

What role for researchers in supporting agroecology as a path to food sovereignty?

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Agroecological research and innovation

- Agroecological solutions are not delivered top down. They are developed through respectful intercultural dialogue between scientists and farmers/citizens, - building on peoples' local priorities, knowledge and capacity to innovate
- Shift from a transfer of technology model of R&D to a decentralised, bottom up, and **participatory process of knowledge creation tailored to unique local contexts** in rural and urban areas
- **Knowledge intensive, transdisciplinary** and based on principles of **cognitive justice**

Farmer participation throughout the research cycle to expand knowledge democracy:

- the framing of national policies for science and development
- the choice of upstream strategic priorities for R&D, including decisions on budget allocations by funding bodies
- during scientific and technological research – the production and validation of knowledge in the natural and social sciences, as well as the arts and humanities
- in evaluating research results and impacts, including risk and sustainability assessments.

Transforming knowledge and democratising ways of knowing depends on two complementary approaches:

- **democratizing science and technology research**, with increased funding for public research and transdisciplinary approaches that include peoples' knowledge
- **de-institutionalizing research for autonomous learning and action**, with an emphasis on strengthening horizontal networks of grassroots research and innovation as well as citizen oversight over the production of knowledge.

Strengthening local organisations that facilitate self-managed research & grassroots innovation

- Farmer-led horizontal networks of peer-to-peer learning and knowledge creation throughout the world
- *Campesino a Campesino* in Central America
- L' Atelier Paysan (France) and Farm Hack (USA and UK)



Democratising Public Research and Transforming Knowledge

- New roles and ways of working for researchers
- A shift to transdisciplinary and participatory research that respects and includes farmer & peoples' knowledge
- Organisational transformation
- Protecting public research from corporate control and censorship



Professional reversals and organizational transformation

- Emphasis on participatory skills as well as enabling attitudes and behavior needed to learn from farmers/citizens (mutual listening, respect, gender sensitivity, empathy etc.)
- Rewards and incentives to engage in power equalizing transdisciplinary research with farmers & citizens
- Transforming organisational cultures and operational procedures: shifts from hierarchical and rigidly bureaucratic structures to 'flat', flexible, and responsive research organizations

Protecting public research against corporate abuse and control

- Job security in university education and research
- Safeguards against the corruption of science by corporations
- Re-inventing research institutions for the common good through alliances between researchers and citizens

The bigger picture: time and material security are prerequisites for democratising knowledge

- Without farmers on the land there is no participation and co-inquiry possible
- Deep policy changes needed to reverse economic genocide of farmers and give **more material security** to farmers
- Wo/men need **free time** needed for democratic deliberations, citizenship, and practice of the art of participatory democracy