



Press Release
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Programme now available for the CSO Forum, opening in one weeks' time

There is only one week left before the opening of the **People's Food Sovereignty Forum**. The Forum will be attended by about 600 people, including delegates and observers, who will gather in Rome from November 13th to 17th to debate the causes of the current state of crisis in the agro-food system, and the need refocus attention on the billion and a half men and women who actually produce the food we all eat.

The Forum programme consists of plenary sessions, thematic working groups and autonomous assemblies of women, youth and indigenous groups. While the plenary sessions intend to adopt the plan of action, the documents and final declarations of the Forum, the workshops and assemblies are designed to explore the issues in more depth, and to provide a chance for specific constituencies to organise their own thematic discussions.

The forum will be divided into four working groups. The first topic will be the governance of the agro-food system. Here, the group will focus on who decides agricultural and food security policies, and through which kinds of consultative and negotiation processes civil society it engaged. This working group will discuss in particular how to enhance and promote the reform process of the Committee on World Food Security (CFS), recently launched by the UN Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO).

The second working group will focus on access to, and control of, natural resources. Keeping in mind the current spate of aggressive dispossession of fertile land, or land grabbing, and the tightening of intellectual property rights over life forms, the group will discuss the prospect of refocusing socio-political attention on collective natural resource assets.

The third working group will devote its attention to the (un)sustainability of current processes of food production and consumption. This discussion will be held in light of climate chaos (and the role that agriculture plays in mitigation and adaptation), the concentration of power in production chain processes, and the necessity for renewal in the logic agricultural research and development.

The fourth working group will focus on access to food in times of food crisis. The group will consider both structural food insecurity in rural areas, where insufficient food is produced for to feed their populations, and the emerging food insecurity problems of the urban lower middle class. Both of these cases re-iterate the need to place the right to food at the core of food and socio-economic policies.

The assemblies will host debate within the three social groups which the Forum has focussed attention on – women, youth and indigenous peoples. These groups will gather for autonomous sessions to allow the advancement of their agendas, with reference to issues concerning food production and consumption. The focus on these three groups is due to them being continually sidelined in various social contexts and international fora.

Based on the conclusions of the working groups and assemblies, a final declaration of the Forum will be drafted for submission to the World Food Summit on Food Security, held at the FAO on the 16th to 18th of November.

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