul>



## 7. Lack of Finance for Small Scale Farmers and Food Alternatives

<b>Challenging the Problem</b>	<b>Promoting the Alternative</b>
<p><i>Those responsible for the problem and who need to be targeted are:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The government, national and provincial, largely in relation to corruption. Specifically Department of Agriculture and its management of financing programmes, and DTI for challenges in accessing their finance</li> </ul> <p><i>Main demands for this phase of the campaign:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Corruption-free provision of finance from government</li> <li>• A greater say in how finance programmes are structured</li> <li>• Simplified processes for accessing finance</li> <li>• Forms of finance more suitable to small scale farmers</li> </ul> <p><i>National campaign tactics:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bring small scale farmer voices together in a tribunal and get government to answer</li> <li>• A national action of dumping produce that has rotted due to lack of finance on doorsteps of Department of Agriculture offices</li> </ul> <p><i>Local campaign tactics:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Photographs and movies</li> <li>• Social media</li> <li>• Local actions of dumping rotten produce on local government offices who are responsible for finance</li> </ul>	<p><i>Examples of existing alternatives:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Subscriptions from members</li> <li>• Utilise festivals to build finance</li> <li>• Savings schemes (for purchasing seeds and equipment)</li> <li>• Marketing ourselves creatively</li> </ul> <p><i>How to profile alternatives locally:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Form local forums and invite people to attend to learn and organise</li> <li>• Exchange visits</li> <li>• Local markets</li> <li>• Communication and media: documentaries, research, local campaigning, social media</li> </ul> <p><i>How to profile alternatives nationally:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• National days of action</li> <li>• Trade fairs for farmers to sell products to generate income</li> </ul>

## 8. Advancing Food Sovereignty through State Regulation

The assembly unanimously supported the idea of bringing in the state to advance food sovereignty regulation including a national Food Sovereignty Act and local government laws and policy that facilitate food sovereignty actions, like making land and water available, support etc. The campaign will build capacity, research other international experiences, clarify the regulatory agenda and draft its legal instruments, including a national Act. This will be done in a participatory way and will be driven from below before being demanded from South Africa's political elites.

## 9. Coordinating the Alliance

It is crucial for the South African Food Sovereignty Campaign to be driven from below at the grassroots. However, to ensure this comes together into a powerful national campaign, national coordination is necessary. As such, the Assembly elected a national coordinating committee.

### Food Sovereignty Campaign National Coordinating Committee:

This committee has a broad spread of sectors, and is comprised of:

#### The Solidarity Economy Movement (SEM):

- Thobeka Finca – Ntinga Ntaba ka Ndoda
- Mandla Mndevle – ESSET
- Vishwas Satgar – COPAC and Wits
- Jacklyn Cock – COPAC board member

#### Community-based Organisations:

- Likeleli Motete – Meqeleng Concerned Citizens
- Patrick Tshikane – United Front

#### Small Scale Farmers and Cooperatives:

- Nomsa Selebano – LAMOSA
- Thammy Dlamini – Asikhutulisane Cooperative
- Anique van der Vlugt – Ethical Coop

#### Agrarian Sector:

- Davine Cloete – Agrarian Reform and Food Sovereignty Campaign
- Inyanda Rural and Landless Movement – to confirm
- Tshintsha Amakhaya – to confirm

### **Environmental Justice:**

- Matthews Hlabane – Green Revolutionary Council (GRC)
- Karen Read – Biowatch SA

### **Food Price Sector:**

- Imraahn Mukaddam – Consumer Fair

### **Role of the National Coordinating Committee:**

As discussed in commissions, the role of the National Coordinating Committee will be to:

- Overall national coordination of the campaign
- Strategic planning of the campaign
- Ensure national networking of local campaigning
- Oversee research to inform campaign
- Ensure coordinated use of organisation's existing strengths to feed into campaign. Eg. diffusion of existing popular education material into campaign
- Coordinate the development of popular education materials
- Develop and coordinate national media, such as the campaign website, film etc
- Develop and implement a national media/publicity strategy

### **Local Campaign Coordination and Alliance Building**

The crucial thrust of the campaign must be from below. Thus localised alliance and campaign building should take a flexible approach that is suited to local realities. However, key common approaches that will be undertaken will include:

- Identifying local actors and organisations that could play a role in the campaign; going to them and inviting them to be a part of the campaign and understand the role they could play; invite them to a local forum to network and plan with others who are part of the campaign
- Local forums that bring together actors in the campaign for education, planning and coordination
- Local food sovereignty festivals
- Local education
- Documentary screenings

In order to ensure this local campaign and alliance building, organisations also indicated what they can offer to the campaign, in terms of training, knowledge, learning resources and so on. These offers made by organisations will be networked to ensure coordination and exchanges to spread these resources according to where they are needed.

In addition the commissions also discussed a drafts set of guiding principles for the food sovereignty campaign and alliance. It was agreed that the following are the principles to guide the alliance, in local and national campaign building:

## **Commitments by Participating Organisations and Movements to Campaign Building**

It was agreed that for the campaign to be grassroots-driven it is not only up to the national coordinating committee to 'run' the campaign, but organisations should make commitments to be co-responsible and lead on the campaigning. This includes contributing time, research capacity, setting up local forums, playing communication roles within the campaign, reporting on work done, offering existing skills and capacities to the campaign, mobilising around food price and land and agrarian reform, and working in a collective way.

### **10. Food Sovereignty Campaign Guiding Principles**

As organisations and movements coming together to collectively advance the South African Food Sovereignty Campaign, those participating will commit to the following principles to ensure its strengthening and achievement of its objectives:

1. To ensure collective leadership and co-responsibility in building the campaign, in the interests of building a united force for food sovereignty in South Africa
2. To undertake the work to implement and develop the campaign as mandated by the Programme of Action (POA)
3. To commit to democratic and open decision-making at all times in relation to the campaign
4. To act on the mandate from and be accountable to the participating organisations
5. For all participating organisations to actively contribute to the campaign, in terms of human resources, financial resources where possible, knowledge and capacity
6. To build international, regional and African solidarity with other struggles

### **11. Way Forward**

After the reading and input on the final declaration of the Food Sovereignty Campaign Assembly (see below), Vishwas Satgar summarised the immediate Way Forward from the Assembly for the campaign:

- Preparation and distribution of the Assembly report in the next couple of weeks
- All representatives to report back to their organisations, using the Assembly report

- Develop campaign website: coordinating committee must ensure development of the website and social media
- Coordinating Committee to have its first strategic planning meeting 21-22 March 2015
- Local forces to plan and initiate local food sovereignty forums in communities.
- Need to plan how to undertake local launches of the campaign
- Work to begin on researching and conceptualising the Food Sovereignty Act
- Another Food Sovereignty Campaign Assembly by the end of the year to be held in order to look back on what we have achieved for the year and further plan

Simon Mbata from the SEM Convening Committee then closed the Assembly by thanking all who attended and those who organised the Assembly and made it possible.

## **Viva South African Food Sovereignty Campaign! Viva!**

### **12. Declaration of the South African Food Sovereignty Campaign and Alliance**

At a historic Food Sovereignty Assembly, from 28<sup>th</sup> February till 1<sup>st</sup> March 2015, over 50 organisations representing the hungry, the landless and the exploited of our country – involved in agrarian, water and land transformation, environmental justice, small scale farming, cooperatives, the solidarity economy movement, waste pickers, the unemployed and activists campaigning against increasing food prices – gathered in Johannesburg to plan the initiation of the South African Food Sovereignty Campaign and Alliance.

We came together at the Assembly through our shared understanding that we have a crisis-ridden corporate and globalised food system that is responsible for worsening social, health and climate challenges, and which is coinciding with increasing state failure in relation to regulating our food regime and ensuring much needed agrarian transformation.

Moreover, the climate crisis is worsening, without any genuine solutions coming to the fore from the South African state, the corporate-controlled food system and the United Nations. Climate shocks are already impacting negatively on our food system with volatile food prices, droughts, heavy rainfall and flooding. This necessitates advancing food sovereignty, to ensure our food and water needs are not compromised and ordinary citizens have the means to meet food production and consumption needs on their terms in the midst of the climate crisis.

South Africa is also experiencing food riots often times linked to ‘service delivery protests’, 14 million citizens experiencing hunger, malnutrition, obesity, desperation by aspirant small

scale farmers, claims for justice by the landless, increasing precarity of farmworkers, and restricted marine rights for small scale fishers. The Food Sovereignty Assembly affirmed the need to directly confront these challenges through a unifying national campaign. Such a struggle-driven national Food Sovereignty Campaign is unprecedented in the context of South Africa and has drawn inspiration from local food sovereignty practices and from the rising international movements and alliances championing food sovereignty in different parts of the world, in particular La Via Campesina and the Alliance for Food Sovereignty in Africa.

Our campaign seeks to unify struggles on the ground and progressive social forces to ensure food sovereignty is placed on the national agenda and is an alternative way forward for our food system. We are not simply calling for technical solutions for households to access food as encapsulated in the government's recently proposed *Food Security and Nutrition Policy and Implementation Plan*. We reject the latter and instead are calling for the deep transformation of our food system by breaking the control of food corporations, repositioning the state to realise the Constitutional right to food and as part of creating the conditions and space for the emergence of food sovereignty alternatives from below. In this context mass popular power is essential and hence we welcome the message of support from the NUMSA-led United Front.

### **Attack The Failing Corporate Controlled Food System and Agrarian Structure**

The campaign will challenge the current unjust, unsafe, and unsustainable food system that is dominant in South Africa. We will be guided by a programme of action consisting of phases of rolling action to confront the key contradictions of our food system, namely rising food prices and corporate control, declining nutrition, increasing use of GMOs and corporate control of seeds, lack of land, water, and agrarian reform, destructiveness of industrial agriculture, labour exploitation on farms, and lack of finance for small scale farmers and cooperatives.

To build food sovereignty we need to (1) challenge the country's unequal agrarian structure; (2) call for land audits at local, provincial and national levels; (3) secure land allocations for food sovereignty in villages, towns and cities; (4) win society over to the idea of one farmer-one farm; (5) end the conversion of agricultural land to game farms for the rich; (6) call on churches that own large amounts of land to make it available to the landless (7) struggle against chiefs that stand in the way of land usage, distribution and food sovereignty; and, linked to this, (8) push for and affirm the rights of women to land, the people who produce most of the world's food.

We will address various demands to capital and the state and we will use our power in our communities, in our farming enterprises, cooperatives, in the streets, and through international solidarity.

We will:

- use symbolic tactics such as public tribunals to spotlight corruption and unfairness in providing finance for small scale farmers and cooperatives, expose greed-driven food price increases and unhealthy food;
- consider dumping rotten produce at government institutions to expose the rot and corruption in such institutions and the failure to address the needs of small scale farmers and community traders;
- march against bread corporations, boycott GMO foods, unhealthy foods and corporate food retailers that persist in selling these foods;
- promote occupation of idle and unused land for agroecological food production;
- demand that 10% of GDP is spent on food sovereignty development;
- demand that the media stop advertising unhealthy foods and show its commitment to healthy and nutritious food for South Africa;
- demand consistent inspections and penalties for labour violations to ensure decent working conditions for farmworkers.

### **Advance Food Sovereignty From Below**

In response to the contradictions of the food system, as manifested in our widespread hunger, we have answers! We believe that small scale farmers, cooperatives, community markets, as part of the solidarity economy, can feed our people, and through the campaign we will promote and highlight practical examples of this. We will highlight and promote the building of seed banks and the defence of local seed systems to ensure that we as farmers and communities control our seed, and therefore life. Through our experiences we will show that agroecology rather than industrial agriculture can feed our communities and country, and nourish our environment. We will highlight, promote and celebrate existing agroecology production that is happening in the country, and conduct learning exchanges to these sites.

We will experiment with and develop alternative forms of finance that are controlled by small scale farmers and cooperatives themselves, including solidarity economy funds and localised saving schemes for productive investment in food sovereignty alternatives. We will champion farmworker rights and models of worker cooperatives in production and consumption to develop worker control in agriculture and the food system. We will uncover, revive and highlight traditional, indigenous and healthy nutrition alternatives that are grounded in local ecologies, cultural tastes, and diversity. A recipe book will be developed to promote these nutritious alternatives.

We will map and link small scale farmers, cooperatives and communities to bring about agrarian transformation and build critical mass. Social media like a food sovereignty app and the Food Sovereignty Campaign webpage will be utilised in this regard to mobilise societal support.

By mobilising local networks we will engage in popular awareness-raising about food sovereignty and the need for organisations and communities to publicly declare their

commitments to food sovereignty. We will capture these declarations in a national directory and as part of an ongoing campaigning thrust to build food sovereignty spaces. We will harness community media, online social media, popular education resources, and face-to-face meetings for commitments to food sovereignty.

We will hold food sovereignty festivals to celebrate our local practices of seed sovereignty and preservation, indigenous plant varieties, arts, crafts and culture, local foods and produce from cooperatives, solidarity economy enterprises and small scale farmers. Such festivals will also serve as socialised markets, learning spaces, and communication tools in our society.

To affirm the Constitutional right to food in our society and to shift state power in favour of food sovereignty and to regulate capital, we will champion a **Food Sovereignty Act** that can control food prices, provide protections to small scale farmers and cooperatives, ensure a socialised market space in the national economy (through, for example, labelling food sovereignty products and proper nutrition labelling of all food ), create participatory mechanisms for food producers and consumers to shape the food sovereignty system, de-concentrate the agrarian structure of South Africa, ensure one farmer one farm, enforce nutrition standards, protect indigenous seeds, plant varieties and the free sharing of seed, and ensure South Africa becomes GMO free by banning GMOs. We will challenge the property clause to ensure access to land. In addition to the Act, we will pursue the implementation of local government regulations and policies to promote the development of food sovereignty. To achieve this we will research international experiences, draft and champion these instruments from below.

We will champion disciplined and commonly agreed actions that coincide with:

- Human Rights Day: 21 March
- International Children's Day : 1 June
- Passing of the infamous 1913 Land Act: 19<sup>th</sup> June
- International Food Day: 16<sup>th</sup> October

### **Coordinating Committee and Alliance**

The FSA elected a representative coordinating committee from the various sectors championing food sovereignty. This committee will coordinate the campaign, facilitate grassroots-driven actions, build capacity and communicate the message of the campaign. The coordinating committee will work in accordance with the principles agreed to at the Assembly and in a manner that builds the Alliance across the country, in various sectors and in communities in a bottom up and democratic manner.

We give a mandate to the coordinating committee to develop and finalise the programme of actions for the priority campaign themes for 2015, namely high food prices and lack of land and agrarian reform, with input from grassroots Alliance partners.



### 13. Photos

