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## **Editorial**

### **Special Focus: Where to for the SAFSC?**

The South African Food Sovereignty Campaign (SAFSC) has begun a discussion on its future direction. The context for this is that the SAFSC has done some great work and made significant achievements over the last year-and-a-half, and in order for it to grow and strengthen all those participating in the campaign have to clarify what the best way to do this is. In addition, COPAC has acted as the secretariat since the launch of the campaign, undertaking the key national organising work. Although COPAC will remain a staunch participant in the campaign and continue to provide all the support that it can, it can no longer continue to play the leading role. A number of organisations, movements and initiatives have been building the campaign in local spaces as well, and this point we now find ourselves at provides us with an exciting opportunity to have a collective discussion, and reach a collective decision, on the way forward for the SAFSC.

Below is a discussion document that was prepared by COPAC to kick off the discussion on the way forward for the SAFSC, and which was discussed at the last National Coordinating Committee (NCC) meeting in July 2016. At this meeting there was a consensus on institutionalising the SAFSC. However, this position still has to be clarified: Does it mean transforming the SAFSC into a movement or does it mean institutionalising the SAFSC as a campaign with its own constitution, bank account etc? It was also agreed that the discussion has to be engaged with at all levels in the campaign in order to come to a widely accepted decision. This requires that all organisations and movements in the SAFSC undertake discussion on the future of the campaign (see box to the right).

Two responses have already been written to the COPAC proposal, which are under the SA Food Sovereignty Campaign section of this newsletter.

### **Calling All Organisations in the SAFSC to Deliberate On the Way Forward For the Campaign!**

As organisations please read the discussion document below, which includes questions to assist partner organisations deliberate on options for SAFSC's way forward. We look forward to all activists, partners, forums and so on discussing the attached document!

The deadline for feedback is the end of September. Please send responses to the discussion document in writing to [copac@icon.co.za](mailto:copac@icon.co.za). As many of these responses as possible will be published in the SAFSC News, SEM Newsletter, on the webpage, Google list, and so forth.



## COPAC Perspective Document: Way Forward for SAFSC

### The objectives of this document are to:

- Open up debate within the SAFSC on its way forward
- Take stock of strengths and weaknesses of SAFSC
- Surface options for the way forward
- Prompt a deliberation on pros and cons of the options

### 1. SAFSC achievements and challenges

#### 1.1 Achievements

- Tribunal on Food Prices, Landlessness and Hunger – which placed food corporations and the ANC state on trial for perpetrating a crime against humanity; the hunger suffered by 14 million South Africans.
- Food Sovereignty Activist Schools – built capacity amongst campaign partners to strengthen the campaign through sharing education tools on food sovereignty, agro-ecology, solidarity economy, worker cooperatives and seed saving. Through food sovereignty activism we have married various antisystemic alternatives and are evolving a South African approach to food sovereignty and more.
- Learning exchanges – encouraged sharing of skills, experiences and practice between campaign partners.
- Food Sovereignty Festival – showcased and celebrated food sovereignty alternatives, practices and knowledge.
- Drought speak out – provided a platform for small-scale farmers and affected communities to speak on the drought, and to highlight the inadequate response of government during the drought. It brought together farmers from affected provinces, from the region, movements and community organisations. It also enabled solidarity links with mining affected communities and resistance to coal as a fossil fuel. Ultimately food sovereignty was championed as response to the drought.
- Bread march – Mobilised over 2000 people to march against rising bread and food prices. The government was called to prioritise the plight of the poor by promoting a food commons with an emphasis of developing urban food gardens and farms that are cultivated on the principle of agroecology, food sovereignty and the solidarity economy. Called out corporations profiteering from food and bread prices. This has gained support on social media, in the national media and has raised the profile of the

SAFSC. The Human Rights Commission is keen to take these issues forward and Wits University is also keen for a dialogue with SAFSC to take forward the memorandum.

- Built solidarity and networks – between 50+ campaign partners, potential to contribute to building the climate justice movement and potential for numerous community based forums to take root and lead food sovereignty processes. Moreover, there is immense potential to build a Southern Africa food sovereignty Alliance or network.
- Forum building – campaign partners have initiated or strengthened existing forums for sharing knowledge, discussing challenges and promoting the alternative.
- Developed a knowledge commons: Activist guides and seed saving guides to promote the Food Sovereignty and the Solidarity Economy. Launched a SAFSC webpage and social media accounts to profile SAFSC partners, promote networking and disseminate knowledge.

#### 1.2 Challenges:

- Resource constraints (especially funding) – funding has been brought into the campaign by partner organisations advancing a priority they want to champion on the campaign platform and which is then commonly agreed, through the annual Assembly. As a result, the campaign has not raised resources directly as the campaign but through the credibility and links of partner organisations willing to support the campaign. A good example is COPAC. COPAC has its funders for its programs and it has been keen to champion a food sovereignty approach to the climate crisis. It raised its own funds for this and secured support from SAFSC for this to be a priority for campaigning in 2016. SAFSC's resource constraints can be overcome if it believes it has its own credible record and can leverage funds directly. This is also related to how it chooses to operate going forward.
- Mobilising grassroots – partner organisations are uneven in their commitments to the SAFSC. Some are more committed than others and have gone further to deepen SAFSC alliances, build local food sovereignty forums, mobilise their communities, draw on local resources, and have actively utilised activist training received to advance the food sovereignty campaign and its priorities. Others have not done this despite receiving intensive activist training over the past two years. Why is this? Why are some activists able to mobilise their organisations and communities and others not? Answering these questions are also crucial to determine whether the SAFSC has a future

or not. If activists from partner organisations do not mobilise their organisations and communities then the SAFSC is merely a national platform and has no rootedness. Without building community based food sovereignty forums as the backbone of the campaign SAFSC cannot go forward as a grassroots campaign. Put differently, SAFSC will not have a grassroots presence and will not be championed from below.

## 2. Options for SAFSC

**2.1 Dissolve the campaign:** The campaign draws to a close, affirming it has placed food sovereignty on the national and local agenda in many communities. Resources have been developed and activist capacities built for things to move forward from below. Partner organisations continue to function outside the campaign, and within the networks that have been developed.

**2.2 Institutionalise SAFSC:** As a movement or as a cooperative with members and structures of activity with various decision making powers (eg. annual national assembly, board, forums, organisations and organisers) and categories of membership (eg. Organisational member, forum member, individual member, finance member, worker owner, and volunteer member). The institution will operate through various sources of funding, eg. donor funding, organisational contributions, membership fees and decentralised organisational funding.

**2.3 Keep it as a loose alliance:** SAFSC remains as it is, but the secretariat rotates. See attached guidelines for how decisions are made, funding managed and roles defined. These guideline have been developed in previous NCC meetings and need to be formally adopted after further deliberation.

**2.4 Decentralised and virtual driven alliance:** The SAFSC disbands as a loose national alliance. This means there is not NCC, secretariat or annual assembly. Instead it maintains a virtual national network through its social media platform (google list, Webpage, facebook page, twitter presence etc) and operates as a decentralised, loose alliance. Interested partners promote food sovereignty initiatives, share information and call for solidarity through the virtual platform. The virtual platform coordinates us all. For example, if organisation X decides it wants help with setting up a seedbank it then draws on the virtual network for assistance. Or if organisation Y hosts activist training on food sovereignty it can invite others on the virtual network to assist.

## 3. Questions to Assist in Discussing and Assessing the Options:

Interrogate each option with the following questions:

1. What does this option achieve?
2. what are the positives of this option?
3. what are the negatives or downsides of this option?
4. What is missing from this option?
5. What is required for this to happen?
6. What option does your organisation prefer?



## **National News**

### **Worker Cooperative Pathways Workshop Held in Johannesburg**

*Andrew Bennie*



In late July 2016, a workshop on worker cooperative pathways in South Africa was held at Wits University. The project is being led by Professor Erik Olin Wright, a leading thinker on constructing alternatives to capitalism. His overall project is called Real Utopias, and is aimed at exploring, explaining and advancing ways to move beyond capitalism. One way, of course, is through worker cooperatives. This project has thus involved exploring concrete cases of worker cooperative building and the paths that lead to them, and the directions in which they lead, in countries like Argentina, Spain, and now, South Africa.

The workshop involved the presentation of case studies of individual worker cooperatives, or cooperatives aiming to move towards this model, in South Africa. The overall picture for cooperatives in South Africa is, as we know, challenging. For example, the head of the cooperatives unit in the Department of Small Business Development, Geoffrey Ndumo, attended the workshop and presented a government perspective on cooperative development

in South Africa. According to him, government has so far spent R2 billion on trying to support cooperatives, yet the overwhelming majority of the over 180 000 cooperatives established in South Africa have failed. The government is trying to address these challenges through a new set of legislative reforms and new interventions, but it is not yet clear whether these will be sufficient to overcome the problems facing cooperatives in South Africa.

This makes further understanding the practical pathways, challenges and issues faced by cooperatives more pressing. The presented case studies looked at one of South Africa's most successful cooperatives, the Fingerprints Worker Cooperative. Fingerprints is a printing cooperative that was established in the late 1980s, providing printing services to political organisations and NGOs. It continues to provide printing services to civil society organisations, as well as broader commercial printing. It has existed for over 20 years and has developed innovative and sophisticated ways of dealing with finance, democracy and membership in the

cooperative (for more information on the cooperative, see Issue 13 of the SE newsletter).

A case study was also presented of a producer-type food cooperative, Ethical Cooperative, which is trying to develop deeper cooperative practice by converting to a worker cooperative. This case presents interesting ways in which to develop producer control over the cooperative, and closer ties to consumers, possibly through membership. A case study was also presented of an agricultural cooperative that is working hard at developing proper cooperative procedures, practice and member control, but which faces challenges in developing independence, financial sustainability, and a path to food sovereignty while operating in the constraints imposed by the current arrangements of the agricultural sector in South Africa. A case of a failed recycling worker cooperative was also presented, in order to learn about the challenges faced by worker cooperatives in trying to create employment for retrenched workers.

The workshop was a space of solid engagement that created the space for thorough engagement in thinking about ways to advance worker cooperatives as part of a broader strategy to move to a human-centred and just economy and society – a world beyond capitalism. Work is now being done to produce a book using the papers presented, as a practical follow-up to the ground-breaking book published in 2014 *The Solidarity Economy Alternative: Emerging Theory and Practice*. The book, which will be titled *Worker Coops workshop: Cooperatives in South Africa- Pathways to the Solidarity Economy*, will provide an insight into worker cooperative practice in South Africa as a way to deepen efforts at advancing the solidarity economy.



## **International News**

### **Worker co-ops created over 8,000 new entry-level jobs in Spain**



The year 2015 has seen 4% more worker co-operatives being set up in Spain. The new worker co-operatives have provided 8,533 new jobs. The figures were revealed at the General Assembly of the Spanish Confederation of Worker Co-operatives in Murcia (Confederación Española de Cooperativas de Trabajo Asociado - COCETA).

In addition, the jobs generated by worker co-operatives are more likely to be stable, long-term positions. “In terms of the type of contract, in 82% of cases jobs are for full working days,” said Juan Antonio Pedreño, president of COCETA. New co-operatives also tend to attract more young people. According to COCETA’s figures, 80% of the employees are under 35 years. Spain also leads in Europe in terms of enterprises saved by having employees taking over the firm.

Around 40 enterprises in difficult financial circumstances were converted into worker co-operatives in 2015. COCETA expects that by the end of 2015 over 1,500 new cooperatives would have been created in Spain, providing 10,000 new jobs, an increase of 35% from 2015.

*Article Source:* <http://ica.coop/en/media/news/worker-co-ops-created-over-8000-new-entry-level-jobs-spain>

# **The South African Food Sovereignty Campaign**

## **Response On the Way Forward for the SAFSC**

*Patrick Tshikana*

### **Introduction**

The SAFSC has achieved a lot since its launch in February 2015 and has made a name for its self. The current state of the food value chain in our country calls for an even stronger and vibrant campaign. That is why it is very important that we do not drop the ball regardless of the changes we make for the campaign. We have as a campaign, through the work we have done and continue to do, reached a point where the working class and the poor in our country will depend on SAFSC for mobilisation and challenging the greed and profiteering of the big monopoly capital in the food sector. We must continue to raise our voice and talk about those things many will think about. We must capacitate our people to be self sufficient and be active participants in the production, distribution and consumption of our produce. We should and cannot rest until a dream of a democratic food system is reached in this country. As the SAFSC we believe that the plague of hunger can be defeated. Failure for the South African Food Sovereignty Campaign is not an option.

### **COPAC as the Secretariat**

It would be ignorance of the highest order if we fail to acknowledge the pivotal role played by COPAC as the secretariat of the campaign. It is through the work done by COPAC that we managed to achieve everything we have achieved in such a small space of time. I must however state that we must avoid moving from one secretariat to another. It is important that SAFSC becomes independent as a campaign and I don't think it is correct that we should continue looking for other organisations to be secretariats of the campaign. It is my view that we should take the campaign to a place where it is self-sufficient and has its own stuff and office. I want to persuade comrades to be open to this possibility.

### **Option for SAFSC**

I suggest that we opt for option 2.2 of the perspective document, with the addition that the campaign continues as it is doing now until such time that it is able to run on its own. The responsibility of the NCC will be to draw up a roadmap with clear deliverables that will get the

campaign to a position of self-reliance. As I mentioned above, we need not look for another secretariat during this period but rely on the proven diligence of COPAC.

*Patrick Tshikana is a member of the SAFSC National Coordinating Committee (NCC) and Eastern Cape Provincial Secretary of the United Front. He can be contacted at [ubuhletrading@yahoo.com](mailto:ubuhletrading@yahoo.com).*

## **The Rural Landless Workers' Movement (MST) in Brazil: What Lessons for the SAFSC?**

*Andrew Bennie*

As the SAFSC embarks on a discussion to clarify its future, it is worth reflecting on other experiences of forces from below that have built power and the ability to pose significant challenges to the existing social, land and agricultural order. This article was thus written as a response to the perspectives document on the way forward for the SAFSC drafted by COPAC.

The Rural Landless Workers' Movement (MST) in Brazil is the worlds largest land movement that has made tremendous gains in its 30-year history. As a movement of the landless, it has fought for comprehensive land and agrarian reform in a country with one of the most concentrated patterns of land ownership in the world, together with one of the highest levels of social inequality. Through its movement struggles and tactics of occupying land, it has resettled over 400 000 families. While intense inequality in land ownership remains, it has therefore made significant progress in challenging existing power relations in Brazil, and it continues to mobilise and practice land occupations as its key tactic in reclaiming land for the social good.

In June of this year I had the privilege of spending some time with the MST in Brazil for research purposes. While the context of Brazil and the MST itself is very different to South Africa, its experiences, achievements and challenges offer some lessons and insights that can be useful for thinking about movement and campaign

building towards food sovereignty in South Africa. As we discuss in the SAFSC what strategic direction and form it should be taking in the near future, learning from how the MST has organised itself and built such an influential and powerful movement can enrich how we think about this task. Due to limited space, I will only focus on three aspects: the organisational structure of the MST, popular education better known as 'formation', and practical building of alternatives.

The MST grew out of the suffering and hardships of the rural landless themselves, who through cooperative relationships with support organisations built their consciousness and confidence to act as agents for emancipation, and undertook the bold act of occupying a latifundi (large estate) in 1984. In short, this occupation sparked the Rural Landless Workers' Movement of Brazil, which reproduced this tactic of occupation as its foremost mode of directly confronting the powerful forces that undermine the wellbeing of the rural poor in Brazil.



However, the MST did not build itself into the large and powerful movement that it is today by this tactic alone. It also deliberately and conscientiously built a coherent movement. Today, it describes the structure of the movement through what it calls 'organicity'. Organicity essentially refers to how the MST is structured in a way that ensures that every aspect of life of the people in the movement is integrated into and addressed in how the movement functions. At the base of the MST are the people living in the encampments and settlements. Encampments are where people have occupied land and are still fighting to win the land. People could find themselves living in such camps for up to eight years before they win the land; such is the commitment of those who stay for this length of time. Settlements are where the land has been won and families have been officially moved onto the land and have legal status there.

Every encampment and settlement is divided into what the movement calls 'sectors', which are responsible for organising all the aspects of social life in the settlement or camp: education, health, political training ('formation'), gender, infrastructure, and so on. Encampments and settlements are also organised at the local level by what the MST calls 'militants', organisers who are so politically committed to the struggle for land and social transformation in Brazil that they spend all their time as activists mobilising and organising the landless in encampments and settlements on a daily basis. To ensure linkages and coordination between all encampments and settlements, representatives from sectors meet at regional level and elect representatives from each sector to attend state-level coordination meetings. The representatives of each sector must always be one female and one male. From state level, representatives from the sectors (again, equal female and male) and militants are represented at the National Coordination. This national coordination has linked to it a reading group, which is comprised of twelve people and whose role it is to keep studying the agrarian and political economy situation in order to provide the National Coordination with up-to-date and relevant information to inform its decision making processes. The national secretariat, which is based in Sao Paulo City and undertakes overall national coordination work, reports to this National Coordination. The National Coordination meets every forty to fifty days.

There are then a few further successive levels of MST structure that culminates in the National Congress, where the overall strategic direction of the movement for the next five years is discussed and decided. At its last congress in 2014, 15 000 people attended! This illustrates the infrastructure and capacity that the movement has, but it is also aided by its overall structure of 'organicity' and relative decentralisation: the organisation of the congress is made easier by the fact that each state coordinates itself, including the representatives that attend the congress, each state brings its own tents for accommodation, own kitchen infrastructure and food, and coordinates its own catering all through the congress. It is thus the actual struggles of the landless that drive the MST, but these struggles are in turn integrated into an organic whole that ensures local struggles for land are organically part of a broader struggle that is able to shift power on a national scale.





A second important feature of the movement is that its high level of coordination and coherence is aided by the MST's deep process of constant political training, or what they call 'formation'. In the MST, learning and deepening intellectual capacity is a constant and central practice. The movement is not guided purely by ideology and political outlook, but is informed also by constant intellectual analysis as a basis for guiding strategy and decisions. In the MST everyone has the capacity to be an intellectual, rather than a small layer of leaders with perceived superior intellectual and strategic capacities, as in the vanguardist tradition. The MST refers to this education as 'formation'. Formation is an on-going process and begins in preparation for the land occupation and continues through the occupation. Formation is not just about politically educating participants in the MST, it is about inculcating a person and a world view – a socialist world view, if you will. The result of this formation and the collective struggle is that the MST is strengthened by the fact that most participants in the movement see a clear connection between their own struggle for land and the social transformation of Brazil, which adds further significance to their own struggles. Linked to this point is that, although it is an on-going challenge to entrench in practice, gender equality is officially taken very seriously in the MST and efforts are made in the camps to practically enact this principle. I would thus suggest that one of the reasons for the strong sense of identification of people with the movement itself is a result of the personal and social liberation that they experience within the MST.

This first and second feature I have discussed combine to essentially mean that, firstly, the MST is a highly democratic organisation whose direction and action is

driven by its base (organicity). Secondly, this base, and the entire structure of the MST, is constantly involved in a process of education and intellectual training so that the operations of the MST is based on sound analysis and firm commitment to radical social transformation.

Thus a third important feature of the MST is that it does not only focus on resistance struggles in terms of the struggle for land. It links the land struggle with the immediate and longer-term struggle to actively construct alternative relations of production and social life. Linked to the point about formation and political education, daily practice is thus guided by building visions of an alternative society, and enacting structures aimed at making this possible, like agroecology, cooperatives, and so on. Of course, challenges exist in this regard and progress is very uneven, but developing visions of an alternative society are important in reproducing the sense of purpose and coherence in the movement.

The MST is not perfect and faces challenges, as any movement would, and operates in a different context to South Africa, but I suggest from the above points that in considering the way forward for the SAFSC, attention should be given to, firstly, what the optimal structure for the SAFSC will be to provide a way to practically link local needs, challenges and efforts into a broader struggle that links the local practices in a way that organically integrates them and builds power to confront the broader social injustice of the food system in South Africa. In turn, is there enough commitment and capacity in the SAFSC to continue to build on this basis? Secondly, ensuring that the workings of the SAFSC continue to be grounded in knowledge and consciousness-building that links local and direct issues to issues of broader

social transformation. This work should aim at not just advancing a consciousness rooted in emancipation, but daily emancipatory practice as well. Thirdly, attention should be given to continuing to advance, coordinate and link people's alternatives that actively build and show that another, just, and emancipatory food system is possible.

## Activist Diary: Mzimasi Ndongeni



**Name:** Mzimasi "Cde Mzie" Ndongeni  
**Place:** Mgungundlovu Location, Mount Frere, Eastern Cape  
**Organization:** Mount Frere Food Sovereignty Forum

I am Cde Mzie, a revolutionary social activist because I undertake, as part of my activism, work on a daily basis to create alternatives to the current capitalist food production and distribution. I am consciously aiming at radical, comprehensive and fundamental changes in the current social order that can truly be brought by a "change from the roots". I believe this change can be brought not by loosely organised social activities but sustained and coordinated social mobilisation that seeks to facilitate this change through a range of players engaged in interrelated and complementary activities.

Throughout my political life, as an active member of both the ANC and SACP I have felt strongly about the plight of the rural poor and have this concern about how I can be part of a collective that is dedicated to change the situation. It is this conviction and appreciation of the need for social change that has in the recent years put me in the forefront of the practical struggle to create this change by participating in building a community from outside the current political establishment.

In November 2015 I then came in contact with activists from COPAC and started to be directly involved in the

South African Food Sovereignty Campaign (SAFSC). I attended workshops, activist schools, an agroecology school and SAFSC national events as part of my activism to raise awareness, nature and grow alternatives, and demand a change from the food value chain.



I am one of the co-founders and the chairperson of the Mount Frere Food Sovereignty Forum. Besides having attended all the SAFSC national events, we have recently held a two-day local agroecology school attended by at least 19 small-scale farmers from 9 villages in Mount Frere. The school dealt with issues of garden design, land preparation, soil fertilisation, and planting and irrigation, applying agroecology principles.

For the campaign to be truly grassroots and appeal to the general public, especially the youth, with the unemployment rate at 62% in Alfred Nzo region, it requires a clear, well coordinated strategy that is appealing to this vulnerable but important segment of our society. The challenge we face as a campaign is resources in terms of infrastructure to make our campaign effective and appealing in the light of the current socioeconomic conditions. As activists we should always look at what we have in common rather than what we don't as a basis for joint action. A social order is not a divine creation but a work of humans.



## **The Worker Cooperative Campaign**

### **Worker Cooperatives: Big 'Yes' for South African Waste Pickers Association (SAWPA)**

*Musa Chamane*



Due to a number of reports published in South Africa critiquing cooperative failures, the South African Waste Pickers Association (SAWPA) decided to be intensively trained by COPAC specifically on worker-based cooperatives. SAWPA agreed to adopt the worker-based cooperative model in 2009 during their national conference but there was a limited understanding on what this really meant. The SAWPA national meeting of 2015 resolved that training of the workers or waste pickers has to happen to bring them up to speed on what is meant by worker-based cooperatives. This was partly due to the shape of the projects that SAWPA had been doing in different regions. Some projects had become a one-person show while some became something else that one cannot even be understood. Therefore, training became crucial.

In April 2016, 15 SAWPA members convened at Stay City Hotel near Johannesburg to receive training from COPAC. The training was over 5 days and it covered very important subjects like workers becoming their own bosses and workers sharing the profits. What was most surprising was that some big enterprises are owned by workers as worker cooperatives. This training has proven that the way of creating employment or empowering people was mainly through cooperatives.

Failure of cooperatives is caused by different mistakes that each cooperative adopts. If a cooperative is formed for the purpose of accessing funding, that cooperative is likely to fail if funding is not accessed and the members do not understand nor are committed to the cooperative form. It became clear that cooperatives should be formed by members with common goals and vision. If a member is thinking about gold while others are thinking about

diamond that means that the cooperative is likely to fail because the members' motivations are not common.

During the training there was a lot of "huh" and "mmmh" from participants confirming that there is new information that is being received. Members made commitments or pledges that they will change the model that they have adopted because it did not suit the model that is 100% fairly beneficial to all the members. There were a number of questions raised by members ranging from membership to budgeting and to operations. I am happy to say that members came out of that training being empowered enough to take their cooperatives to another level. COPAC made it clear that the training is structured in a way that those who have been trained can train others as well. Manuals were donated by COPAC to SAWPA and made it clear that they should go forth and train others.

Cooperatives' failure rate amongst waste pickers has been reduced because members understand why cooperatives are formed and for what purpose. SAWPA is busy registering cooperatives with government and government training is not sufficient to empower cooperative members. Most people who were part of the training have attended government training on cooperatives and it was felt that, yes, it is a good start but it's not sufficient to make a cooperative a success. Others felt that if every business in this country could be managed as cooperatives, it would mean that the economy would be shared fairly amongst the citizens.

The training was an eye opener even for myself. I am not a member of any cooperative but the knowledge I got from this training cannot be quantified. It would be ideal for everyone in this country to understand the cooperative model, which will encourage people to think as a collective and move away from individualistic ideas and self-gain.

*"United we stand, divided we fall."*

*Musa Chamane is the Waste Campaign Manager at the environmental justice organisation, groundWork. Through this work he also provides support to SAWPA. He can be contacted at [musa@groundwork.org.za](mailto:musa@groundwork.org.za).*

## **Activist Resources to Build the Solidarity Economy From Below**

**Friends of the Earth Report – Farming for the Future: Organic and Agroecological Solutions to Feed the World**

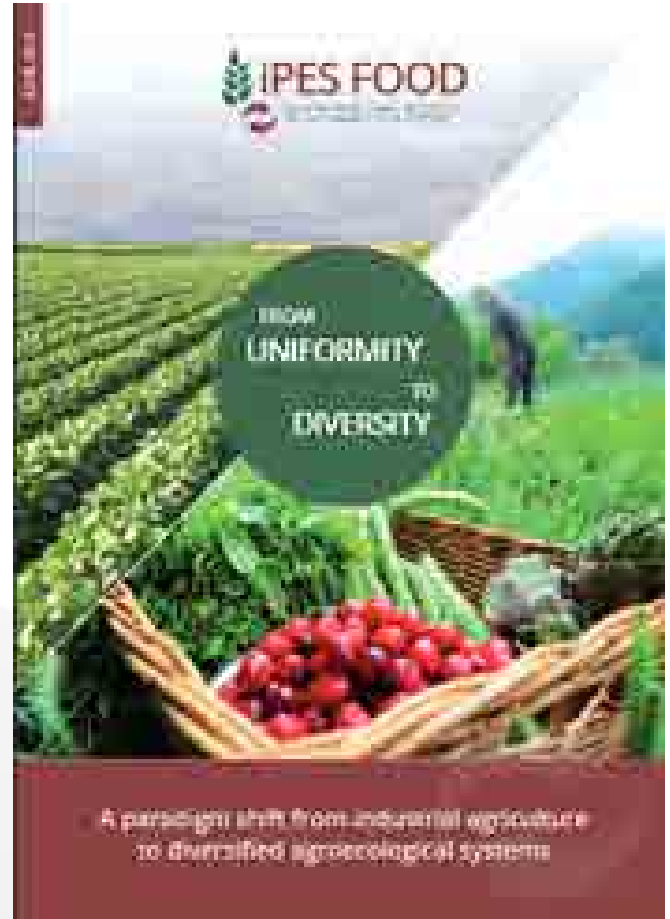


The science is clear: feeding the world sustainably requires that we protect the ecological resources that are essential for producing food now and in the future. What's more, research consistently shows that hunger is not a problem of overall supply of food, but results from poverty, lack of democracy and unequal access to land, water and other resources. This report shows that rather than producing more food under unequal and ecologically destructive conditions, the solution to hunger hinges on creating a more sustainable, democratic and fair food system for all.

Together with the report, very useful and informative video presentations of the key issues in the report can also be watched and downloaded, and used for popular education, at:

<http://www.foe.org/projects/food-and-technology/farming-for-the-future>

## **How to Leave Industrial Agriculture Behind: Report by Food Systems Experts Urges Global Shift Towards Agroecology**



Input-intensive crop monocultures and industrial-scale feedlots must be consigned to the past in order to put global food systems onto sustainable footing, according to the world's foremost experts on food security, agroecosystems and nutrition. The solution is to diversify agriculture and reorient it around ecological practices, whether the starting point is highly industrialised agriculture or subsistence farming in the world's poorest countries, the experts argue in this report. The report was compiled by the International Panel of Experts on sustainable Food Systems (IPES-Food), led by Olivier De Schutter, former UN Special Rapporteur on the right to food.

The report, titled *From Uniformity to Diversity: A Paradigm Shift From Industrial Agriculture to Diversified Agroecological Systems*, explores the potential for a shift to occur from current food systems, characterised by industrial modes of agriculture, to systems based around diversified agroecological farming. Based on a

review of the latest evidence, the report identifies the major potential for diversified agroecological systems to succeed where current systems are failing, namely in reconciling concerns such as food security, environmental protection, nutritional adequacy and social equity. This report also asks what is keeping industrial agriculture in place, and what would be required in order to spark a shift towards diversified agroecological systems.

The report can be freely downloaded at:

[http://www.ipes-food.org/images/Reports/UniformityToDiversity\\_ExecSummary.pdf](http://www.ipes-food.org/images/Reports/UniformityToDiversity_ExecSummary.pdf)

## **Video: Building Local Agriculture Through Short Marketing Chains**

The Regional Development Association of Setubal Peninsula (ADREPES) in Portugal aims to promote an integrated development of Setubal Peninsula in the economic, social, cultural and environmental fields. In this short movie you can have a look at one of the most successful projects implemented by ADREPES. Called 'Prove' (Portuguese for 'taste'), it is implemented in different regions of Portugal and inspired the work of different NGOs in developing countries. This project promotes new ways of short marketing chains, contributing to recover local agriculture and promoting a more sustainable local consumption.

The video can be viewed at the following link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M8eNGzDrs0U>

*Article Source:* <http://www.geo.coop/story/its-our-land>



## contact us

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**We invite organisations and activists to make contributions to the Newsletter by writing stories, contributing photographs or cultural contributions, such as poetry, art, songs etc.**

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