AGROECOLOGY SCHOOLS TOOLKIT

FOR ORGANISATIONS AND FACILITATORS



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PROJECT BACKGROUND

> *Our ancestral production systems have been developed over millennia, and during the past 30 to 40 years this has come to be called agroecology. Our agroecology includes successful practices and production, involves farmer-to-farmer and territorial processes, training schools, and we have developed sophisticated theoretical, technical and political constructions* - Nyeleni 2015 Declaration

EUROPE AND CENTRAL ASIA AGROECOLOGY COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE: BILIM

OUR NETWORK'S WORK

In the context of the abandonment of agricultural activities and rural exodus in the Europe and Central Asia (ECA) Region, the project *Sharing knowledge for a stronger agroecology movement in ECA region 2022/2023* aims at strengthening local food producers' organizations and network through supporting grassroots organizations actions in rural areas and specifically their knowledge-related activities.

Building on nearly a decade of work of the network of grassroots organizations and social movements in agroecology, the ECA Agroecology Community of Practice activated by Schola Campesina supports coordinated advocacy work for agroecology and small-scale producers' rights, the implementation of UNDROP and the pursuit of food sovereignty in the region. Built on 11 Pillars of the Nyéléni Declaration on Agroecology, the network promotes strengthening of existing agroecology initiatives in the region, scaling up and scaling out of agroecology in the region and facilitates emergence of new Agroecology Schools.

METHODOLOGY

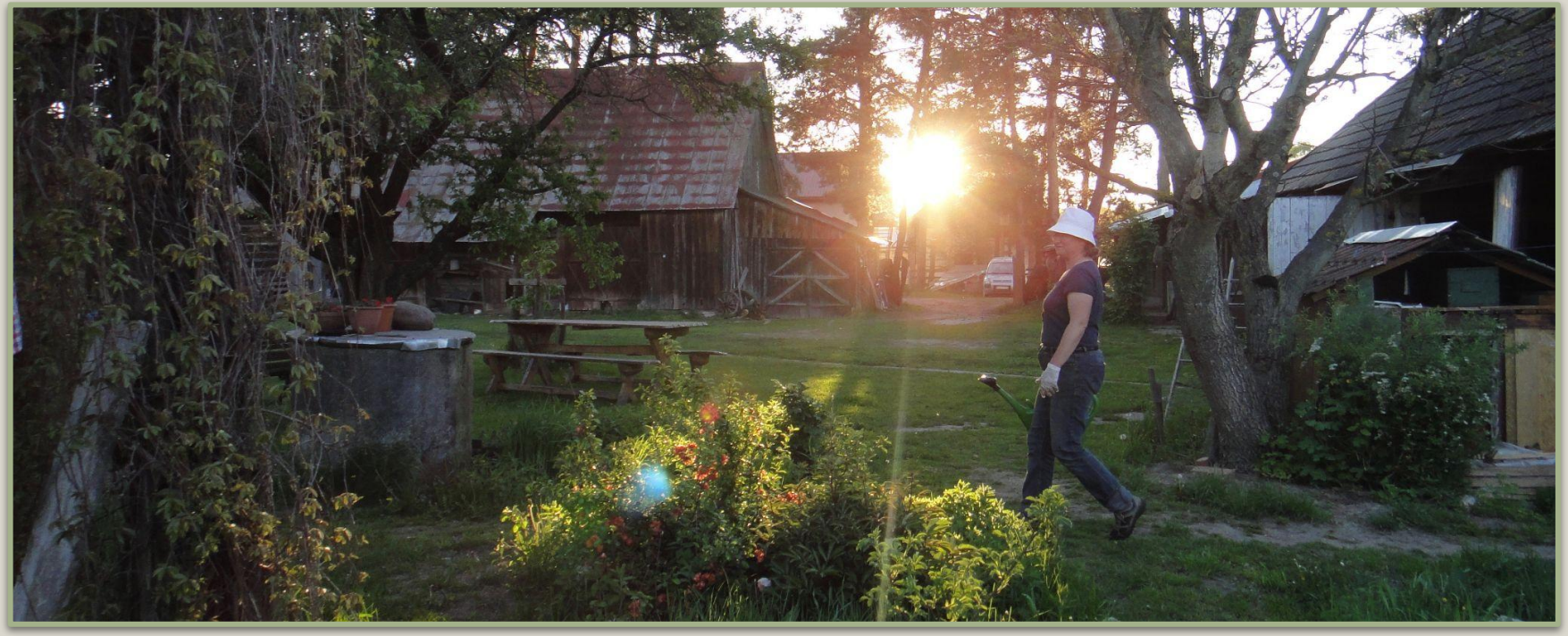
AGROECOLOGY SCHOOLS

Agroecology schools are already well implemented in Europe and Central Asia region. There are often not well connected to each other and not well supported. ECA Agroecology Community of Practice aims at supporting these initiatives and facilitating the exchange of knowledge and experiences amongst them. This includes supporting food producers in their farming activity (economic viability, access to markets, food processing, local policies, organizational model, political advocacy, sharing of local knowledge) and in building alliances for improved and coordinated policy support for agroecology.

The Toolkit is part of a continued pedagogical work allowing agroecology schools facilitators to meet, exchange and be trained on content and methodology. It also aims at supporting young organisations in starting their own agroecology schools. Through horizontal knowledge-sharing organisations expand leadership, expertise and tools across community research, education and political work to promote agroecology at the international, national and regional levels.

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

> *Together, the diverse constituencies our organizations represent produce some 70% of the food consumed by humanity. They are the primary global investors in agriculture, as well as the primary providers of jobs and livelihoods in the world* - Nyéléni Declaration



GENERAL INTRODUCTION

> *The autonomy of agroecology displaces the control of global markets and generates self-governance by communities. […] It implies a transparent relationship between producers and consumers, and is based on the solidarity of shared risks and benefits* - Nyeleni Declaration 2015



WHY AGROECOLOGY?

The current model of our food system is in crisis. We no longer can deny its exploitative impact on both humans and nature and its failure to sustain and nourish the world. Agroecology is increasingly seen as a solution for societies to respond to the multiple crisis situations and reinstall stability of our collective livelihoods, ecosystem and human health (IAASTD, 2009; IPBES, 2019; IPCC, 2020; HLPE, 2019). The power and potential of Agroecology is rooted in the traditions of communities and continuously enriched with innovations in a Human Rights-based approach (Nyéléni, 2015).

For a better understanding of what Agroecology is from Food Sovereignty perspective, see the Declaration of Agroecology Nyeleni 2015

WHY A FOOD SYSTEM APPROACH?

Food systems are nested in complex webs of interactions across sectors and actors in societies. All too often, farmers' livelihoods and environment are seen as competing with each other, when in fact, they are often both victims of the very same power structures. The challenges of agriculture today require us to integrate elements that usually are considered separate: rural development, youth employment, gender perspective, human health, climate change, environment, etc. Agroecology gives us a holistic, integrative and action-oriented (political) perspective on food systems connecting food, health, nutrition, culture, land use and sustainability. Agroecology prioritizes protection of peasant knowledge at the heart of this transition.

For a better understanding of what Food Sovereignty is, see the Declaration of Nyeleni 2007

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

> *“Given that historically the family structure was often based on patriarchy and has oppressed women for centuries, we must find new ways of ensuring the transfer of knowledge in a world in which farming is not inherited from father to son, but rather, new entrants experience a cultural transition in order to become true peasant farmers or specialists in agroecology/gies* - Schola Campesina



WHY KNOWLEDGE?

In an agroecological approach, which includes a wide range of actors, food producers are at the centre. It is therefore essential to recover, preserve and develop the knowledge that is useful for their activities and autonomy in order to secure the future of food producers. This is also crucial for new farmers and young people who want to farm in close connection with the ecosystem and their immediate environment. Without knowledge and skills appropriate to local needs (how to grow food on small plots, how to plan and build the appropriate equipment, how to prepare food for storage and marketing, etc.) farmers fall into dangerous dependency, e.g. on industrial seed producers. Agroecological education goes beyond vertical model of technical knowledge transfer and is horizontal. Learning takes place in communities, it is often an empowering and a valued and sensitive space where people teach each other and contribute to change development paradigms and food system transformations.

WHAT IS INNOVATION FOR US?

Innovation inspired by agroecology and food sovereignty is aimed at the collective common good, and can be strengthened with the help of digitalisation. Innovation can't mean fewer farmers and less work in rural areas. Farmers provide the means for achieving a basic human right: the right to adequate food -- without them this right is no longer granted. Farmers’ knowledge has been extracted countless times in order to take control of the production chain. The dematerialisation of agriculture is a work in progress and is clearly set on a collision course with the interests of family farming. The meaning of innovation hides a large part of the capitalist system that seeks to transform food production from a communal, social, democratic act that is respectful of the natural cycles into a commercial business for a few. Agroecology is the innovation based on peasant knowledge, which strengthens farmers’ knowledge and farmers’ autonomy.

Explore Digitalization and Innovation in the frame of Agroecology /

EUROPE AND CENTRAL ASIA

> *Agroecology is a way of life and the language of Nature, that we learn as her children. It is not a mere set of technologies or production practices. It cannot be implemented the same way in all territories […] with each sector contributing their own colours of their local reality and culture, while always respecting Mother Earth and our common, shared values*
> - Nyeleni 2015 Declaration

SHARING KNOWLEDGE FOR STRONGER AGROECOLOGY MOVEMENT IN ECA REGION

Agroecology is certainly happening in European and Central Asian countries and there are many good cases of agroecology in different local contexts showing that Agroecology is - invisibly - making our local food systems resilient and strong. There is still, however, not enough institutional support, including the commitment from government ministries to encourage mainstreaming of agroecology and building of a groundswell movement across the region (FAO 2020).

In many cases, the environmental protection and agricultural policies are shaped without a political dialogue between them, or even perceived as opposite agendas and treated as separate domains. Far too often, where there is 'agroecology-in-action', it remains poorly visible due to national and local organisations' limited capacity to document the good work on the ground and engage in vigorous farmer-to-farmer or village-to-village work of testing agroecology principles.

Documenting and disseminating successful practical experiences region-to-region is, however, critical to learn from them, leverage their lessons and generate insights for policy change. The varied success rate in the adaptation and integration of Human Rights framework at national level in ECA region makes it an even stronger case for a continued dialogue, experience-sharing and regional partnerships in and through agroecology.



NYÉLÉNI DECLARATION OF AGROECOLOGY

> *Our ancestral production systems have been developed over millennia, and during the past 30 to 40 years this has come to be called agroecology. Our agroecology includes successful practices and production, involves farmer-to-farmer and territorial processes, training schools, and we have developed sophisticated theoretical, technical and political constructions*
> - Nyeleni Decalration 2015

NYÉLÉNI DECLARATION OF AGROECOLOGY 2015

The Nyéléni Declaration has been drafted during the International Forum on Agroecology which was organized at the Nyéléni Center in Mali, from 24 to 27 February 2015. The organizations of small-scale food producers and consumers present in the Nyéléni forum that contributed to identifying the 11 pillars of Agroecology have represented diverse populations, including peasants, indigenous peoples, communities, hunters and gatherers, family farmers, rural workers, herders and pastoralists, fisherfolk and urban people (Nyéléni, 2015). Other allied actors, like international or philanthropic organizations, public institutions and NGOs were also present, but the declaration was drafted by representatives of food-producing communities. The 11 pillars of Agroecology are used by Agroecology Schools in designing curricula, adapting learning methods and choosing training settings..

BOX 1.1

Agroecology defined by the Food Sovereignty movement is unique, it emphasises:

- **people agency** in the food systems as well as the immaterial connections of communities to their territories and to nature,
- caring relations between humans and nature; care for the **territory** and **local culture**
- recognition of the existing dimension of **power** in food systems and the necessity of transforming structures of power in society as part of the effort to progress towards agroecology.

READ MORE: Agroecology Guidebook
"Bridging Generations in Agroecology"



11 PILLARS OF AGROECOLOGY

> *The real solutions to the crises of the climate, malnutrition, etc., will not come from conforming to the industrial model. We must transform it and build our own local food systems that create new rural-urban links, based on truly agroecological food production by peasants, artisanal fishers, pastoralists, indigenous peoples, urban farmers, etc.* - Nyeleni Declaration 2015



PILLAR 1
AGROECOLOGY IS A WAY OF LIFE
Agroecology is a way of life and the language of Nature, that we learn as her children.



PILLAR 2
ECOLOGICAL PRODUCTION
Agroecology entails agricultural production practices based on ecological principles.



PILLAR 3
TERRITORIAL APPROACH
Territories are a fundamental pillar of agroecology. Peoples have the right to maintain their own spiritual and material relationships to their lands.



PILLAR 4
RIGHTS AND COMMONS
People are rights holders. Collective rights and access to the commons are fundamental pillar of agroecology.



PILLAR 5
KNOWLEDGE & DIGITALISATION
The diverse knowledges and ways of knowing our peoples are fundamental to agroecology.



PILLAR 6
FEELINGS AND CARE
The core of our cosmovisions is the necessary equilibrium between nature, the cosmos and human beings.



PILLAR 7
COLLECTIVES AND ORGANISATIONS
Agroecology is based on collectives. Families, communities, organizations and movements are central to make agroecology alive.



PILLAR 8
SELF-GOVERNED MARKETS
The autonomy of agroecology displaces the control of global markets and generates self-governance by communities.



PILLAR 9
FOOD SYSTEM TRANSFORMATION
We need to put the control of seeds, biodiversity, land and territories, waters, knowledge, culture in the hands of the peoples who feed the world.



PILLAR 10
WOMEN ARE CENTRAL
Women and their knowledge, values, vision and leadership are critical for moving forward, play a central role in Agroecology.



PILLAR 11
YOUTH ARE CRITICAL
Agroecology can provide a radical space for young people to contribute to the social and ecological transformation that is underway in many of our societies.

UNDROP - UNITED NATIONS' PEASANT RIGHTS DECLARATION

> *"The Declaration acknowledges the prominent role that peasants play in solving multiple crises facing us today – food, environmental, social and economic. Peasants are essential to food security and sovereignty and the realization of the right to food, particularly in developing countries where they provide up to 80% of the food locally consumed* - Zainal Arifin Fuat, from La Via Campesina

Full text of the UN Resolution is **here**
ECVC **video** on the UNDROP
ECVC **infographic**



UNITED NATIONS DECLARATION ON PEASANTS AND OTHER PEOPLE WORKING IN RURAL AREAS

The approval of the "Declaration on the rights of peasants and other people working in rural areas" by the United Nations Human Rights Council is an opportunity to 1) recognise the central role of peasants in 2) transforming food systems in a holistic way with the long-term vision needed to tackle climate change. UNDROP is a powerful tool that we have to use to defend peasant knowledge and rural livelihoods. Today we must extend the struggle for farmers' rights over their own seeds to all the knowledge that makes peasants unique as economic, social and environmental actors in their field. Without the right-based approach, there is no agroecology. Agroecology Schools support the advocacy work to advance the implementation of UNDROP at the national and regional level through knowledge sharing, political capacity, publications and participatory action research for food sovereignty.

KNOW UNDROP ARTICLES PROTECTING THE RIGHT TO PEASANT KNOWLEDGE

Article 19 [...]
2. Peasants and other people working in rural areas have the right to maintain, control, protect and develop their own seeds and traditional knowledge.

Article 20 [...]
2. States shall take appropriate measures to promote and protect the traditional knowledge, innovation and practices of peasants and other people working in rural areas, including traditional agrarian, pastoral, forestry, fisheries, livestock and agroecological systems relevant to the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity.

Article 26 [...]
3. States shall respect, and take measures to recognize and protect, the rights of peasants and other people working in rural areas relating to their traditional knowledge and eliminate discrimination against the traditional knowledge, practices and technologies of peasants and other people working in rural areas.

AGROECOLOGY SCHOOLS CASE STUDIES
SCHOLA CAMPESINA, ITALY

> *Peasant farming is constantly evolving, and agroecology interprets this continuous search for innovation. Without peasant farming and its particular characteristics, such as respect for fundamental rights, knowledge and a sense of community, there is no future for farmers or for humanity itself*
> - Schola Campesina

ABOUT SCHOLA CAMPESINA APS - International School of Agroecology

Schola Campesina is an agroecology school based in an Italian biodistrict seeking to share, valorise and develop knowledge on agroecology and global governance of food and agriculture. Schola Campesina facilitates the sharing of knowledge amongst food producers' organizations and other allies (academia) on global governance processes in order to improve their participation within the global spaces and advance the food sovereignty agenda at international level. The origins of the organisation date back to the 2015 Nyéléni International Forum for Agroecology and to La Via Campesina's schools of agroecology. In that sense, Schola Campesina wants to put into practice the principles and action plan of Nyéléni 2015 by building training and participatory action research activities.

EDUCATION ACTIVITIES

Schola Campesina pursues 5 strategic educational activities on agroecology:

- Facilitating international trainings for peasant farmers' organisations who identify with the food sovereignty movement;
- Coordinating participatory research activities, such as TAPE, strengthening the documenting of agroecological transition;
- Communicating bi-directionally between ECA agroecology network the IPC and agriculture-related UN bodies in Rome;
- Supporting agroecology organisations in developing their own Agroecology Schools and curricula;
- Developing digital learning tools (webinars, platforms) for sharing knowledge on food policy in global food and agricultural governance



READ SCHOLA CAMPESINA's VISION

AGROECOLOGY SCHOOLS

> “Something that’s really crucial to stimulate the process is to convince people what they know is relevant and that they hold the knowledge themselves. […] Such confidence and capacity building […] can create a catalytic effect, where more learners become teachers and the process takes on a self- perpetuating momentum
> - Colin Anderson 2019



WHY AGROECOLOGY SCHOOLS?

> *In these schools, both younger and older educational subjects are trained not only in farming, but also in political-organizational aspects of the collective struggle for land reform, food sovereignty and agroecology. This makes for a rich learning environment, […] a dialogue-based processes of action and reflection, using popular education as a guide for developing critical consciousness* –La Via Campesina



WHY AGROECOLOGY SCHOOLS?

Agroecology schools have become strategic spaces of social movements for scaling up agroecology, strengthening the work for food sovereignty and engaging people, especially youth, in agroecology. An Agroecology School is a self-organised safe space where farmers share knowledge and wisdom on a peer-to-peer principle. The School's methodology is rooted in years of experience of the work done by La via Campesina in the methodology campesino-a-campesino. Peasant knowledge is at the heart of our model of food production. Being autonomous of governments or formal adult education institutions, Agroecology Schools bridge the gap between practical and theoretical knowledge, as well as technical and political skills and provide a platform to unite learning and knowledge-sharing with action research and civic engagement. They are holistic and empowering, including two-way learning processes between policy makers, researchers and farmers to build strategic networks.

WHY AGROECOLOGY ORGANISATIONS?

Agroecology Schools are tools in the hands of organisations who use them to better understand the nature of their work, to better coordinate their action and carry out outcomes of learning into social, economic and political space. Strengthening farmers' organisations and building networks is fundamental in amplifying agroecology. Moreover, organised farmers help to build evidence that supports agroecology as a modern way of farming in the face of climate change and the current industrial food system's glaring injustices. Forms of organisations change through history. Historical popular forms of organisation, such as cooperatives, have been emptied out and devoid of their true meaning, self-regulation and agency. We need to address these very dynamics through strengthening farmers' and agroecological organisations.

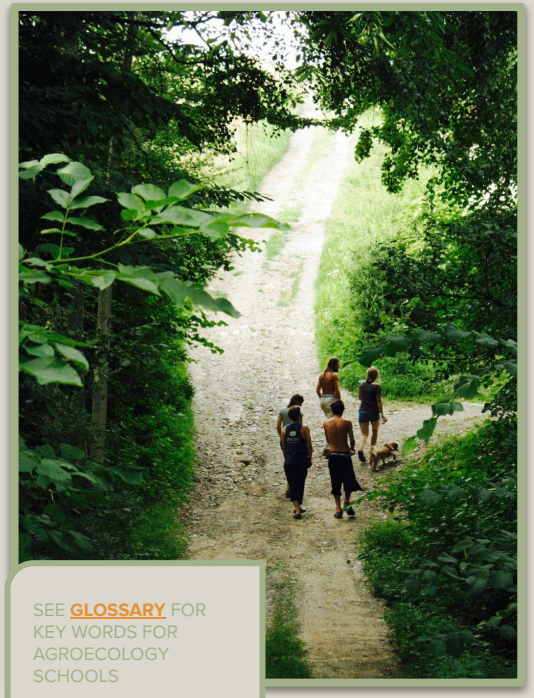
AGROECOLOGY SCHOOLS - DEFINITION

> “ Decisions are made collectively and learner-educators become accustomed to taking responsibility for their actions. Human qualities such as humility, honesty, integrity and solidarity are considered as important to the learning process as are composts, intercropping, and seed saving - La Via Campesina

WHAT DO WE TALK ABOUT?

Agroecology schools are the place where knowledge is shared within communities led by grassroots organizations on a diversity of topics determined by the local context. It can be either in the formal or informal educational system, in a solid structure or without walls. They tend to have the following elements:

- **For society transformation:** Agroecology schools facilitate knowledge sharing for a change toward a fairer society
- **Based on local needs and realities:** Agroecology schools are facilitating the exchanges to solve local problems faced in a specific context and reality.
- **Based on local knowledge:** The main source of knowledge is held in the farming community, enriched by other sources
- **Popular education:** Agroecology schools are using popular education methods, where participants are the main agent / knowledge holder.
- **Based on horizontal learning processes:** Agroecology schools are facilitating the exchange of knowledge, free of hierarchy. Learners and teachers are exchanging roles in a continuous dialogue. Experts are complementing the existing knowledge provided by all participants.
- **Dialogue of different kinds of knowledge**: (food producers, academia, activist, ...).: Allied by a common vision (food sovereignty) in a space of trust, a diversity of knowledge, wisdom, ideas, feelings awareness is enriching participants. Food producers and communities, in relation with academia, experts, and activists can build promising dialogue in agroecology schools.
- **Participatory Action Research:** Research dimension in agroecology schools is always focused on people’s needs and will be based on people agency in research processes (will not take food producers and their communities as object of academic research).



SEE GLOSSARY FOR KEY WORDS FOR AGROECOLOGY SCHOOLS

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND
LA VIA CAMPESINA SCHOOLS

> *There are many exciting approaches and models for these horizontal learning institutions in the Global South, but there is less understanding about what is happening in European territories and countries and a need to support civil society popular education, learning and training initiatives* -European Coordination Via Campesina



AGROECOLOGY SCHOOLS GLOBALLY AND IN EUROPE

Internationally, numerous Agroecology schools have been established – perhaps the most well known examples being The Paulo Freire Latin American Institute of Agroecology (IALA) in Venezuela, which, in 2005 became the first 'international peasant university'. In Europe, The Peasant's Action School (EAC in Spanish acronym) emerged as a project of the Spanish food sovereignty organizations with the objective of reinforcing the movement and responding to a Nyeleni mandate of the international food sovereignty movement (Nyeleni, 2007). At the same time, the idea of political training spaces in rural areas addressed to farmers in Europe has been rooting more strongly since the Declaration of Agroecology (Nyeleni 2015). In 2016, the European Coordination of Via Campesina (ECVC) recognized the need to better emphasize popular education and agroecology learning in order to strengthen the European Agroecology Movement. After a period of planning, 30 agroecology leaders and educators formed in 2017 in the UK, the European Agroecology Knowledge Exchange Network, EAKEN.

SCHOOLS OF LA VIA CAMPESINA

The development of agroecology schools over the past 30 years can be linked directly to the growth of La Via Campesina (LVC), who intentionally focused on popular education as a part of its international movement building strategy since their foundation in 1993. The Nyéléni Declaration on Agroecology, for example, addressed this subject directly:
La Via Campesina (LVC) is focusing on expanding and strengthening Agroecology Learning Institutions and Agroecology Schools in all regions of the world (see case studies at the end). LVC has recognized that agroecological, political and practical training and learning is a central process in the struggle for food sovereignty and should be a central priority, with a focus on regional leadership, women and youth

Read more on LVC Agroecology Schools
Explore the La Via Campesina Toolkit on Peasant-to-Peasant Horizontal Learning
Read Case Studies of Agroecological Schools

AGROECOLOGY SCHOOLS #1 STARTING UP

> *Our starting point is the local level, so that our position is deeply grounded and thereby enhanced, in order to influence change on the global level* - Schola Campesina

GET INSPIRED - SURVEY EXPERIENCES

There are various agroecology trainings already run by various grassroots organisations: farmers' associations, self-organised consumer initiatives such as Community Supported Agriculture groups, land education collectives and mixed advocacy coalitions. The political roots of such programmes, in so far as they respond to concrete needs of social and peasant movements, are in that they tend to contribute to food system transformations in their territories. As such, trainings unlike more general adult education offerings go beyond individual learning outcomes. There are also courses and trainings offered by formal academic institutions. It is yet unclear to what extent these courses are actually contributing or not to paradigm change, or to what extent, the tools used aim at empowering participants to impact their political contexts. You can draw inspiration and invite expert practitioners from different fields and partner organisations.

FORM A PEDAGOGICAL COMMITTEE

A pedagogical committee is a coordinating body made up of leading organisation members, allied pedagogues or experts who share basic principles of Agroecology. Their work is to identify priorities, diagnose needs, choose training themes and co-create a training proposal or educational strategy for the organisation. Since agroecological learning is transdisciplinary, combining several disciplines and areas, from academia to production practices and advocacy work, the committee can invite into collaboration other experts. The pedagogical committee may also set up criteria for participants and the enrollment process, choose the farmstead and work with farm host to prepare the learning space. It may also nominate facilitators and research for appropriate resources, including funding to deliver the programme. In Agroecology Schools the emphasis is on the reciprocal connection between learner-educators. As such, training participants may be involved in co-creating and adapting the training curriculum.



> *Territories are a fundamental pillar of agroecology. Peoples and communities have the right to maintain their own spiritual and material relationships to their lands. […] This implies the full recognition of their laws, traditions, customs, tenure systems, and institutions, and constitutes the recognition of the self-determination and autonomy of peoples* - Nyeleni Declaration 2015

AGROECOLOGY SCHOOLS #1 STARTING UP

DEVELOP VISION AND GOALS

Agroecology Schools are a tool for strengthening grassroot organisations and movements, training (young) farmers (and activists) of the food sovereignty movement and dynamising their engagement as political subjects. The objective of the school is to help carry out the vision of agroecological organisations, defined collectively and coming from their territories and communities. The form of the school follows function: Agroecology School can take a form of an annual training for organisation members, or be a core and integrated element of organisation structure (see Romania case study). The primary step is to define within the organisation the needs and vision of the Organisation's work, and to build the School's goals and its training programmes from there on. While Agroecology Schools are diverse, their common characteristic features include horizontalism (popular education methods), *dialogo de saberes,* combining political and technical knowledge and building social movement networks or organisational capacity.

SET OBJECTIVES FOR YOUR SCHOOLS

- To share knowledge in a farmer-to-farmer way to spread practices, especially based on local, ancestral wisdom, and respect for food producers;
- To demonstrate the power and successes of existing agroecological approaches, to showcase grassroot innovations and leverage the lessons to achieve a systemic change;
- To build leadership and educational capacity in the organisation and strengthen outreach;
- To raise awareness about advocacy work or political campaigns coordinated by the organisation, to build bottom-up policy work;
- To meet cyclically generations of practitioners and uncover arising needs, interests and issues from various perspectives;
- To create direct relationships between farmers, consumers and academia, and to rebuild the pact of trust and responsibility for our food systems;
- To apply pedagogical methods and contents learned from other organisations and train own facilitators

BOX 1.1 QUESTIONS TO ASK WHEN STARTING UP:

FROM WHERE? Who is defining and promoting the agroecological school or training programme? For what purpose? Who may be involved in defining how the training will be developed? Will the School have a transformative agroecology focus? What needs of the organisation/movement will the training respond to?
FOR WHOM? Who the participants, teachers and facilitators will be? What is the intended pedagogical dynamics in learning? Will the group be more homogenous or more diverse; will previously unrelated stakeholders meet around the table? Will the participants be gaining skills or also sharing skills?
HOW? Which forms of learning, actions and methodologies will you use? Will the courses include a strong critique to the current developmental and political policies and actions? Are the dynamics of oppression and power hierarchy to be actively uncovered and worked through? Is the function of educational process more about beginner's level or advanced and deepening reflection and co-creation exercise? About knowledge transfer and skill-honing, or about action-research and active enquiry?

> *Agroecology is political; it requires us to challenge and transform structures of power in society. We need to put the control of seeds, biodiversity, land and territories, waters, knowledge, culture and the commons in the hands of the peoples who feed the world* - Nyeleni Declaration 2015

AGROECOLOGY SCHOOLS CASE STUDIES
KYRGYZSTAN

ABOUT ADI - PF Agency for Development Initiatives, Bishkek

Agency for Development Initiatives (ADI) works closely with producers in different areas in Kyrgyzstan and supports gaining autonomy in seed supply for agroecological production. With the ongoing learning supported by ADI, the small-scale (mainly female) producers gradually became a strong seed-saving community, while also offering a rich diversity of agricultural products to the local population. Together with ADI, these producers have become a community co-creating knowledge and restoring its cultural identity within their food systems through agroecology. Another example of a locally-driven solution for sustainable food systems is a farmers' shop created by ADI in Kyrgyzstan's capital. ADI facilitated the first Agroecology School in Central Asia in 2019.

EDUCATION ACTIVITIES

ADI pursues 4 strategic educational activities on agroecology:

- Since 2015, supporting "Dyikan Muras" a network of local seed guardians to revive the seeds of local vegetable varieties.
- Since 2019, a Youtube channel has been operating - a school for farmers "Dyikan mektebi», in which video lessons for farmers are collected (and continue to be replenished).
- Since 2021, 3 local agroecological field schools have also been opened.
- Since 2020, ADI has been a facilitator (hub) of the Central Asian network on agroecology and has been working with partners from Tajikistan, Kazakhstan, and Uzbekistan.



AGROECOLOGY SCHOOLS #2 TRAININGS

> *We call on our fellow peoples to join us in the collective task of collectively constructing agroecology as part of our popular struggles to build a better world, a world based on mutual respect, social justice, equity, solidarity and harmony with our Mother Earth*
> - Nyeleni Declaration 2015

TYPES OF TRAININGS

Agroecology Schools employ a variety of learning forms, keeping the peasant and farmers' wisdom at the heart. School can combine activities:

- Farm work and farm study visits provide encouraging testimonials of agroecological experience and transition;
- Capacity building political trainings based on multi-stakeholder and multi-perspective dialogue;
- Design workshops for field experiments and field visits on demonstration and research farms;
- Workshops, trainings and group consultations on specialist agroecological production techniques;
- Community action research and other forms of structured enquiry, such as TAPE;
- Theatre of the Oppressed engages learners with social issues and decision-making;
- Games, fairs and exhibitions around practices and products motivate for innovation;

METHODS AND TOOLS

In an Agroecology School, one of our objectives is to make learning an active peer process. We encourage learners to take action on their own behalf and to articulate their own perspective. For this, we engage in discussions and value all contributions equally. For learners, who feel empowered to co-create the context of learning, trainings are prototypical situations of negotiating and impacting their wider social and political context.

There is a great variety of facilitation schools and tools (see back of the toolkit for references).. When choosing tools you might want to think about:

Variety: Using a range of techniques and different activities helps to engage a wider spectrum of learners
Accessibility: Not every form of activity will be accessible to everyone; check prior the training needs in the group
Consent: not everyone will want to take part in scheduled activities; give people freedom to choose.



SEE THE POPULAR EDUCATION SECTION IN CH. 3 LEARNING COMMUNITY

See the TOOLKIT OF TOOLKITS if you're looking to hone your facilitation skills.

AGROECOLOGY SCHOOLS #2 TRAININGS

> *"The use of education, learning, and training as a strategy to build movements and fight oppression has a long history, especially in agrarian social movements […] such approaches contrast with top-down approaches in that they seek to empower learners rather than simply fill them with information* - EEAKEN

TRAINING THEMES

Training and research themes are proposed by a pedagogical committee. The training seeks to bring together members of small-scale food producers organisations and/or other actors to share experiences and discuss issues relating to food and agriculture governance, peasant knowledge, peasant autonomy, agroecological practices, global peasant struggles, food policy, women empowerment, etc.

There are many ways to organise trainings, and each organisation will have specific needs and capacity, including economic means and other resources, that will influence the training programme. A general introductory training on agroecology will have a mix of theoretical and practical modalities. It may for example address one Agroecology principle a day. Alternatively, a school may run a specialised thematic training around specific production sector, pointing to political, social and economic dimensions of agroecology. Some organisations may choose to structure agroecological training around particular modalities of learning, based on the goal behind the training and the profiles of participants (dialogue, trips, expert presentations, fieldwork etc)

EXAMPLE OF TRAINING BY MODULE

Example of dividing the training programme into modules, reflecting five different types of knowing:

Module 1- On Agroecology appropriate to the region. Nyeleni Agroecoogy and FAO 10 elements of Agroecology

Module 2 - Learning Community. Get to know each other and presentation of the training process, framework and methodology. The module will be expressed through presentations and informal interactions.

Module 3- Socio-economic aspects of food systems. Focus on global governance and decision-making processes related to food and agriculture at the global level. How food policies are set up at regional and sub-regional scales. The module will seek to highlight the structure, logic and power relations that characterize the current corporate food system and be mainly explored through collective readings.

Module 4- Agriculture and livestock agroecological production and processing. Agroecological practices including biodiversity, a farm's relationship with surrounding ecosystems, life cycles, composting, multicropping and agroforestry, agroecological management of natural resources, seeds and forgotten varieties, raw product processing. Mainly be explored through farm work.

Module 5- Territories and Communities. Peasant knowledge and recovering popular memory, collective peasant identity, rural sociology, rural extension and peasant autonomy. Ways of disseminating agroecology (scaling up as well as scaling out) - the Cuban territorial approach of disseminating agroecology through the 'Campesino a campesino' method and the Italian 'Biodistretto' system and the role of the territory. The importance of women empowerment in our organisations and in agricultural activities in general is also a key issue in spreading agroecology and this will be discussed as part of this module.

Module 6- Peasant empowerment. Sharing tools and learning tools to take back home. Highlight and discuss the networks and initiatives linked to trainings and courses, such as LVC's IALA Agroecology Schools, "Collective on Agroecology, Seeds, and Biodiversity", the European Peasant Agroecology Exchange Network, Nyéléni, etc. The module will set up media and IT tools for knowledge capitalization and sharing, will improve the skills related to building organisations and strengthen peasant autonomy.

From 2017 Training on Agroecology, Schola Campesina.

AGROECOLOGY SCHOOLS #2 TRAININGS

> *Families, communities, collectives, organizations and movements are the fertile soil in which agroecology flourishes. Collective self-organization and action are what make it possible to scale-up agroecology, build local food systems, and challenge corporate control of our food system*
> - Nyeleni 2015 Declaration



EXAMPLE DAY-BY-DAY PROGRAMME

Thursday 28th of September
Agroecology: Agroecology: what is our agroecology? Exchange of local realities that shape the local agroecology. COnnection of smallholders realities to the 11 pillars on agroecology of Nyéléni and the 10 elements of FAO. Speakers: Andrea Ferrante, Schola Campesina

Friday 29th of September
Rural extension How to share knowledge amongst food producers? The role of agroecology schools and other initiatives and networks. Basic principles of popular education. Speakers: Dario Mencagli, AUCS, Crocevia farm, Italy Nasseegh Yaffer, World Forum of Fisher Peoples

30-31st of October
Feelings and agroecology. Cultural weekend.
Saturday: Trekking on Via Amerina up to the town of "Ci ita castellana". Evening: Folk music "Taranta e pizzica"
Sunday: Lunch at Fattoria Lucciano, Civita castellana

Monday 2nd of October
14. Local policies and local food system. Role of the territory and the local management of food systems for food sovereignty. Introduction to the Bio-district. Local policies and sustainable management of natural resources. Urban-rural linkages and farmers-consumers linkages. Speakers: Javier Sánchez, La Via Campesina

Tuesday 3rd of October
18. Farmer's organizations Farmer's organizations as social actors for change. How to get stronger and influence local policies? How to build a social control on natural resources? Speakers: Michel Pimbert, Director of the Center for Agroecology, Water and Resilience at Coventry University, UK; Andrea Ferrante, Schola Campesina

Wednesday 4th of October
Democratising knowledge for agroecology and food sovereignty. Knowledge and power relations, people's access to knowledge and know-how as a political issue. Speakers: Michel Pimbert, Director of the CAWR ,UK

Thursday 5th of October
Biodiversity & Seeds. Intellectual property rights, criminalization of farmers' seeds, international treaties and regulations, seeds, international actors and roles (CGIAR, FAO), institutional lock-ins, farmer's seeds networks, seeds selection and conservation methods.
Speakers: Guy Kastler, Réseau semences paysannes, France; Emile Frison, IPES-Food, ex- Biodiversity Intern.; Fabio Caporali, Tuscia University (Agrarian ecology)

International Training on Peasant Agroecology and Food and Agriculture Global Governance 25th of September – 7th of October 2017, Rome

> *Our diverse forms of smallholder food production based on Agroecology generate local knowledge, promote social justice, nurture identity and culture, and strengthen the economic viability of rural areas.* - International Forum on Agroecology

AGROECOLOGY SCHOOLS CASE STUDIES
GEORGIA

ABOUT ELKANA - Organic Farming and Rural Tourism Network

The Biological Farming Association Elkana, a Georgian non-governmental organization, was founded in 1994. The association employs 50 people; its membership oscillates around 500 and is open to any citizen of Georgia. Elkana works on the issue of environmental conservation and agricultural biodiversity in the rural communities in Georgia, in the context, characterised by a deep erosion of traditional knowledge through 70 years of the Soviet rule. This is done through fostering the development of organic farming, agro-ecological practices, diversification of economic activity and increasing self-reliance of the population in rural areas. Elkana is also an active contributor to regional policy on agro-biodiversity.

EDUCATION ACTIVITIES

Elkana pursues 5 strategic educational activities on agroecology:

- running trainings on organic production by different sectors and territorial specification;
- operating two demonstration / conservation farms (focused on fruit and field crop, and domesticated animals landraces) and farmer-led field experiments;
- offering farm consultations and thematic workshops in the region on collectively diagnosed problems
- contributing to policy development and national strategic plans related to agricultural biodiversity
- participating in exchanges of international networks in agroecology (ECVC, Nyeleni Food Sovereignty Network, Bioversity International, etc)



AGROECOLOGY SCHOOLS #3 FOLLOW UP

> *Agroecology is a process. You cannot expect a process to be perfect immediately. But once you make a step, you are moving*
> - Ugandan farmer, Jowelia Mukiibi

REFLECTION AND CELEBRATION

Write up

ONGOING TRAIN THE TRAINERS

Write up

SUSTAINABLE FUNDING

Write

DIGITAL PLATFORM ACTIVITY

Write up



BUILDING TRUST & ALLIANCES

> *Policy advocacy for agroecology generally works well when it is embedded in broad collaborations among farmers, researchers, and civil society organisations, and specifically includes women and indigenous peoples […]* - Amplifying Agroecology 2016

BOX 1.1. BUILDING TRUST, STARTING SMALL

The principles of the farmer-to-farmer method have been at the core of its success of La Via Campesina regional Agroecology Schools:

1. Start slowly and at a small scale. This principle allows for evaluation, reflection, and the rectification of errors. It diminishes the magnitude of risks. It also allows farmers both great participation, as well as time to manage their work on the farm.
2. Limit the introduction of knowledge. It is not necessary, in agroecology, to introduce many new themes all at one time. It is more efficient to gain command of new topics one by one, and stabilize and integrate them little by little.
3. Attain quick and recognizable success. Enthusiasm is a generator of new ideas, and success is the most effective motivator. This principle seeks to be the moral engine during development, recognizing the advances made by daily tasks.
4. Experiment on a small scale. Experimentation is nothing more than testing, sharing, adapting, and adopting new techniques or solutions, based on needs. By this principle, the farmer becomes an active and innovative experimenter and the farm, his or her rich and permanent laboratory, or in the organisation network.
5. Develop a multiplier effect. Sharing information between peasants about results and lessons learned is the only way by which one can achieve extension and growth. Teaching is the best way to learn a subject in depth, and much of this teaching lies in creating a living example, and communicating from farmer to farmer. 'For the farmer, seeing is believing.'

Adapted from: LVC TOOLKIT (Bunch, 1982; Machín et al. 2010) :

BOX 1.1 SOCIAL MOVEMENTS AND NGOs

It is important to distinguish between social movement organisations (SMOs) and non-governmental organisations (NGOs). Both are non-state actors and are, in general, recognised as part of civil society. The most crucial distinction between them pertains to the issue of membership. SMOs are constituted by their members, organised formally or informally, and engaged collectively from grassroots protest, resistance and change in a political project. The membership is central to the legitimacy of SMOs, their leadership and their ways of working. NGOs tend to be functionally specialised, with paid and professional staff, de ning their work by their organisational goals rather than by their membership. This distinction is crucial in the context of food sovereignty, where there was an early rejection by the SMOs of the tendency of many NGOs to speak on behalf of social movements and grassroots organisations. In this context, social movement organisations have managed over time to assert their protagonism in relation to their NGO allies, giving them a supportive role. This support can be diverse in terms of political solidarity, expertise, funding, facilitation or media support. It is also essential for NGOs to respect the differentiation of roles and responsibilities between them and the SMOs, and accept the need to adapt to the SMOs often slower and more complex decision-making and implementation processes.

Excerpt from: Ch.4 The role of trust in building alliances of social movements: organising the International Forum on Agroecology, in Knowledge for Food Justice

LEARNING COMMUNITY

> *Policy advocacy for agroecology generally works well when it is embedded in broad collaborations among farmers, researchers, and civil society organisations, and specifically includes women and indigenous peoples […]* - Amplifying Agroecology 2016



MOVEMENT-BASED LEARNING

> *Something that's really crucial to stimulate the process is to convince people what they know is relevant and that they hold the knowledge themselves. […] Such confidence and capacity building, when embedded within a strategic program to scale up and scale out a learning program, can create a catalytic effect, where more learners become teachers and the process takes on a self- perpetuating momentum* - Colin Anderson, 2019



BOX 1.1. MOVEMENT-BASED LEARNING - lessons from LVC

Movement schools are about creating social situations in which learners can transform their way of thinking and doing, so that together they can create the microcosm of the society they wish to live in. This means that each person is responsible for building the school community, rather than leaving everything to a group of administrators.

Decisions are made collectively and learner educators become accustomed to taking responsibility for their actions. Human qualities such as humility, honesty, integrity and solidarity are considered as important to the learning process as composts, intercropping, and seed saving.

One of the major characteristics of movement schools is their organicity, a term meaning that people are connected to one another in bonds of reciprocity, communication, planning and follow-up of tasks that are defined collectively. Learner-educators work in permanent small groups that share productive, academic and managerial duties within the school setting. Additionally, working groups are established by topic to make sure that all the needed actions at the school are carried out.

This form of direct democracy is reflected and improved upon over time through the actions of the Political-Pedagogical Coordination, a body made up of leading cadres from the social movements. Coursework is transdisciplinary, combining several academic disciplines with long homestays in peasant communities near the schools, allowing learner-educators to learn from the 'chalkboard of reality' as they develop skills related to rural assessments and participatory community work.

MOVEMENT-BASED LEARNING

> *Peasant to Peasant methodology "sets knowledge free and awakens the enthusiasm to discover, recover and socialize the rich peasant knowledge, tightly linked to the territory, the memories and the socio-historic conditions of the place* - Rivierra-Ferre

FARMER-TO-FARMER
campesino-a-campesino

While agroecology learning is relatively embryonic across Europe, its potential as a tool to build up social movement networks has been exemplified in the Cuban *Farmer-toFarmer* movement, where, through social processes of learning, the program built up a base made up of 50% of all the peasant families in Cuba (Rosset et al. 2011).

Of course, there are many differences between the European context and the Cuban or other Latin American countries where much of the literature on agroecology learning has been developed. First, there is generally a larger peasant contingent in the Latin American context, with denser networks. Next, there is a much stronger tradition of popular education, whereas in Europe these traditions have been weakened through the neoliberal period. Finally, whereas in many Latin American contexts, peasant social movements have long advanced agroecology within an anti-capitalist and decolonizing framework, peasant movements in Europe have only recently begun to embrace a transformative agroecology for food sovereignty (Nyéléni 2017; Pimbert 2015).

Extract from: Anderson 2019

DIALOGUE OF WAYS OF KNOWING
dialogo de saberes

Dialogo de saberes is one of the key elements of Agroecology Schools' pedagogical methods. It takes seriously learners' lived experiences as a point of departure. The method generates a space of transdisciplinary mutual learning. In practice this means that lecturers and students exchange knowledge in a non-hierarchical and respectful environment following the principles of horizontality. This requires honing of skills and confidence in one's ability to listen and think critically, take a stand and express a position as well as reflect individually and collectively, including the emotions and feelings that may emerge.

One way of using *dialogo de saberes* is to structure a series of interventions between actors from different constituencies (farmers, food workers, consumers, scientists, etc). Such multi-actor and inter-sectoral dialogues are essential to transform the food systems together based on food-sovereignty.

FORMAL VS NON-FORMAL EDUCATION

FORMAL EDUCATION (FE)
Formal education mainly occurs in schools, colleges and has pre-requisites and non-flexible, subject-determined curriculum. Increasingly agroecology is moving to this mode, as universities increase agroecological courses, which may restrict its ability to adapt to change and demonstrate learning diversity. However, it also has some mainstream advantages, such as reaching large numbers. FE tends to have a top-down teaching style, fixed curriculum and is often difficult to change.

NON-FORMAL EDUCATION (NFE)
Non-formal education generally takes place in communities. People teach each other and may or may not get certificates etc. NFE in the community is often a more radical and a philosophical place for learning. It is non-discriminatory and it has a network pattern. This has strength. NFE is most often egalitarian and bi-directional. It favours equality of experience and authority and personal communication.

POPULAR EDUCATION

> *Education either functions as an instrument to…bring about conformity or it becomes the practice of freedom, the means by which men and women deal critically and creatively with reality and discover how to participate in the transformation of their world* - Paulo Freire



PHILOSOPHICAL ROOTS

The use of education, learning, and training as a strategy to build movements and fight oppression has a long history, especially in agrarian social movements. Sometimes referred to as 'popular education', such approaches contrast with top-down approaches in that they seek to empower learners rather than simply fill them with information.

Popular Education centres people's knowledge and understanding of their own world to generate and legitimise the expertise and strategies within their community. The purpose of popular education is the cyclical process of people joining with peers to critically reflect on the socio-economic and political conditions they exist in, and then imagine possibilities for something better to emerge.

In this way, popular education seeks to transform situations and institutions by "uncovering" the necessary knowledge for a (social) agroecological transition within economies and territories.

PEDAGOGY OF PAULO FREIRE

Paolo Freire, the author of *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* and *Education for Critical Consciousness*, born in 1921 in Recife, Brasil, headed a literacy programme that trained more than 5 million people to read and write. There are six principles of Freire's education. They are:

- The aim of education is radical transformation of our own lives, our communities, and our societies;
- Identify "generative themes" as the basis for the learning process; people learn best and work hardest for change when they have strong feelings about an issue and are emotionally engaged;
- Dialogue is essential. Learning must be participatory. The educator (or animator) creates the space for this authentic dialogue
- Use a problem-posing approach to analyze and understand the root causes of injustice. Find answers together and use them for action planning;
- Use a reflection/ action approach – what Freire referred to as praxis – in order to create change;
- No education is neutral – every approach supports certain values and worldviews.

Read: Pedagogy of the Oppressed (Paulo Freire) EN

POPULAR EDUCATION

> *“There is a lot groups: the group of the men who sanctify peasant farming; the group of the young, who only want to engage in permaculture, the group of the women who just want to keep it practical, but don’t really want to engage politically. So these are some of the bottlenecks*
> - Attila Szocs-Boruss

WHY HORIZONTALISM?

In Agroecology Schools participants are expected to share knowledge and experiences in a peer-to-peer perspective as well as to learn from other participants and guest speakers. The guest speakers are expected to learn from the participants and vice-versa, in a horizontal dialogue or “Diálogo de Saberes”.

“Horizontalism” is one of the key concepts within popular education and it involves a democratic, non-hierarchical and anti-authoritarian communication that resembles more co-creation, than reaction. The approach recognises people’s ability to think critically and strategically, and to contribute knowledge, positioning learners as co-creators of their own learning process and activating in them a sense of discovery, confidence and agency. Horizontal learning environments also have the advantage of fostering confidence in participants, emphasising that everyone has experience and knowledge to contribute to any learning environment (i.e. as teachers)



EMPOWERING WOMEN AND YOUTH

WOMEN’S KNOWLEDGE & PERSPECTIVE

Women and their knowledge, values, vision and leadership are critical for moving forward. Migration and globalization mean that women’s work is increasing, yet women have far less access to resources than men. All too often, their work is neither recognized nor valued. For agroecology to achieve its full potential, there must be equal distribution of power, tasks, decision-making and remuneration - Nyeleni Declaration of Agroecology 2015

YOUTH’S KNOWLEDGE & PERSPECTIVE

Youth, together with women, provide one of the two principal social bases for the evolution of agroecology. Agroecology can provide a radical space for young people to contribute to the social and ecological transformation that is underway in many of our societies. Youth bear the responsibility to carry forward the collective knowledge learned from their parents, elders and ancestors into the future. They are the stewards of agroecology for future generations. Agroecology must create a territorial and social dynamic that creates opportunities for rural youth and values women’s leadership - Nyeleni Declaration of Agroecology 2015

AGROECOLOGY SCHOOLS CASE STUDIES
ROMANIA

> *We can talk day about how to grow plants in an agroecological way, how to take care of them, but it's much more difficult to us to talk about the political importances of why we need to grow plants in this way, and why the false solutions around us are false* - Attila Szocs-Boruss

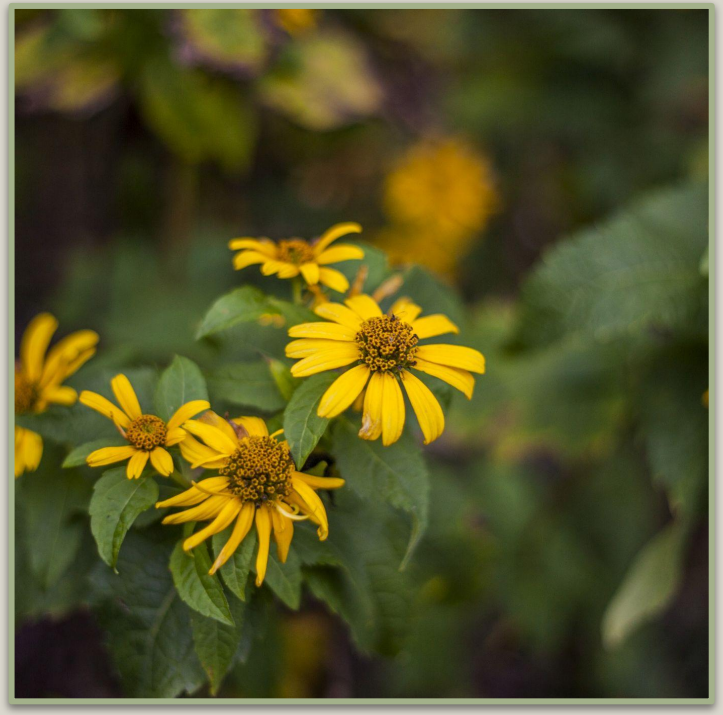
ECO RURALIS - peasant & family farmers' association, Romania

In 2009, a group of small family farmers came together from several regions of Romania to form Eco Ruralis with the vision of a society that is environmentally sustainable, economically fair and socially just where peasants are central to the food system. Over the few years, membership in Eco Ruralis has grown to include over 2000 members from all over Romania, including peasants and small-organic farmers, urban and rural gardeners as well as academics and agricultural activists. Due to its grassroots approach and strategic outreach, especially to young farmers, in its few years of existence Eco Ruralis has managed to create a diverse national network of small-scale Romanian food producers, agroecology activists and conscious consumers. Eco Ruralis is also part of the International Peasants Movement "La Via Campesina".

EDUCATION ACTIVITIES

Eco Ruralis pursues 5 strategic educational activities on agroecology:

- Transversal Peasant Agroecology education strategy is built into all organisation's activities; Strategic programmes are defined by the theme of specific Articles from the UN Peasant Rights' Declaration (UNDROP); practical exchanges transposed with political contents
- "Agro-Biodiversity" campaign, collects and distributes traditional seeds to small food producers from all over the country;
- Research on "Food Chains" and "Land Rights" disseminates knowledge via campaigns throughout network
- Coordination of World Wide Opportunities on Organic Farms (WWOOF) in Romania -grass-roots volunteering and knowledge exchange on 40 traditional and organic host farms



EMPOWERING FACILITATION

> *The political aspects of agroecology may not to some seem somehow 'natural' or automatic, yet simply teaching agroecological practice will not automatically equate to political processes of social transformation. […] The political and practical elements of training must be deliberately and carefully integrated*
> - Colin Anderson 2019



LEARNING SPACES

> *Building trust among the participants was a key concern when designing the programme and methodology. Respect for the other, being open to listening and learning, creating a common language and understanding, and building mutual trust were unstated objectives of the Forum and they were put into practice throughout the event*
> - Everyday Experts



CREATING A SAFE SPACE

Creating intentional educational spaces is extremely important in Agroecology Schools. This refers to not only the physical spaces, but also the processes of building and "educational environment", creating conditions for an atmosphere of safety and trust free from sexual herassment, racial, ethnic or gender prejudice.

Learning environment impacts on how people learn and can reflect the theme of the day. Building an educational environment combines activities with attitudes; each person is responsible for the group, and the group is responsible for each of the individuals, thus, bringing emotions into the learning process. Agroecology schools can use many spaces: training module on *Communities and Territories* may take the form of a nature field trip, whilst the day on *Collective rights to seeds*, a form of seed exchange or seed-saving on farm..

FARM AS A TRAINING SPACE

Lessons fromm Schola Campesina

A farm is an unmatched setting for locating agroecology trainings, due to the very immersion in all the dimensions of agroecology at hand's reach. The trainings held in an agroecological farm allow the participants to discover an Italian family farm environment and also include a one day field visit in Rome. Close proximity to FAO enables training participants to directly participate in international meetings, such as the launch of the HLPE or CSM work. The agrotourism facilities on farm, combined with large hangar adopted for activities space, family-style kitchen and ongoing production activities around allow to connect and intersperse more theoretical discussions with nature and farm work, whilst field trips to other collaborating farms help to understand territorial and community dimension.

INCLUSIVE COMMUNICATION

> *Agroecology Schools values local knowledge and pays specific attention to languages as instruments of popular culture. It aims to go beyond the "colonial" languages: movements should not limit themselves to these languages as an instrument of communication between different 'ways of knowing'*
> - Schola Campesina



LANGUAGE THAT WORKS

The way you listen, look, move, stand, and react tells others whether you care, if you're being truthful, and how well you're listening. When your non-verbal signals match with the words you're saying, they increase trust, clarity, and rapport. When they don't, they generate tension, mistrust, and confusion. Emotions and attitudes are clearly and powerfully, communicated by the body.

There have been many studies on what makes a clear communicator and enables effective learning. To become a better communicator, it is important to become more sensitive not only to the body language and non-verbal cues of others, but also to your own. Communication comes in many forms:

- verbal (sounds, language, and tone of voice)
- aural (listening and hearing)
- non-verbal (facial expressions, body language, and posture)
- written (journals, emails, blogs, and text messages)
- visual (signs, symbols, and pictures)

SESSION STRUCTURE

Experience from Schola Campesina

As regards horizontal dialogue sessions including different types of actors, it is a good practice to provide a clear structure and guidance on the presentation and interventions. Each session may be introduced by a participant-learner before the intervention of the external speakers and everyone is encouraged to speak on the issue. The topics covered in the training should be accompanied by case studies coming from the participants as often as possible. Each session includes presentation of relevant documentation published by the FAO, the CFS, or civil society organizations, to which the external speakers make reference whenever possible.

The session may have the following structure:

Topic Introduction by a participant	max 10'
Speaker A	max 15'
Collective discussion	max 30'
Speaker B	max 30'
Break	max 30'
Collective discussion	max 30'
Speaker A	max 30'
Speaker B	max 30'
Reporting by 2 participants	max 15'

DISMANTLING OPPRESSION AND POWER HIERARCHIES

> *Human beings are not built in silence, but in word, in work, in action-reflection. But while to say the true word- which is work, which is praxis- is to transform the world, saying that word is not the privilege of some few persons, but the right of everyone. Consequently, no one can say a true word alone – nor can she say it for another, in a prescriptive act which robs others of their words*
>
> - Paulo Freire

DYNAMICS OF POWER AND HIERARCHY

Unless it is consciously interrupted and transformed, much of the harmful conditioning of the dominant culture will pervade any social space. Agroecology workshops are no exception. The replication of dominant culture unintentionally happens when facilitators do not attend to the dynamics of power and privilege and when people of marginalised identities are not fully included. Any learning environment, but especially inter-cultural one, is prone to unconsciously replicating patterns of oppression and perpetuating patterns of exclusion.

Addressing power, privilege, and oppression dynamics is a life-long practice and a learning journey that can be deeply transformative. People with privileged identities cannot be expected to suddenly recognize and rectify the full extent of a millennia of conditioning. It is a long and demanding process and we each approach it with the resources we have. Meeting people where they are and remaining patient is critical when creating spaces of learning. A key step in this process is a shift from guilt and defensiveness into an understanding of how our complicity in systems of oppression devastates our siblings with less power, making us fragile and disconnected from the truth of our interconnection.

Adapted from: The Work that Reconnects



THEATRE OF THE OPPRESSED

Theatre of the Oppressed is an arsenal of theatre techniques and games that seeks to humanize people, restore true dialogue, and create space for participants to rehearse taking action. It begins with the idea that everyone has the capacity to act in the “theatre” of our lives; everybody is at once an actor and a spectator. We are all spect-actors! It was created by Augusto Boal from Brazil who drew inspiration from Pedagogy of the Oppressed. There are many theatre forms that constitute Theatre of the Oppressed. The primary forms in use are: Body Demechanization, Image Theatre, Forum Theatre, Rainbow of Desire and Invisible Theatre.

Extract from: Collabchange

READ MORE ON THEATRE OF THE OPPRESSED METHODOLOGY

LEARNING THROUGH CONFLICT

> *There is a tendency always to say social movements are so influenced by ideology that we normally accused them of being demagogic, but actually […] even the academy is based on certain values and principles that were decided by the elites who have decided that this is called academic knowledge* - Colin Anderson

LEARNING THROUGH CONFLICT

1. OBSERVE:

Examples of closed behaviour:
Defensive: cross arms, legs, cover heart, neck, groin, hold arms out to ward off. Place chair/desk between you and the class. Become small, even submissive. Flick your eyes looking to escape. Touch your face to indicate anxiety.
Aggressive: face closed, frown, clench fists, red face, stare at another person.
Invasive: reduce other's space, invade comfort zone without permission. People feel attacked when they do these.

2. RESPOND:

Examples of skillful responses:
-Stick to the facts (try appraisal)
-Don't judge (revise (language which doesn't work)
-Allow time out (practice the use of silence)
-Ask the person what they think. (let them debrief)
-Offer support
-Acknowledge improvements (alarm and assist)

Source: PTM

NON-VIOLENT COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES IN CONFLICT

- Listen actively, clarify, assess, speak
- Use direct communication
- Accept responsibility
- Pause before speaking
- Assume good intentions
- Attack the problem, not each other
- Be curious and test your assumptions by asking clarifying questions
- Don't take it personally
- Put yourself in the other person's shoes
- Show empathy and support
- Respond don't react, think before speaking
- Be solution minded and think cooperatively
- Look for common interests
- Speak from a loving place that considers the best interest of the collective
- Reflect back what you think you heard

NON-VIOLENT COMMUNICATION, CTD

- Inquire about what a person needs to feel heard and seen
- Find the humour in the situation (if you can)
- Honour your emotions and find a healthy way of expressing them (singing, art, etc..)
- Let people cry for as long as they need to
- Make an agreement with all parties on the techniques or tools you will use to support for your specific situation
- Take note of special needs, cultural context and different abilities in the people you are dealing with when choosing tools or techniques
- Find a mediator that all parties agree on
- When blocked or anxious about verbal communication, write a letter and then read it aloud to the person or people involved
- Dance it out. Take a long hike together. Have an intentional bonding adventure together

NETWORK TOOLS #1 TAPE
PARTICIPATORY ACTION RESEARCH

> *While TAPE testing is only an exercise that these organizations implemented, former represents the tip of the iceberg of their work in nurturing existing agroecological initiatives in their countries*
> - Ana Benoliel



TAPE introduction
course online
TAPE – Brochure

TAPE - FAO TOOL FOR AGROECOLOGY PERFORMANCE EVALUATION

Together with 70 agroecology-related organizations from all over the world, FAO has developed a global analytical framework for the multidimensional assessment of the performance of agroecology: the Tool for Agroecology Performance Evaluation (TAPE).
It envisions to build knowledge, empower producers, inform policy makers and development institutions on one hand, and support agroecological transition processes at different scales on the other.
TAPE applies a stepwise approach at the household/farm level but it also collects information and provides results at a community and territorial scale.
The tool was designed to remain simple and to require minimum training and data collection.
The FAO Tool for Agroecology Performance Evaluation came as an instrument that can fill the knowledge gap about the existing agroecological practices, helping to reveal its hidden potential. With the help of TAPE and food producers and their respective communities the latter can identify their own unique development path integrated with their food culture and traditions.

PARTICIPATORY ACTION RESEARCH

Participatory Action Research or PAR brings people together to define for themselves what problems they face in their community, find solutions through talking with and gathering data from their peers, and then implementing those solutions through strategic and informed actions. It's a model of community organizing that builds the capacity of people on the front-line of a problem to take leadership in creating the change they want.

Extract from: Collabchange

NETWORK TOOLS #2 BILIM PLATFORM
DIGITAL TOOLS FOR AGROECOLOGY

> *Digitalization of food systems that – under full control of the local community, can potentially be a useful tool for local development purposes – is currently mainly used to facilitate data collection for corporate control and interest* - Schola Campesina



BILIM PLATFORM OPEN TO ALL: **BILIM.NETWORK**

READ PAPER: FOOD SYSTEMS AND DIGITALISATION FROM A FOOD SOVEREIGNTY APPROACH

DIGITAL TOOLS FOR AGROECOLOGY AND FOOD SOVEREIGNTY

Why *Bilim*? *Bilim* Means Knowledge in Turkish and other Central Asian languages. Built on 11 Pillars of the Nyéléni Declaration on Agroecology, Bilim promotes co-learning and political capacity building at the regional and international level.

STRENGTHS OF BILIM

1- The **first interregional digital platform focused entirely on Agroecology**, bridging the gap between traditional knowledge and technological tools for sharing it.

2 - A tool **built** for a community, **owned** by a community, to share useful knowledge for the community

3 - A **safe place** for small-scale farmers to communicate, share knowledge and experiences, and to promote co-learning

4 - A **multi-language tool** able to connect farmers' organizations in over 10 countries

5 - An **interactive forum and chat** to exchange contents and ideas on the different dimensions of Agroecology (11 Pillars of the Nyéléni Declaration on Agroecology)

SCALING UP, SCALING OUT

> *Agroecology training must also include the political…I come from a country where peasant farming is a way of life and it's still very vivid in the rural area. But what is missing, and this is what is happening in agroecology, is a more political training on how to articulate our political demands and how to act on achieving political aims*
> - Ramona Dumunicioiu



POLICY MEASURES TO FACILITATE
SHARING OF KNOWLEDGE FOR AGROECOLOGY

> *Strengthening farmers' organisations is fundamental in amplifying agroecology, because together farmers' organisations can create a grassroots movement that is capable of influencing mindsets and policy*
> - Amplifying Agroecology 2016



READ: POLICY MEASURES, Erasmus+ *Bridging Generations in Agroecology 2022*

A. A better recognition and support from the States of the existing agroecology initiatives of knowledge co-creation and sharing -and of the actors behind these initiatives.

- Policies should ackNowledge the existing informal initiatives -organized by non institutional actor demonstrating a valuable experience in educating farmers in agroecology-, as knowledge institution. The actors behind these initiatives -including the partner organizations of this project- should also be recognized and supported for the work accomplished so far in designing and providing adequate training for resilient and sustainable food system through agroecology, with an horizontal and peer-to-peer education and learning systems.
- Policies facilitate the access to ground-up, grassroot, community-based and diversified educational, training and capacity building initiatives specifically for youth; enhancing participatory and inclusive engagement and self-determination.

B. The inclusion of Agroecology -in all its dimensions- in the formal education system, in vocation trainings as well as in lifelong trainings.

- The existing courses in the formal system of education do not address agroecology in all its dimensions but are mainly dedicated to the ecological production of food. Adequate trainings for agroecology cover very different dimensions of food systems, starting from the Human Rights to the importance of the collective action, the territorial autonomy with self-governed markets, the relation with land and Nature, the transformation of the society for more equity; while recognizing the central role of women and youth in the food systems. A food system approach is required to address the increasing and concerning challenges.

POLICY MEASURES TO FACILITATE
SHARING OF KNOWLEDGE FOR AGROECOLOGY

> *We have built agroecology through many initiatives and struggles. We have the legitimacy to lead it into the future. Policy makers cannot move forward on agroecology without us. They must respect and support our agroecological processes rather than continuing to support the forces that destroy us* - Nyeleni Declaration 2015



C. Progress in pedagogy, from top-down to horizontal learning processes, where food producers' knowledge is recognized as central and where youth are given a chance to be agent of change.

- Policies should ackowledge the central importance of small-scale food producers in the co-creation of knowledge and promote the horizontal dialogue with other kinds of knowledge such as academia's. Education for farmers should be based on concrete field examples and lessons learned from elder farmers and rural communities to share existing experiences of local economies.
- Policies should focus on the role and priorities of youth in education. Public research and training should be reoriented to build on the agency ("capacity to be agent") of youth and respond to their training needs to be skilled for transforming the food systems toward more sustainability.

- Public policies should promote participatory research given the key role that small-scale food producers play in research and development. The current unbalance in investment and research leading between the public and the private sector should be addressed by promoting participatory public led research, where farmers can set their priorities.

D. Promote, organize and fund collaboration between existing grassroot, community-based and diversified trainings that are so far poorly recognized and the formal education system

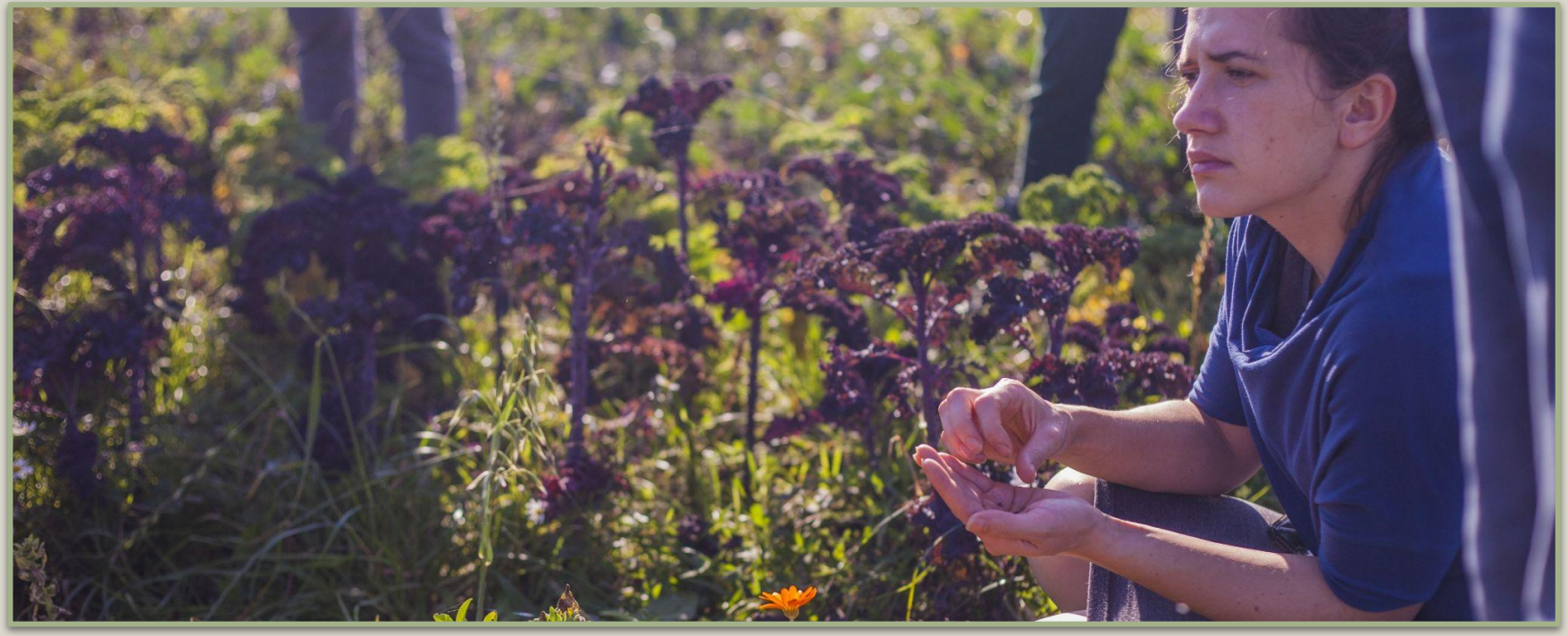
E. Create new spaces for knowledge sharing specifically between different generations

F. Allocate a specific fund for food producers' training, all life long.

Source: Erasmus+ *Bridging Generations in Agroecology 2022*

APPENDICES

> *If we are just talking about organic farming or agroecological approaches to farming-, it's easy. But it's a big challenge to transmit knowledge on political agroecology, and that's why we need to find mechanisms that help us do that kind of political education"*
> - Attila Szocs-Boruss



AGROECOLOGY SCHOOLS CASE STUDIES
MOLDOVA

> *Collaboration is a lot about communication. We use our garden as a visual platform to concretely show things growing better without the work and chemicals. This is one of the best ways to communicate this information to bring people in contact with the garden and where the seeds are grown*
> -Mariana Seremet

ABOUT GRADINA MOLODOVEI - Garden of Moldova Civil Society Org.

Gradina Moldovei - a Moldovan NGO has been pioneering the concept of agroecology and testing TAPE in Moldova, attracting young families who want to increase their food autonomy with the help of agroecology, i.e., using less or no phytosanitary products, reducing labour, becoming more circular and reducing waste while obtaining abundant yields of delicious fruits and vegetables. The organisation has created a Green Library, an Agroecological Seed Bank based on heritage varieties as well as online tutorial series on food-growing. Building on the need of local communities to access healthy, diversified food, the organisation works to show the environmental and economic benefits of agroecology whilst teaching practical skills through workshops, research and campaigns.

EDUCATION ACTIVITIES

Gradina Molodovei pursues 5 strategic educational activities on agroecology:

- Green Library includes informational materials, leaflets, guides, practical resume of main principles of agroecology;
- Community Seed Bank activated with the help of French and Romanian Seed Savers' organisations;
- Experimental plot - garden of the organisation's founder, combining edible and agroecological features;
- Gardening workshops and trainings on different topics, with special interest among the young generation aware of
- Research, including TAPE, starting critical discussions on food issues, especially health



AGROECOLOGY EDUCATION CASE STUDIES
POLAND

> *Our educational network grows with the participation of local leaders and various organizational models: from cooperatives to research institutions and educational farms. Leaders grow up truly grassroots, and movement creates spaces where the vectors of their actions can meet and connect*
> - Joanna Bojczewska

AGRO-PERMA-LAB - training leaders in agroecology and permaculture

A training, research and capacity building education organisation that grew out of Food Sovereignty Movement, Nyeleni Polska. In 2019 APLab adapted and implemented Agroecology Schools' methodology in the first 10-day residential training at the agroecological educational farm, *Ecological Folk Highschool*. The inter-sectoral training was co-designed and pedagogically advised by Schola Campesina. It gathered 20 young activists and 20 expert speakers from a variety of food and agriculture organisations leading to the work on the Declaration of Agroecology for Poland. Since then, APLab has applied horizontal, participatory and popular educational methods to specialist trainings on Community Seed Homes and International Permaculture Educators' Forum.

EDUCATION ACTIVITIES

Agro-Perma-Lab pursues 5 strategic educational activities on agroecology:

- Combining 3-stage training model: participatory research; followed by training; and pilot implementation;
- Working in a synergistic manner at the intersection of approaches (agroecology, permaculture, seeds, sustainable activism, food system transformation);
- Employing *dialogo de saberes* and working across sectors and generations of food-producers;
- Emphasising leadership, community organising potential and diversity in training enrollment;
- Building a network of educators with practical land-based and informal education skills.



AGROECOLOGY EDUCATION CASE STUDIES
UNITED KINGDOM

> *Farm Hacks are based on the principle that everyone has something to learn and everyone has something to teach. Farm Hack opens space for horizontal dialogues and experimentation rather than one-way lecture style learning*
> - EAKEN

ABOUT FARM HACK - sharing in spirit of technological sovereignty

Farm Hack Farm Hack is a community-led approach to the development, modification and sharing of designs for farm tools, machinery and other innovations. It emphasizes a farmer-to-farmer approach to learning and creates platforms for farmers to come together to 'hack' and apply their collective ingenuity in the development of technologies appropriate for agroecology. The first Farm Hack was started by The Greenhorns in the U.S.A., and has since been taken up in the U.K. By bringing farmers and other technology creators together, new capacity for learning and innovation is created, leading to improved tools, new ideas, increased confidence, and the capacity to develop and build tools.

EDUCATION ACTIVITIES

Farm Hack typically involves two main complementary components:

Web-based: A web platform is used to where designs can be shared using an open source or creative commons approach. Farmer-derived innovations are made available and editable by other members of the community.
Events: Farm hack events bring together farmers, growers, fabricators, engineers and IT programmers to demonstrate and share tools, skills and ideas through field demonstrations, practical workshops, seminars, entertainment, and cultural exchanges. These two components come together when tools that are demonstrated at events are posted online.



Farm Hack
Farm-to-farmer innovation: open source and creative commons
Pedagogical PDF

AGROECOLOGY SCHOOLS CASE STUDIES
SPAIN, HUNGARY

> *In Agroecology, the practical and the political are inseparable. EHNE-Bizkaia attempts to politicize new members through popular education, pointing out the systemic contradictions – or 'clash of models' – between food sovereignty and capitalist society* - EAKEN

EHNE BIZKAIA, BASQUE COUNTRY
- farmers' union for small scale farms in Spain

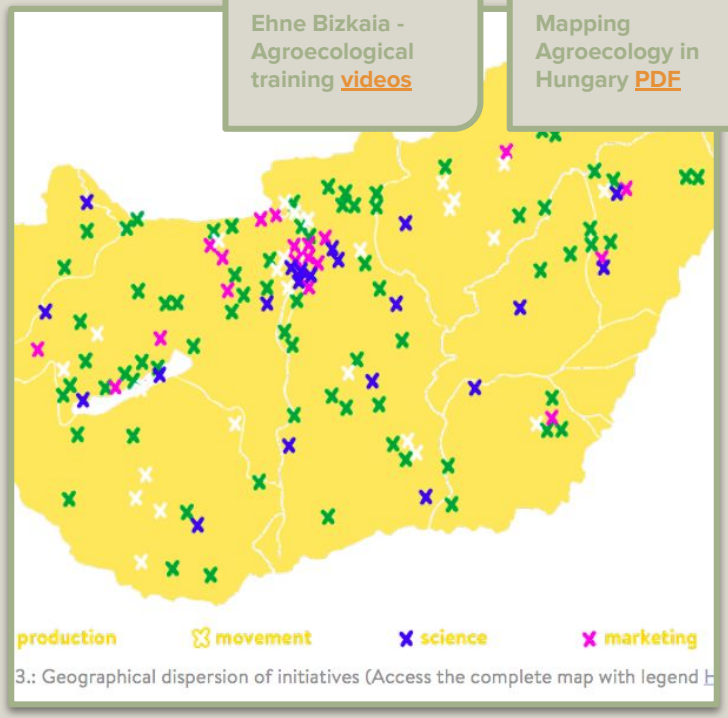
EHNE-Bizkaia provides training in both the practical and political aspects of agroecology. Formed in 1976, EHNE-Bizkaia has gradually moved towards fully integrating political activism and agroecology, joining La Via Campesina in 1993. EHNE-Bizkaia has developed and advocated forms of learning that not only help farmers escape dependency on corporate supply chains, but also build political networks and the educational capacity of farmers. In doing so EHNE-Bizkaia has drawn heavily from the traditions of Popular Education. EHNE-Bizkaia courses are geared towards learning about the political and the practical reasons for transformations towards agroecology and food sovereignty. In 2017 Ehne Bizkaia played a key role in hosting VII International La Via Campesina Conference.

HUNGARIAN AGROECOLOGY NETWORK ASSOCIATION

Emerged at the 1st Hungarian Agroecology Conference, 2019. Currently the Network has 3 working groups: Education and Knowledge sharing, Landscape and natural resources management and Farmer involvement. The network aims to:
- organize events to promote knowledge sharing and networking for the development of the Hungarian agroecological transition;
- carry out agroecological awareness-raising activities;
- embed agroecology in the formal and informal education system;
- formulate and represent policy recommendations; advocate for agroecology
- promote research that is practice-oriented, stakeholder-involved and cross-disciplinary

Ehne Bizkaia - Agroecological training videos

Mapping Agroecology in Hungary PDF



3.: Geographical dispersion of initiatives (Access the complete map with legend H

AGROECOLOGY EDUCATION CASE STUDIES
INTERNATIONAL NETWORKS

> *Collective rights and access to the commons are fundamental pillar of agroecology. We share access to territories that are the home to many different peer groups, and we have sophisticated customary systems for regulating access and avoiding conflicts that we want to preserve and to strengthen -*
> Nyeleni Declaration 2015

EAKEN - European Agroecology Knowledge Exchange Network

Since 2016, The European Agroecology Knowledge Exchange Network aims to link European initiatives which promote the peasant-to-peasant agroecological knowledge exchange. This network is part of an international process led by La Via Campesina (LVC) and coordinated in Europe by the European Coordination of La Via Campesina (ECVC). EAKEN strives to build a European-wide exchange network facilitating peasant-to-peasant knowledge exchange and increase emphasis on popular education. The network focuses on practical skills sharing as well as on political training, considering both as inseparable. By doing so, it wishes to strengthen the peasant agroecology and food sovereignty in Europe.

URGENCI - bridging farmer-consumer divide

URGENCI, the international network for Community Supported Agriculture (CSA), emphasises the need to consider consumers as key subjects in agroecology and agroecology learning. In one example of their agro-ecological education work. The participation of consumers in the political dynamics of agroecology is a rich but largely untapped potential for advancing food system transformation, however, providing blended farmer-consumer learning spaces is critical for wider social movement building.

In 2019, leading members of URGENCI took part in the Schola Campesina's training on Agroecology in Italy.



EAKAN
Resources
Working Notes

URGENCI RESOURCE HUB (for Community Supported Agriculture)

AGROECOLOGY FRAMEWORKS - MAIN DIFFERENCES: Nyéléni, FAO, HLPE

> *"The efforts of defining agroecology and developing different sets of agroecological principles have been occurring in various contexts by different actors with different perspectives* - HLPE, 2019

Three important initiatives to conceptually define agroecology are:
- The 11 pillars of the Nyéléni Declaration
- The 10 elements by the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO, 2018a)
- The 13 principles by the High Level Panel of Experts on Food Security and Nutrition (HLPE, 2019)

The Nyeleni definition of agroecology was shaped by the different aspects that characterise territorial food systems operated by communities around the world. These aspects were reported by grassroots organisations. It is a bottom-up process aimed at defending human rights in the face of unequal power relations..
According to the Declaration of Nyéléni (2015), agroecology advocates an agricultural model
- that respects farmers' rights and livelihoods,
- that aims to feed the surrounding population,
- that is based on local biodiversity
- that is managed at the local level.

The definitions from FAO and HLPE, based on extensive consultations, are institutional processes that aim to capture the key elements of food system sustainability.

It is a process, led by international institutions and experts with the general idea of overcoming the existing climate, environmental and social crisis. The different nature of these processes naturally leads to differences in the content of the definitions. In general, the FAO and HLPE definitions refer more to the ecological character of the production system, while the Nyéléni Declaration focuses more on culture, social, rights and governance issues. In fact, 5 of the 10 FAO elements (1, 3, 4, 5, 6) concern the production side at farm level, while this is only the case for the second pillar "Ecological Principles" of the Nyeleni Declaration. The agency of the populations is fundamental in the Nyéléni definition of agroecology and is poorly represented in HLPE and FAO definitions, similarly to the central role of organisations and collectives..



HLPE 2019 PDF

FAO 10 elements of agroecology 2018 PDF

AGRO-INDUSTRIAL FOOD SYSTEM:
THE CHALLENGE

> *Agroecology is the answer to how to transform and repair our material reality in a food system and rural world that has been devastated by industrial food production and its so-called Green and Blue Revolutions. We see agroecology as a key form of resistance to an economic system that puts profit before life*
> - Nyeleni Declaration 2015



THE CHALLENGE

The agro-industrial model is highly dependent on 'growth' in gross domestic product and business productivity, however, this does not necessarily translate into an increase in agricultural incomes. Thus, the model engenders inequalities, contributes to deep social fractures and it certainly does not lead to better living conditions for humankind. The agro-industrial model seeks to define peasant farmers – an endangered occupation – as "agricultural entrepreneurs". Once ensnared into the agro-industrial supply chain – which pushes peasant farmers to produce raw materials at low costs with hidden high environmental and social costs – the peasant farmer becomes an agricultural worker who is poorly paid but forced to take on entrepreneurial risks, whose rights are seen as a mere cost. The agro-industrial chain model denies us our knowledge in order to take away our autonomy and transform us into a workforce. All of this demonstrates that the agro-industrial model is socially and environmentally unsustainable. Moreover, it is underpropped by public policies and health and business standards that have been designed in accordance with this model.

The model of agro-industrial production is unsustainable for the following reasons:

- it is not equitable;
- it depends on non-renewable fossil fuels;
- it is highly polluting, and is one of the main culprits of climate change, due to high level of gas emissions that lead to climate change;
- it produces unhealthy foods;
- it consumes more water;
- it causes the disintegration of communities in rural areas;
- it generates food waste;
- it leads to obesity and famine;
- it favors urban growth processes that are unsustainable for the planet;
- it leads to the loss of biodiversity;
- it has devastating effects on the conservation of natural resources and ecosystems;
- it contributes to poverty and inequality.

1 See FAO, The State of Food Insecurity (SOFI) 2017.
2 See Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) of the European Union or Agricultural Law of the United States of America.
3 See the Agreement on Agriculture of the World Trade Organisation and all the agreements of free trade that are pending ratification.

GLOSSARY - KEY WORDS FOR AGROECOLOGY SCHOOLS

ACTION RESEARCH
AUTONOMY
AMPLIFYING AGROECOLOGY
BIO-REGIONAL COOPERATION
CAPACITY BUILDING
CO-CREATION OF KNOWLEDGE
COOPERATION
DIVERSITY
EMANCIPATORY
EMPOWERING CRITICAL
FARMERS ORGANIZATIONS
FEELINGS
HORIZONTAL LEARNING
INTERGENERATIONAL
INTERSECTORAL

ACTION RESEARCH Action research' is a participatory process concerned with developing practical knowing in the pursuit of worthwhile human purposes. It seeks to bring together action and reflection, theory and practice, in participation with others, in the pursuit of practical solutions to issues of significance concerning the flourishing of human persons, their communities, and the wider ecology in which we participate (adapted from Reason and Bradbury, 2008, Pimbert 2009)

AUTONOMY Building farm autonomy is a central issue for Agroecology Schools: valuing local knowledge, farmers, technologies for water and energy management, soil fertility and the multi-functionality of farming.

AMPLIFYING AGROECOLOGY Amplification of agroecology the transformation of food systems, rather than just the spreading of a set of food production techniques. Amplification of agroecology (is) a long-term process leads by social movements, but encompasses all actors in the food system, including consumers.

BIO-REGIONAL COOPERATION Developing bio-regional cooperation is a model of a self-sufficient and democratic economy.

CAPACITY BUILDING Horizontal learning environments emphasize that everyone has experience and knowledge they can share with others. Capacity building builds self-confidence in participants. It is a crucial element within a strategic program to scale up and scale out a learning program, where more and more learners become teachers.

CO-CREATION OF KNOWLEDGE The declaration of the Nyéléni Forum on Agroecology, 2015, clearly states that agroecology is a process of collective generation, or co-creation, of knowledge, not merely vertical information transfer. Co-creation of knowledge happens when new knowledge emerges from sharing learning and working together with other people.

COOPERATION Agroecology Schools must be based on building cooperative situations among the actors involved in the agrifood system: producers, educators, consumers, social movements, (local) public institutions, along with initiatives and markets for a social-solidarity economy. This approach is based on enabling actors to work on the transformation of territories inspired by democratization of knowledge, institutions, economies and power.

DIVERSITY Agroecology School recognises the critical role of diversity in two aspects: ecological and social. Diversity is central in peasant farming, and it is through the observation and analysis of diversity that small producers improve and innovate their practices and approach. The process is based on continuous learning and embraces diverse modalities of knowledge that comprise peasant wisdom and art of food growing, land management, and environmental conservation.

EMANCIPATORY EDUCATION Emancipatory education dismantles the traditional vertical nature of teaching and learning and empowers learners to understand the wider context of learning and knowledge co-creation. It encourages learners to act on their understandings more effectively and enact change, both at first within the classroom, but ultimately to experience and reflect on their impact and affect other spaces.

EMPOWERING CRITICAL LEARNING Developing critical consciousness among farmers through empowering their self-recognition, self-determination and visibility of experience is key to understanding the genuine role of agriculture.

FARMERS ORGANIZATIONS Grassroots organizations for small food producers include peasants and small family farmers, indigenous peoples, local communities, hunters and gatherers, small-scale livestock farmers and shepherds, and fishermen. These groups' work is essential combat poverty, food insecurity and hunger.

FEELINGS Peasant sentiment bases on awareness, love and respect for the Earth, the commons, nature and all life forms. Agroecological education approves the role of emotions and feelings and gives them value as part of the transformative learning process. Agroecology Schools recognise explicitly the emotional and organisational aspects of the shared common political identity in the group.

HORIZONTAL LEARNING A transformative learning approach and a central concept within popular education that involves democratic communication on the same level, non-hierarchical and anti-authoritarian co-creation. A horizontal agroecology learning approach is a way to validate perspectives routinely sidelined in mainstream learning approaches.

INTERGENERATIONAL Agroecology School approaches the older generation with care, respect and a humble attitude, paying attention to how we can set up spaces for a more sensitive dialogue across differences in historical farming experiences.

INTERSECTORAL Agroecological education is intersectoral, showing us how various elements of the food system are linked. By bringing together into dialogue people from diverse sectors of economy and society, we learn that our concern for nature and care for the right to eat healthy, nutritious food connects us all deeply. From here we can build shared vision and act.

GLOSSARY - KEY WORDS FOR AGROECOLOGY SCHOOLS

NETWORKS & ALLIANCES
ORGANIZATIONS
PARTICIPATORY
PEASANT TO PEASANT
PRINCIPLE-BASED
SCALING OUT/UP
SOLIDARITY
TECHNICAL & POLITICAL
TERRITORIAL DIMENSION
THEORETICAL & PRACTICAL
TRADITIONAL KNOWLEDGE
TRANSFORMATION OF FOOD SYSTEMS
TRANSFORMATIVE
TRUST

NETWORKS & ALLIANCES By building international networks through local, regional and national initiatives, new possibilities arise for exchange and the international mobility of pedagogical innovations from one location to another through the *dialogos de saberes*. Multi-scaled networks are critical for the sharing of agroecological knowledge and pedagogies and building capacity for further learning.

ORGANIZATIONS Decentralized and distributed local organizations play a key role in facilitating knowledge-sharing within transformative agroecological learning networks of producers and consumers.

PARTICIPATORY Agroecological education is based on dialogo de saberes, participatory methodologies and dynamics.

PEASANT TO PEASANT (*Campesino a Campesino*) Peasants have innovated and exchanged knowledge from ancient times, but the contemporary and systemized version of this exchange is known nowadays as the “Peasant to Peasant” (also known as farmer to farmer) methodology.

PRINCIPLE-BASED Agroecological education is based on the 11 Principles of Agroecology. These principles inform topics in the curriculum. the choice of training space, participant enrollment and the design of training programmes.

SCALING OUT/UP To amplify agroecology, it is helpful to imagine horizontal and vertical dimensions. Horizontally, it is necessary for agroecology to reach out from the existing ‘lighthouse farms’ and engage many thousands and millions more small farmers across the continents of the globe. This horizontal growth is called ‘scaling-out’.” On the other hand, agroecology cannot change global food systems without local NGO-led processes, projects promoting agroecology (supported by large funds), and social movements implementing agroecology with the scientific community in the context of ongoing agrarian reform and political structures (LVC Toolkit)

SOLIDARITY Sharing risks and benefits, and solidarity between rural and urban populations build strong, independent communities where agroecological knowledge can be horizontally learned.

TECHNICAL & POLITICAL Agroecology Schools connect learning about the practical aspects of agroecological production with the political project of food sovereignty. Whereas training on agriculture can happen naturally in communities, the political dimensions of training, including how to articulate political demands or impact institutions, is critical for empowering farming communities and organisations.

TERRITORIAL DIMENSION Agroecology Schools must enable transforming territories The role of the territory as well as the local management of natural resources and food systems, with strong urban-rural links and farmer-consumer cooperation are critical for food sovereignty.

THEORETICAL & PRACTICAL A combination of theoretical (e.g. popular education, political agroecology), practical (ongoing study proposals for Food Sovereignty) and transformative (food networks and movements) approaches are typical of Agroecology Schools.

TRADITIONAL KNOWLEDGE Protecting and developing traditional knowledge is essential to maintaining the continuity of the farmer's vocation. Without traditional knowledge farmers could lose their autonomy and become vulnerable to external changes.

TRANSFORMATION OF FOOD SYSTEMS Agroecology links together science, practice and movements focused on social change and social justice. The agroecological transformation of the food system is a way to redesign it to achieve ecological, economic and social equality.

TRANSFORMATIVE Transformative agroecological learning changes the position of learners and makes them active discoverers. Agroecology schools help learners to reflect on their collective identity and struggles.

TRUST Trust between social movement leaders and non-governmental organisation workers is a result of long-term relationships built on shared values and goals, and the engagement of taking risks collectively, with a shared understanding of roles and responsibilities between the social movements and non-governmental organisations.

RESOURCES & LINKS

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

2022 Agroecology Guidebook: Bridging Generations in Agroecology **PDF**
2021 Agroecology in Europe and Central Asia - An overview by FAO **PDF**
2021 Pimbert, M.P.; Moeller, N.I.; Singh, J.; and Anderson, C.R. Agroecology, in, Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Anthropology. Oxford University Press 2022 **WWW**
2009 Altieri, M. Agroecology, Small Farms, and Food Sovereignty, in Monthly Review, 61 (3) **WWW**
2018 CIDSE (Coopération Internationale pour le Développement et la Solidarité). The principles of Agroeoclogy **PDF**
2015 Nyéléni International Forum for Agroecology. Nyéléni Center, Sélingué, Mali. 24–27 February 2015. **PDF**
2021 Food system and Digitalisation from a Food Sovereignty Approach **PDF**
2015 The final report on the international forum for agroecology **PDF**

PART I - AGROECOLOGY SCHOOLS

TRAINING DOCUMENTS:
2017 International Training on Peasant Agroecology and Global Governance 2017 - Pedagogical Note **PDF** / Programme breakdown by day **PDF**
2019 Agroecology School pilot training in Kyrgyzstan Programme **PDF**
2019 Agro-Perma-Lab Training Programme based on adaptation of Schola Campesina Agroecology School **WWW**
2020 International Agroecology and Global governance youth training Programme **PDF**
2022 Sakarya Report for a day-to-day overview of activities **PDF**
2009 Book chapter: Pimbert, Michel, "Transforming Knowledge and Ways of Knowing" **PDF**
2018 Pimbert, M.P. Democratizing knowledge and ways of knowing for food sovereignty, agroecology and biocultural diversity, in Pimbert, M.P. (ed.) Food Sovereignty, Agroecology And Biocultural Diversity. Constructing and Contesting Knowledge. London: Routledge, pp. 259-321. **WWW**

Developing a European Agroecology Learning and Training Network. Research brief. PDF

PART III - LEARNING COMMUNITY

2009 Book chapter: Pimbert, Michel, "Local Organizations at the Heart of Food Sovereignty" **PDF**
2014 Everyday Experts: How people's knowledge can transform the food system **BOOK**
2014 La Vía Campesina and academia: a snapshot Ch 9 in Everyday Experts **BOOK**
2014 The role of trust in building alliances of social movements: organising the International Forum on Agroecology Ch 10 in Everyday Experts **BOOK**
2016 Strengthening people's knowledge, Farming Matters **WWW**

A running list of literature on adult education in food movements **www**

RESOURCES & LINKS

PART III - EMPOWERING FACILITATION

Seeds for Change Resources on different topics in facilitation **WWW**
Learning for Sustainability Facilitation Tools **WWW**
Agroecology and feminism short **PDF**
2021 Food systems and digitalization from a food sovereignty approach – new working paper, Schola Campesina **PDF**
2014 Participatory action research transforming local food systems in India, Iran and Peru Ch. 7, in Everyday Experts **BOOK**
2014 CAIS Maloka: Researching our Campesino reality through critical reflection, participation, action and learning Ch. 4, in Everyday Experts **BOOK**
TESA tool box of popular education techniques WWW
People's Knowledge and Participatory Action Research PDF

PART IV - SCALING UP, SCALING OUT

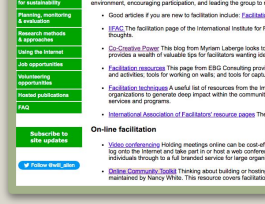
2016 How to amplify Agroecology **PDF**
Leadership, Organising and Public Narrative Tools **WWW**
InsightShare (tranings, indigenous media, toolkits) **WWW**
2018 FAO Scaling Up Agroecology Initiative. Transforming Food and Agricultural Systems in Support of the SDGs **PDF**
Mapping Agroecology and Food System Change Initiatives, Agroecology NOW **WWW**
2016 Agroecology Learning Exchange final report **PDF**
2014 Agroecological Formación in Rural Social Movements, McCune, N., Reardon, J., & Rosset, P. **PDF**
2017 A Matter Of Scale A study of the productivity, financial viability and multifunctional benefits of small farms (20 ha and less) **PDF**
2009 Towards Food Sovereignty. Reclaiming autonomous food systems. Pimbert, M., **PDF** **WWW**
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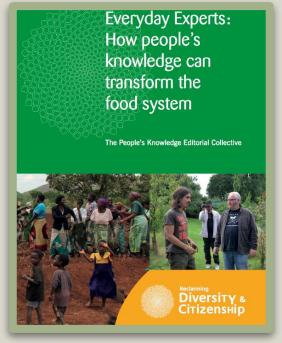
APPENDICES

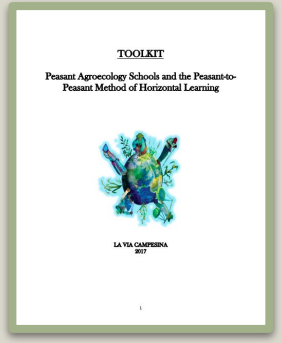
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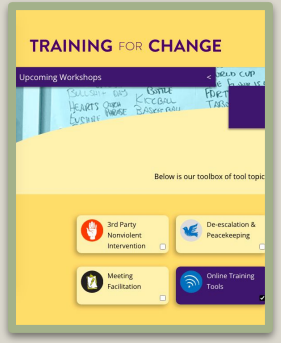
HLPE (High Level Panel of Experts on Food Security and Nutrition) (2019). Agroecological and other innovative approaches for sustainable agriculture and food systems that enhance food security and nutrition. HLPE Reports series # 14, Rome PDF

TOOLKITS & HANDBOOKS FOR FACILITATORS





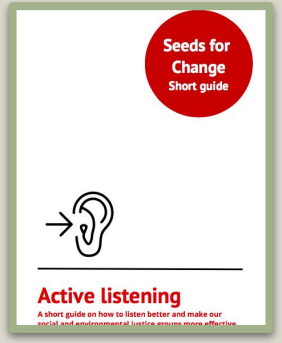


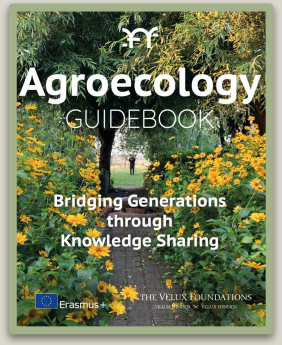




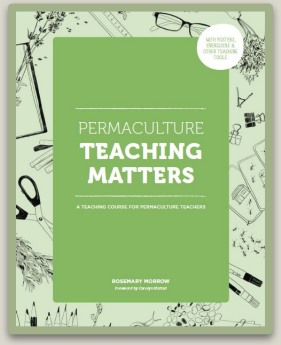
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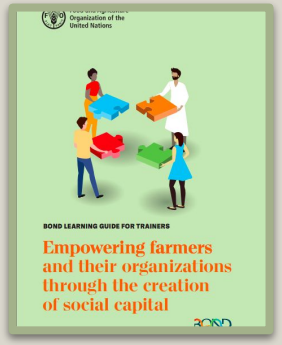


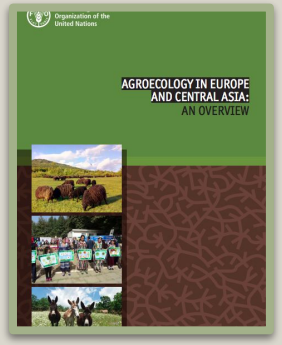


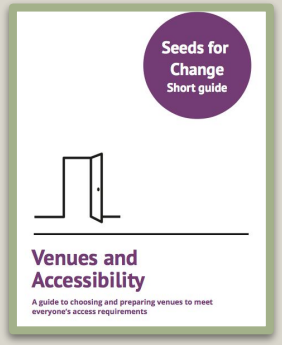












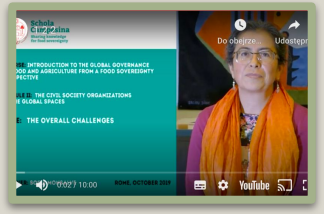
VIDEO LIBRARY



Agroecology: Voices From Social Movements



TAPE - Introduction to E-Learning Platform



Introduction to the Global Governance of Food and Agriculture from a Food Sovereignty Perspective



Introduction to the Global Governance of Food and Agriculture from a Food Sovereignty Perspective



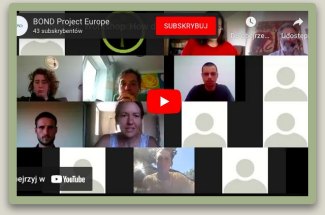
Technology sovereignty – what kind of innovation small-scale food producers need and want?



Schola Campesina 2017 Training documentary video



Open Source solutions: the challenge to share and protect farmer's knowledge



How do rights to natural resources ensure a viable future for young farmers?



Miguel Altieri: Why is agroecology the solution to hunger and food security?



Earth Talk: Agroecology: Who will feed us in a planet in crisis with Miguel A. Altieri



Participatory Research with Women Farmers



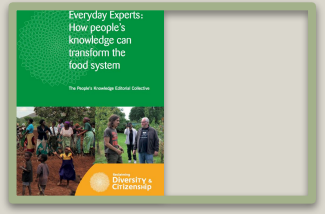
Agroecology Grassroots Solutions to Global Crises



DARE This playlist includes a series of films about Democratising Agriculture Research in Europe



CAWR People's Knowledge Series - Public Debate on Agroecology in the European Parliament



Agroecology: Voices From Social Movements

CO-CREATION, COPYRIGHTS

> *“Our vision is to rebuild, defend, energise, exchange and transfer peasant farming knowledge from generation to generation. This knowledge is the heritage of food producers, and also of their communities and like-minded academics – all on an equal footing”*
> *- Schola Campesina*

CO-CREATION

THE TOOLKIT is a working document, which will be updated in the course 2022/2023. The content of this publication is the sole responsibility of partner organisations: Schola Campesina Aps, Elkana, Ecoruralis and ADI and have been created as part of the project *“Sharing knowledge for a stronger agroecology movement in ECA region”*.

PARTNER ORGANISATIONS

This project is co-led by four organizations ADI (Kyrgyzstan), Ecoruralis (Romania), Elkana (Georgia) and Schola Campesina Aps (Italy) and will benefit a larger community of Agroecology Schools and small scale farmers’ organisations from Europe and Central Asia (ECA), including Albania, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Hungary, Kazakhstan, Kosovo, Moldova, North Macedonia, Poland, Serbia, Tajikistan, Turkey, Ukraine, Uzbekistan.

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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

ADI – Agency of Development Initiatives
CSA – Community Supported Agriculture
CSOs – Civil Society Organizations
EU – European Union
FAO – Food and Agriculture organization
LVC - La Via Campesina
NGOs – Non-Governmental Organizations
SDGs – Sustainable Development Goals
UN – United Nations
UNDROP – United Nations Declaration of Rights of Peasants and other People Working in Rural Areas
USSR – Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
TAPE - Tool for Agroecology Performance Evaluation

TEXT

TWO TYPES OF CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANISATIONS

Table 4.2. A comparison between two different types of civil society organisations

	Peasant and peoples' organisations	Non-governmental organisations (NGOs)
Types of organisations	Community based organisations, peoples' organisations, mass organisations and social movements that include, for example, indigenous peoples and fisherfolk organisations, urban poor groups, trade unions, farmer organisations and women's collectives	Non profit organisations that channel funds for conservation and development projects Organisations that capture significant resources to conduct research on issues of importance to the marginalised and "poor"
Funding sources	Private donations, international organisations	Private donations, governments, foundations, international organisations and corporations
Staff and membership	Community members and volunteers, with a small number of paid staff in larger peasant organisations Many—but by no means all—have democratically elected leaders who are directly accountable to their communities or wider membership	Usually staffed by well educated, middle class professionals Continued existence depends on ability to secure funds from donors for specific projects or campaigns
Roles	Work to further the interests of their mass membership and/or members of their community	Project driven organisations created to speak for those without a voice. In practice, act either as critics that challenge the powerful, or as allies and advisors to dominant social forces and coalitions of power

Extract from: Pimbert, Michel. "Local Organizations at the Heart of Food Sovereignty." Chap. 4 in Towards Food Sovereignty: Reclaiming Autonomous Food Systems. London: IIED, 2009.

ALTERNATIVE SYSTEMS OF LEARNING FOR CHANGE

Box 7.10. Alternative systems of learning for change

There has been in recent years a rapid expansion of alternative systems of learning and innovation. These have drawn on many long-established traditions that have put participation, action research and adult education at the forefront of attempts to emancipate disempowered people. These approaches represent a significant departure from standard practice in the social and natural sciences. Methods are being used not just for local people to inform outsiders, but also for people's own analysis of their own conditions (see Action Research, passim; Bradbury and Reason, 2007; Chambers, 1992a&b; Pretty and Chambers, 1993).

Despite the different ways in which these approaches are used, there are important common principles uniting most of them (Fals Borda and Rahman, 1991; Pretty, 1994; Borrini *et al.*, 2007). These are as follows:

- *A defined methodology and systemic learning process*: the focus is on cumulative learning by all the participants and, given the nature of these approaches as systems of learning and action, their use has to be participative.
- *Multiple perspectives*: a central objective is to seek diversity, rather than characterise complexity in terms of average values. All views of activity or purpose are heavy with interpretation, bias and prejudice, and this implies that there are multiple possible descriptions of any real-world activity.
- *Group learning process*: all involve the recognition that the complexity of the world will only be revealed through group learning.
- *Context specific*: the approaches are flexible enough to be adapted to suit each new set of conditions and actors, and so there are multiple variants.
- *Facilitating experts and citizens*: the methodology is concerned with transforming existing activities to try to bring about changes which people in the situation regard as improvements. The role of the "expert" is best thought of as helping people in their situation carry out their own study and so achieve something. These facilitating experts and citizens may be stakeholders themselves.
- *Leading to sustained action in the face of dynamic change*: the learning process leads to debate about change, including confronting others' constructions, and this debate changes the perceptions of the actors and their readiness to contemplate action. Action is agreed, and implementable changes will therefore represent an accommodation between the different conflicting views. This action includes local institution-building or strengthening, so increasing the capacity of people to initiate change on their own.

The methods are structured into five classes, namely those for group and team dynamics, for sampling, for interviewing and dialogue, for visualisation and diagramming, and for citizen deliberation and negotiating agreements on the roles, rights and responsibilities of different actors. It is the collection of these methods into unique approaches, or assemblages of methods and processes, that constitutes systems of learning and action for change.

Source: modified from Pretty, 1994; Borrini Feyerabend *et al.*, 2007.

Box 5.18. Broad principles for deliberative and inclusive processes related to policy development

- ✓ Participants, not those organising the process, frame and set terms of reference for the whole exercise.
- ✓ The group organising, or in overall control of, the process is broad based, including social actors with different interests on the subject being discussed.
- ✓ There are safe spaces for participants (usually non-specialist) to engage in a mutually educative manner with specialists.
- ✓ There is full transparency about the activities carried out within the process to those outside it.
- ✓ A diversity of information sources is available to participants.
- ✓ Those without a voice in policy-making can use the process as a tool for positive change.
- ✓ The process contains safeguards to prevent policy-makers from using it to legitimise existing assumptions or policies.
- ✓ All groups involved in the process should have sufficient room for learning, development and change.
- ✓ There is an audit trail that can explain whether policies were changed as a result of the process, what was taken into account, what criteria were applied when weighing up the evidence from the process and therefore how the views of those involved in the participatory process made a difference to the decision.

(adapted from Peals, 2003; Wakeford and Pimbert, 2003)

Extract from: Book chapter: Pimbert, Michel, "Transforming Knowledge and Ways of Knowing"

MAPPING AGROECOLOGY: PRINCIPLES, TOOLS, PRACTICES, PROJECTS

	PRINCIPLES	TOOLS AND PRACTICES
SCIENCE	Holistic approach Transdisciplinarity Locally adapted solutions	-Participatory research -Action research -Agronomy,ecology,sociology, economics
PRACTICE	Sustainable use of local renewable resources Regenerating biodiversity Providing resilience Applying ecological principles Climate change mitigation and adaptation Geographic proximity between producers and consumers	-Organic agriculture, permaculture, biodynamic agriculture, agroforestry -Recycling of biomass, composting, cover crops and mulching -Minimize energy, water and nutrient loss -Minimize dependence on external resources -Crop rotation and fallowing -Local crop varieties and livestock breeds -Enhance biological interactions -Conservation tillage -Intercropping, polycultures -Holistic landscape management -Local and short food supply chains, CSA, PGS -Locally adapted design of farming and food systems -Traditional or innovative products
MOVEMENT	Defending smallholder and family farming Food, seed and land sovereignty Sustainable and fair food system Autonomy of farmers Social equity between actors	-Financial independence, market access -Farmers groups, advocacy -Sharing of knowledge -Cross-sectoral dialogue -Shared organization -Participatory governance -Fostering food culture

Table 1.: Key principles and tools of agroecology

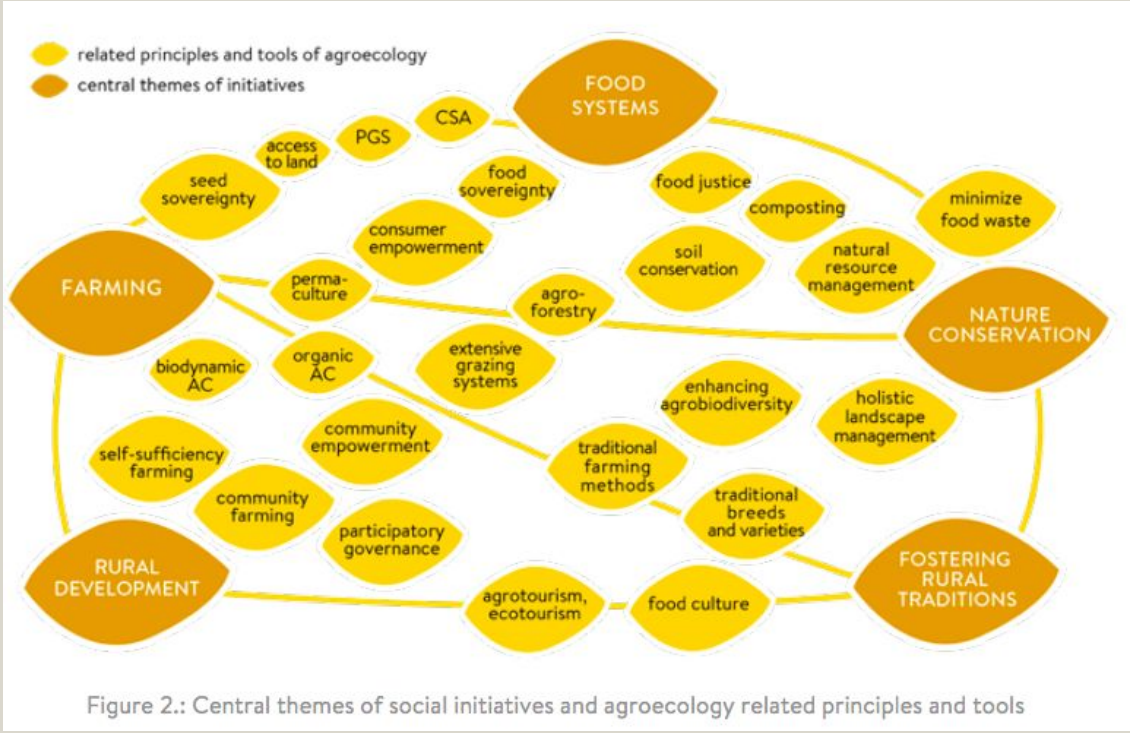


Figure 2.: Central themes of social initiatives and agroecology related principles and tools

TABLES FROM OTHER SOURCES

Extract from: 2020 Mapping Agroecology in Hungary PDF