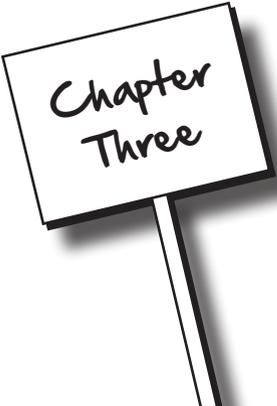


# Agriculture: Voices of Resistance

---

## Introduction

In this chapter, we will listen to the voices of resistance that are constituted under the broader area of agriculture and the rights of local communities across the globe to grow food and secure access to it. In the context of agriculture, the tension constituting efforts of social change lies between the liberalization principles of national governments that have sought to turn agricultural lands into the hands of industrial projects, projects of mining, or large-scale agribusiness, and the rights of local communities at the global margins to grow their own food in sustainable and locally meaningful ways. The questions around which local agricultural communities organize relate to the capacities of communities to locally produce food and secure access to basic food resources. The question of local rights of farmers in the global South to grow food in their local communities and make a living on the basis of agriculture is also constituted amidst the inequitable agricultural policies at the global level that favor transnational agribusiness. Voicing the large-scale corporatization of agriculture and the consolidation



Chapter  
Three

of power in the hands of multinationals, the Gandhian activist Siddharaj Dhadda voices (2010, p. 247):

the farmer used to preserve his own seeds, and this had been going on for centuries. Now half a dozen multinational companies are striving to capture the seed markets of the whole world. All the seed that the world needs has to be brought from them. They are pushing high-yielding seeds in the market, and government departments are helping them. These genetically engineered seeds are so structured that seed from their crops would not bear fruit, or only very little. The farmer will thus have to buy seeds from corporations every year. The multinationals have patented their seeds and are forcing the government of India to amend our patent laws so that they are favorable to them.

Joining the voices of activists such as Dhadda, in chapter three, we review the processes through which global policies create the margins in the agricultural sector, and the ways in which these global agricultural policies are resisted by farmers in local-global networks of solidarity. An overview of the political economy of food production and food consumption serves as the basis for exploring the (a) inequities in access to agricultural production and agro-markets in the different sectors of the globe, and (b) food insecurities that are created in the marginalized sectors of the globe through the deployment of neoliberal policies that are supportive of transnational hegemony. This chapter draws from specific case studies that discuss the experiences of marginalized communities in the agricultural sector, and brings forth the voices of farmers and farm workers in the co-construction of the narratives of resistance constituted in the realm of agriculture. Of particular interest in this chapter are the discursive constructions and communicative processes through which voices of resistance articulate alternative frameworks for understanding and practicing agriculture in resistance to the structures of neoliberalism.

### *Connecting Local Resistance into Global Alliances*

Voices of resistance around agriculture point to neoliberal policies globally that are played out in the local politics of agriculture experienced by peas-

ant communities. The voices of resistance of local farmers are articulated in the backdrop of neoliberal policies framed in the form of structural adjustment programs (SAPs) and development projects that are often antithetical to the interests of local farmers. For example, in organizing against the takeover of peasant lands, local and global activists came together in solidarity in Mali to voice a collective entry point to resistance. In a meeting held in Nyeleni on November 19, 2011, the global alliance against land-grabbing articulated the vision of the alliance in the following words:

We, women and men peasants, pastoralists, indigenous peoples and their allies, who gathered together in Nyeleni from 17-19 November 2011, are determined to defend food sovereignty, the commons and the rights of small scale food providers to natural resources. We supported the Kolongo Appeal from peasant organizations in Mali, who have taken the lead in organising local resistance to the take-over of peasants' lands in Africa. We came to Nyeleni in response to the Dakar Appeal, which calls for a global alliance against land-grabbing. (<http://ewwaunel.wordpress.com/2011/11/22/stop-land-grabbing-now/>)

What becomes evident in the above voicing of the global alliance is the local-global interconnectedness of the alliance, crafting out a space for a collective voice that connects local issues with global stakeholders. The local organizations of peasant resistance paved the way for bringing together several peasant organizations from across the globe in a collective that offers a cohesive voice of resistance against neoliberal agricultural and development policies, layered on the local politics of resistance in Mali. The local-global linkage is defined on the basis of the articulation of the rights of small-scale local food providers to natural resources. The local resistance of the peasant organizations from Mali provides the impetus for the global network of peasant activists to come together under the framework of the global alliance.

In voicing their resistance, peasant activists in the global alliance question the issue of land rights within a local historical-cultural context that is situated globally:

In Mali, the Government has committed to give away 800 thousand hectares of land to business investors. These are lands of communi-

ties that have belonged to them for generations, even centuries, while the Malian State has only existed since the 1960-s. This situation is mirrored in many other countries where customary rights are not recognised. Taking away the lands of communities is a violation of both their customary and historical rights. (<http://ewwaunel.wordpress.com/2011/11/22/stop-land-grabbing-now/>)

The historical depiction of the rights of peasants in the context of Mali is utilized as a frame to offer a more global perspective on the non-recognition of customary rights of subaltern communities on their lands. The local experiences of Mali serve as the foundation for coalition building that connects similar local experiences in the face of neoliberal policies promoting land-grabbing. Here, discourse emerges as an entry point to interrogating the politics of ownership. The right of the nation state to land (and by extension, the right to give away this land to corporate investors) is contested in the backdrop of the narratives of ownership of land by local communities that have owned the land through generations. The interpenetration of the local and the global is furthermore evident in the discourse as it takes up the language of global human rights to provide a framework for interrogating the local oppressive practices of nation states:

Secure access to and control over land and natural resources are inextricably linked to the enjoyment of the rights enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and several regional and international human rights conventions, such as the rights to an adequate standard of living, housing, food, health, culture, property and participation. We note with grave concern that states are not meeting their obligations in this regard and putting the interests of business interests above the rights of peoples. (<http://ewwaunel.wordpress.com/2011/11/22/stop-land-grabbing-now/>)

The reforms brought about locally under neoliberal frames of development are resisted by appealing to a universal declaration of human rights, which offers a framework for defining the rights of local communities to basic standards of living, housing, food, culture, property, and participation. The discourse of rights of the people to basic standards is foregrounded to interrogate the privileging of the rights of global businesses.

The formation of the global alliance against land-grabbing came about through the *La Vía Campesina* movement, a movement born in 1993 involving farmers' representatives from four continents, which has paved the way for global organizing of farmers built on the leveraging of local organizing capacities at a global level. Involving over 150 local and national organizations from 70 countries in Asia, Africa, Europe, and the Americas, the international movement seeks to defend small-scale sustainable agriculture as a mechanism for promoting social justice and dignity by opposing corporate agriculture and transnational agro-corporations. In the description of the movement, the group's website spells out the local-global linkage in the following excerpt:

La Vía Campesina is the international movement which brings together millions of peasants, small and medium-size farmers, landless people, women farmers, indigenous people, migrants and agricultural workers from around the world. It defends small-scale sustainable agriculture as a way to promote social justice and dignity. It strongly opposes corporate driven agriculture and transnational companies that are destroying people and nature. ([http://viacampesina.org/en/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=category&layout=blog&id=27&Itemid=44](http://viacampesina.org/en/index.php?option=com_content&view=category&layout=blog&id=27&Itemid=44))

By connecting a variety of local-global stakeholder groups, including peasants, farmers, landless people, indigenous communities, and migrants, the movement resists the neoliberal framework that promotes power and control of agriculture in the hands of transnational corporations (TNCs). The power consolidated in the hands of TNCs is resisted through the global networks of small- and medium-scale farmers from across the world. The promotion of global agribusiness under neoliberalism is resisted through these global linkages among farmers, represented through local and national organizations that are linked globally through *La Vía Campesina*. Under the title "Globalizing hope, globalizing the struggle," the movement notes its global resistance to neoliberalism:

La Vía Campesina is built on a strong sense of unity and solidarity between small and medium-scale agricultural producers from the North and South. The main goal of the movement is to realize food

sovereignty and stop the destructive neoliberal process. It is based on the conviction that small farmers, including peasant fisher-folk, pastoralists and indigenous people, who make up almost half the world's people, are capable of producing food for their communities and feeding the world in a sustainable and healthy way. ([http://viacampesina.org/en/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=category&layout=blog&id=27&Itemid=44](http://viacampesina.org/en/index.php?option=com_content&view=category&layout=blog&id=27&Itemid=44))

The excerpt spells out the linkage between the local and global stakeholders of the movement, pointing out that the global scale of neoliberal reforms needs to be resisted globally as well as locally at the specific sites where oppressions are enacted on farmers at local levels through structural adjustment programs. The foregrounding of the local capacity of farming, peasant, and indigenous communities to produce food is offered as an entry point to resisting the frames of neoliberalism that seek to constitute agriculture under corporate control of TNCs through top-down agendas of change. The local-global linkages of networks of solidarity are evident in the organizing structure of *La Via Campesina*, formed through the participation of farmer organizations at local and national levels. The movement is constituted on the basis of distributions of power into nine regions, with each region being represented by a man and a woman, which make up an International Coordinating Committee. The globally decentralized decision structure is connected through international conferences that emerge as sites of action as well as specific events of resistance. Examples of such events include International Women Day on March 8, International Day of Peasant's Struggle on April 17, and International Struggle Day against the WTO on September 10.

The need for developing and building a local-global linkage is seen as a resistive strategy for disrupting the global hegemony of TNCs that is exercised precisely through their mobility in globally dispersed markets. Therefore, *La Via Campesina* defines mobility in an alternative framework of networks of global solidarity:

We learned that we were not the only ones struggling. Globalization has meant the impoverishment of the majority of communities. All the communities of the world that have been deeply affected, over-

whelmed and crushed by this economic globalization—we are organizing ourselves. In other words, we need to globalize this struggle for justice, for the survival of community, for the development of communities. We need to globalize this struggle in the poorest of communities everywhere just as the large capitalists have globalized the economy. (Desmarais, 2007, p. 194)

The identification of a common platform for a global struggle is based on the realization that the deleterious effects of globalization are faced across communities all around the globe. That these effects experienced by communities are products of globalization serves as the fulcrum for organizing global resistance of farmers and farming communities. The globalization of the economy, therefore, needs to be countered by globalizing the struggles of the poorest sectors, connecting them into broader networks of resistance. Resistance is also enacted in the linkages crafted out by the voices of protest in the agro-sector with the voices of protest in other issue-based contexts, creating collectives of resistance across issue frames.

One instance of the interconnected linkages of resistance is articulated in the local struggles against neoliberalization of agriculture at the core site of globalization of agriculture and consolidation of power in the hands of the agro-industry, US. For instance, in its solidarity with the Occupy movement, the Occupy Monsanto movement in the US provides a framework for resisting Monsanto in the US, at the very site of global control that carries out the imperialist expansionist agendas of Monsanto (<http://occupymonsanto.wordpress.com/>). The frame of occupation gets taken up to disrupt the hegemony of Monsanto in the legal system, and to offer a common framework for solidarity across issues. The Occupy Monsanto movement WordPress site is accompanied by an “Occupy Monsanto” Facebook site. The website as well as the Facebook site emerge as avenues for organizing protests and solidarity actions. For instance, the Facebook site announced the details of the “Farmers vs. Monsanto solidarity rally!” (<https://www.facebook.com/events/157058514407689/>):

On January 31st, family farmers from across the county will take part in the first phase of the OSGATA et al. v. Monsanto court case filed to protect farmers from genetic trespass by Monsanto’s genetically mod-

ified (GMO) seed, which can contaminate organic and non-GMO farmers' crops and open them up to abusive lawsuits.

As a result of aggressive lawsuits against farmers with contaminated crops, Monsanto has created an atmosphere of fear in rural America and driven dozens of farmers into bankruptcy.

But farmers are fighting back!

The Federal District Court judge has agreed to hear oral arguments in this landmark case to decide whether or not this case will move forward.

Occupy Wall Street Food Justice, Occupy Big Food and Food Democracy Now! will assemble in solidarity with farmers on the front lines of the struggle against corporate domination of our food system.

The resistance offered at the legal sites of neoliberalism that have traditionally been utilized to carry out the agendas of TNCs such as Monsanto to harass and abuse farmers through lawsuits disrupts the dominant logics of legal frameworks and institutional structures that are utilized to push Monsanto seeds on farmers and to harass farmers who don't grow Monsanto seeds. In offering a network of linkage with the Occupy movement, the legal action is complemented by direct action on the streets and at public sites, carrying out the discursive frame of occupation of political and juridical sites. The description of the protest and the invitation to participate in it is accompanied by the links to the three organizations, [www.fooddemocracynow.org](http://www.fooddemocracynow.org), [www.osgata.org](http://www.osgata.org), and <http://www.pubpat.org/monsanto-seed-patents.htm><http://www.pubpat.org/monsanto-seed-patents.htm><http://www.pubpat.org/monsanto-seed-patents.htm>. Organic Seed Growers and Trade Association (OSGATA), filed a lawsuit against Monsanto in March 2011 as a pre-emptive strike to prevent Monsanto from its abusive practice of suing farmers and seed growers if their fields were contaminated by Monsanto's Roundup Ready seeds. Over the last several years, Monsanto had developed the practice of trespassing into the fields of farmers who had not purchased the Roundup Ready seeds from

Monsanto to investigate whether the farmers had Monsanto seeds growing on their land. In many instances, seeds blowing in from neighboring fields of farmers growing Monsanto seeds would contaminate the fields of farmers with non-Monsanto seeds; if these contaminations were detected by the Monsanto inspectors going into the fields, the farmer would then be sued by Monsanto and charged fines. The legal structures that provided Monsanto with its basis for harassing farmers are turned into the sites of resistance; the lawsuit frames Monsanto as the violator of the sovereignty of the farms. This point is well elucidated by the following statement by Jim Gerritsen, the President of OSGATA:

“Today is Independence Day for America. Today we are seeking protection from the Court and putting Monsanto on notice. Monsanto’s threats and abuse of family farmers stops here. Monsanto’s genetic contamination of organic seed and organic crops ends now. Americans have the right to choice in the marketplace—to decide what kind of food they will feed their families—and we are taking this action on their behalf to protect that right to choose. Organic farmers have the right to raise our organic crops for our families and our customers on our farms without the threat of invasion by Monsanto’s genetic contamination and without harassment by a reckless polluter. Beginning today, America asserts her right to justice and pure food.” (<http://www.osgata.org/judge-sides-with-monsanto-ridicules-farmers-right-to-grow-food-without-fear-contamination-and-economic-harm>)

The threat of Monsanto to farmers is framed within a language of colonialism. Therefore, the lawsuit is constituted in a narrative of freedom, foregrounding the freedom of farmers to grow what they would like to grow without the colonial invasion of Monsanto. The seed monoculture of Monsanto is narrated as a form of imperialism, one that denies farmers their basic rights to choice in the marketplace and in determining what kinds of food they would feed their families. The frameworks of justice, access, and right to pure food offer an organizing framework for resisting the imperialism of Monsanto. The Facebook page of the Occupy Monsanto movement offers links to images, videos, and newsfeeds of protests organized across the US and globally against Monsanto. The website as

well as the Facebook site also emerge as important resources for sharing information and for planning meetings. The solidarity among the farmers and between the farmers and other activists strengthen the structures of resistance from the grassroots. Similar to voices of resistance expressed in other contexts, networking within local spaces across various issue sites as well as networking across local-global spaces are important elements for building resistance to dominant structures of neoliberalism that shape agricultural policies.

### *Interrogating Power*

The voices of resistance in the realm of agricultural policies interrogate the top-down nature of policy articulations and the ways in which these policy articulations under neoliberal governance have silenced the voices of local communities in the global South. For instance, in interrogating the policies of global land-grabbing that have been fostered by the neoliberal reforms imposed by international financial institutions (IFIs), the global alliance against land-grabbing notes the following:

Land-grabbing is a global phenomenon led by local, national and transnational elites and investors, and governments with the aim of controlling the world's most precious resources. The global financial, food and climate crises have triggered a rush among investors and wealthy governments to acquire and capture land and natural resources, since these are the only "safe havens" left that guarantee secure financial returns. Pension and other investment funds have become powerful actors in land-grabbing, while wars continue to be waged to seize control over natural wealth. The World Bank and regional development banks are facilitating land grabs by promoting corporate-friendly policies and laws, facilitating capital and guarantees for corporate investors, and fostering an extractive, destructive economic development model. The World Bank, IFAD, FAO and UNCTAD have proposed seven principles that legitimise farmland grabbing by corporate and state investors. Led by some of the world's largest transnational corporations, the Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa (AGRA) aims to transform smallhold agriculture into

industrial agriculture and integrate smallhold farmers to global value chains, greatly increasing their vulnerability to land-loss. (<http://ew-waunel.wordpress.com/2011/11/22/stop-land-grabbing-now/>)

The issue of land-grabbing here is framed in the context of discourses of power that point toward the roles of local, national, and transnational elites in garnering control over precious resources. In setting up a framework for understanding the politics behind land-grabbing, the excerpt points toward the role of the dominant power structures in justifying land-grabbing under the guise of economic development. Essential to the interrogation of neoliberalism in the global organizing of agriculture is the interruption of the logics of global economic development that facilitate corporate-friendly laws and policies, and simultaneously displace the global poor from their everyday forms of livelihood.

Pointing toward the role of global structures such as the World Bank, IFAD, FAO, and UNCTAD, the articulations of resistance narrate the agendas of profiteering that are played out in desires to gain control over natural resources. The underlying motives of profiteering that are couched as development become the sites of resistance. The Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa (AGRA) is brought up as an example of the interplay of power and control in the hands of TNCs that seek to transform local small-scale agriculture into industrial agriculture, thus increasing the vulnerability to land loss among smallhold farmers. At the heart of interrogating the paradoxes of neoliberalism is the questioning of the dominant logics that are circulated in neoliberal structures. For example, the language of agricultural prosperity that is taken for granted in the label of “green revolution” is disrupted by pointing out the vulnerability of smallhold farmers to land loss and, therefore, to food insecurity brought about by industrial agriculture that is propagated under the framework of the “green revolution.”

In other instances, attention is drawn to the configurations of power to articulate the strategies for local-global solidarity. Pointing out the effectiveness of neoliberal reforms to carry out specific local-global linkages in generating profit, the following excerpt draws attention to the global positions of power that serve the agendas of the elite globally:

Land-grabbing goes beyond traditional North-South imperialist structures; transnational corporations can be based in the United States, Europe, Chile, Mexico, Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa, Thailand, Malaysia and South Korea, among others. It is also a crisis in both rural and urban areas. Land is being grabbed in Asia, Africa, the Americas and Europe for industrial agriculture, mining, infrastructure projects, dams, tourism, conservation parks, industry, urban expansion and military purposes. Indigenous peoples and ethnic minorities are being expelled from their territories by armed forces, increasing their vulnerability and in some cases even leading to slavery. Market based, false solutions to climate change are creating more ways to alienate local communities from their lands and natural resources. (<http://www.grain.org/media/BAhbBlsHOgZmSSI6MjAxMS8xMS8yNS8wNF8xMV8xMl80MjhfTnllbGVuaV9kZWNsYXJhdGlubl9GaW5hbC5wZGYGOgZFVA/Nyeleni%20declaration%20Final.pdf>)

The global nature of land-grabbing remains the key point of resistance for the alliance. Therefore, whereas on one hand, the politics of the alliance operates on the basis of resisting the locally based land-grabbing in different regions of the globe for the purposes of industrial agriculture, mining, dams, tourism, and other projects that are carried out in the name of development, on the other hand, these local politics of land-grabbing are connected together in their broader underlying theme of serving the interests of transnational corporations. The emphasis of the alliance is in addressing the issue of land-grabbing at global sites because of the cross-border nature of this issue. In resisting the power of neoliberal structures of decision making, attention is drawn to the oppressive effects that are produced through projects that are carried out under the framework of development, dictated by the agendas of dominant political, economic, and social actors who shape the contours of global development.

Similar dynamic of interrogating the global power consolidated in the hands of TNCs is noted in the local activist networks of farmers that organize to question the policies and programs that are passed in order to facilitate the global exploitation of agricultural resources by transnational agribusiness. For instance, in India, based on the experiences with

Bt Cotton that is connected with the epidemic growth of farmer suicides, toxic effects, and effects on grazing animals as well as on local ecosystems, farmers across India mobilized to resist the country-wide adoption of Bt Brinjal (Institute of Science in Society, 2008). In the wake of the large-scale negative effects of Bt Cotton adoption in the country, farmers' unions, development scientists, environmental groups, consumer organizations, and other civil society groups came together to form the "Coalition for GM-[genetically modified] Free India." Including over 15 civil society groups represented from across the country, the coalition offered an umbrella for organizing against the large-scale adoption of GM crops. Its organizing activities are constituted under the tasks of generating awareness about GM crops; engaging media, civil society groups, and the general public; and creating an open climate for informed debate about GM crops. The coalition is constituted around the key goal of democratizing the framework of science and technology in the country, attending to the farmers' knowledge and local forms of livelihood and sustainability. Through local-level *jaiw panchayats* (living democracies), farmers organized into localized collectives that created discursive spaces for organizing protests against Bt Brinjal (Shiva, 2010).

On January 30 2010, more than one *lakh* Indians across the country went on a fast to hit home the message that the independence won by the country through the freedom struggle and through the leadership of non-violent (*ahimsa*) noncooperation (*satyagraha*) offered by Gandhi cannot be lost to the imperialist practices of global agribusiness in the form of GM crops such as Bt Brinjal. Drawing on Gandhi's concept of *Hind Swaraj* (sovereign self-rule), the protestors noted that the agricultural economy cannot be turned into a source of exploitation in the hands of TNCs. With the slogan "Remember the Mahatma, Stop Bt Brinjal and Protect India's Seed & Food Sovereignty," the organizing of voices from the subaltern sectors across India was centered on fostering an alternative rationality for organizing agriculture that predominantly drew upon local, culturally based systems of knowledge that privileged traditional forms of knowledge. Consider, for instance, the following depiction of the fasts as forms of nonviolent resistance (<http://aidindia.org/main/content/view/1207/442/>):

Today we remember Gandhiji and Hind Swaraj. We fast in order to prevent profit-hungry corporations from taking control of our food and seed system through GM crops like Bt brinjal. We fast to stop insertion of genetic material that makes the brinjal plant produce Bt toxin. We fast because the Committee that cleared Bt Brinjal violated both science and ethics—based on inadequate tests, overlooking the deaths of animals grazing in Bt cotton fields and data that indicated harmful effects of Bt food on liver, kidney and other functions, and based on the votes of members closely associated with the industry. We fast because if we believe in the true meaning of Swaraj, we should not let India's farmers lose control over their seed and agriculture, and its citizens lose control over the food they eat. We fast because GM technology comes with many risks to environment and bio-safety, and it is fundamentally unwise to introduce this into the food chain of billions of people and into the environment on a large scale.

The meaning of "*Hind Swaraj*," a concept that Gandhi drew upon from Indian philosophy to define the framework of the movement for independence, provides a space for organizing against the imperialism of GM technology. The concept of "*Hind Swaraj*" is presented as an entry point to draw attention to the violation of the self-sufficiency of India's farmers by turning the seeds and agricultural production processes over to the TNCs. The control of their agricultural processes and seeds is defined as the right of farmers, tied in to their sovereignty. Furthermore, process-based violations such as the violation of basic principles of science and ethics by the International Coordinating Committee that cleared Bt Brinjal also emerged as a key point of resistance. The tests that were done in constituting the approval process were noted as being inadequate, with omissions of key facts such as the effects of Bt on liver, kidney, and other functions as well as the deaths of animals grazing in Bt cotton fields. In essence, the questioning of the knowledge processes that constitute the logics of the dominant structures of science and technology in the agricultural sector are brought under scrutiny. The hidden logics of power underlying specific material outcomes are rendered visible and their taken-for-granted notions are interrogated.

The framework of an alternative rationality is further rendered visible in the following excerpt on the reason behind the National Day of Fast (<http://aidindia.org/main/content/view/1177/442/>):

In 2009 October, our country saw the making of the “worst disaster that can destroy India’s self-reliance and sovereignty for ever”. India’s regulatory body for genetic engineering, the Genetic Engineering Approval Committee (GEAC) hastily approved Bt Brinjal for commercial cultivation—the first time in the world that such a poisonous genetically modified (GM) vegetable was given clearance by the unnatural insertion of foreign genes into brinjal.

100 years ago, in 1909 the Father of our Nation, Mohandas K. Gandhi produced his central work, his key-text, his seed-text, the *Hind Swaraj*. This small 91-page booklet today reads almost like a prophecy that predicted all of 21<sup>st</sup> century India’s ailments. Gandhi clearly realised that the British continued in India as colonial masters not because of their superior military strength, etc., but simply because we Indians kept them “for our base self-interest.” He concisely remarked: “We like their commerce; they please us by their subtle and get what they want from us . . .”

Gandhi was clear that “India is being ground down, not under the English heel, but under that of modern civilisation [that makes bodily welfare the object of life].” He repeated, in different ways how “(modern) civilisation’s deadly effect is that people come under its scorching flames believing it to be all good.”

The approval for commercial sale of Bt Brinjal seeds developed by Mahyco, the Indian partner of Monsanto, the world’s most powerful and sinister agribusiness company, tragically reflects how they achieved this goal. The fact that the approval of a crop that will threaten life itself, cripple the environment and economy and decimate India’s national biodiversity of brinjals was not based on hard, scientific grounds or vision for sustainable development for all vindicates this.

In prophetic terms that warn us of the perils of globalisation the Mahatma said: "They wish to convert the whole world into a vast market for their goods . . . They will leave no stone unturned to reach the goal."

The wisdom of Gandhi draws upon the historical-cultural narrative of resistance against imperialism to hit home the point that the large-scale adoption of GM crops amounts to a new form of imperialism. The logic of the market is brought to interrogation, pointing out how that very same logic of colonization remained at the root of British imperialism in India. The reliance of the Indians on the British through the market retained the hold of the British on their Indian colony; the analogy to Monsanto similarly notes how the market becomes the entry point to the colonial interests of the TNC. In offering a critique of the modernist desire to expand and control, the narrative draws attention to the ways in which power is exercised by the dominant capitalist structures under global politics to turn the globe into a vast market for the capitalist goods. The call further goes on to note the following:

India is the Centre of Origin and Centre of Diversity of brinjal. We have around 2,500 varieties of brinjal in this country. In every state it is cultivated and consumed by all classes of people. Many of these varieties are pest tolerant, some are nutritious, medicinal and culturally important. One example is Udupi Gulla from Udupi region of Karnataka. Farmers of this region cultivate Udupi Gulla as an offering to the temple there. This diversity is what keeps India going amidst various global crises. Once this is destroyed, then there is no India and there is no freedom. This is what Mahatma Gandhi always tried to tell us. But the scientists who are working on Bt Brinjal are least bothered about this. The sad part is that our policy makers tend to show more faith and commitment to these scientists and seed companies than to us. They have forgotten how we were enslaved by a British company for centuries and how we regained our freedom from them.

Freedom is more important than "*Pranavayu*" for all of us. Hence we must protect our seeds and soil from multinational corporations and national seed companies who have joined hands with the MNCs. We have to reclaim our seeds from the hands of these seed companies. We

have to protect our seeds and ensure seed sovereignty and thus, food sovereignty. The seeds should be in our farmers' hands. The safety and sovereignty of food in this nation can no more be compromised. (<http://aidindia.org/main/content/view/1177/442/>)

The power of TNCs and national elite to shape the fabric of agricultural decision making is resisted through the privileging of local agricultural practices and local forms of knowledge production that foreground the sustainable nature of local technologies. The question of sustainability is brought to the forefront within the context of democratizing science and technology, creating greater access to forms of decision making by indigenous knowledge systems that have traditionally been undermined. The democratizing principles that seek to make discursive spaces of science and technology accessible offer resistance to the traditional forms of scientific and technological decision making that have consolidated power in the hands of TNCs.

For instance, the “Monsanto Quit India” day has been organized as a site of protesting the power of the global agribusiness in shaping the landscape of farming in India, corporatizing farming and simultaneously undermining the food sovereignty and food security of local grassroots farmers (Kuruganthi, 2011). On the day, protests are organized by farming communities all across India as well as in the state capital. On August 9, 2011, farmers voiced their resistance to the commoditization and privatization of agriculture, narrating their demands to the government in the form of four key claims: (a) no collaborative research projects and partnerships with Monsanto or other similar food corporations in state-owned agricultural universities or within the national agricultural research system; (b) no commissioned projects under GM crop trials in these institutions and no GM crop trials; (c) no public-private partnerships in the name of improving food productivity, particularly for crops such as rice and maize that pose serious questions of food security and food sovereignty; and (d) setting up sustainable grassroots systems of seed self-reliance that respect the local knowledge and technology of farmers, and simultaneously seek to support institution building and infrastructure around self-reliant systems. On one hand, the narrative of the “Monsanto Quit India” movement

draws its cultural relevance from the “Quit India” movement that defines a key element of Indian history in the fight against agro-capitalism; on the other hand, it draws upon a historically rich cultural narrative to resist specific policies in oppressive structures of globalization that undermine the food sovereignty and security of local farmers.

*Pada yatras* (which are long marches that are intended to generate awareness and solidarity) and *palli sabhas* (which are local grassroots meetings with local communities) were organized across rural communities to engage in dialogue about GM seeds, the short-yield claims about these seeds made by the corporations, and the realities of the experiences in growing GM seeds. The *pada yatras* and *palli sabhas* are specifically organized in rural farming communities that have particularly been the targets of private-public partnerships in promoting the large-scale acceptance of hybrid maize, with the goal of generating local awareness about the false claims made by agro-corporations. *Beej yatra* (referring to the Gandhian salt march that played a key role in the Indian freedom struggle) is utilized as a frame to refer to a seed march seeking to take back the local ownership of the seed. In other forms of organizing protests, the narrative of the freedom struggle of India that was based on offering the alternative logic of local sovereignty to resist imperialism is brought back to resist agro-imperialism. The power of agro-imperialism is challenged through the invoking of locally empowering narratives of self-reliance, self-sustainability, and sovereignty. Several localized *Gram Sabhas* (local meetings) organized across the country emerged as sites of mobilizing, fostering alternative information systems that interrogated the top-down propositions of the state and the agro-industry. The power of the agribusiness sector played out through its economic strengths and public relations strategies is resisted through locally situated cultural rituals such as farmer meetings, dialogues, and marches that draw upon contextually embedded narratives of social change to give meaning to the localized forms of protest.

Meetings where farmers from the Vidarbha region narrated their experiences with the Bt cotton seeds and shared stories of the ongoing farmer suicides offered grassroots resistance to the GM rhetoric of yield and productivity that is utilized to persuade farmers to grow GM seeds.

Protest sit-ins at state agricultural offices were accompanied by demands that the government not allow GM crop trials. Local demands at various protest sites spread across India that were spearheaded by local farmers' organizations drew attention to India's Biological Diversity Act and the violation of farmers' intellectual property rights over seed resources by the processes through which the Bt Brinjal varieties were created. Farmers' groups went on one-day symbolic fast to deconstruct the hegemony of government-Monsanto partnerships and research on GM crops such as Golden Rice, hybrid rice, hybrid maize, and so forth. Memoranda submitted to ministers across separate states, meetings with ministers and policy makers were utilized as strategies for resisting the role of the state and state-based knowledge production systems such as state universities and research centers to carry out GM crop trials. Protestors utilized symbolic resources such as processions and posters, as well as innovative performances such as death processions of Monsanto and burial of Monsanto.

One of the core actors in India that plays a leadership role in the localized processes of organizing farmers and creating spaces for listening to the voices of farmers is the Alliance for Sustainable and Holistic Agriculture (ASHA), a loose network of over 400 diverse grassroots organizations across India that came together to organize a *Kisan Swaraj Yatra* (Farmer Sovereignty March) in 2010, organized with the agendas of drawing attention to the adverse effects of neoliberalism on local agricultural practices, the marginalization of farmers, and the exploitation of local farming communities in the hands of agricultural TNCs. The *Yatra* was seen by the participating actors as an avenue for raising awareness and generating greater participation in farmer-driven, pro-farmer, locally sustainable agriculture that served the needs of rural areas and simultaneously served the resource needs of urban communities, drawing upon and foregrounding the age-old practices of traditional agricultural knowledge. At the heart of the farmer sovereignty march was the idea of developing a discursive site of knowledge production that fostered alternative agricultural practices based on the principles of food sovereignty and sustainability, and the simultaneous articulation of the need to resist neo-colonial structures of knowledge production that pushed TNC-based agriculture

through public relations practices, propaganda, and through the deployment of university-based research systems that facilitate the neocolonial expansion of industrialized agriculture. The national-level outreach and mobilization efforts of ASHA resulted in the articulation of the *Kisan Swaraj Neeti* (Farmer Sovereignty Policy) that is based on the four pillars of (a) fostering sustainable agriculture; (b) ensuring dignified livelihoods for all farmers, including the small and marginal farmers; (c) protecting the rights and control of farmers to seeds, land, and water; and (d) ensuring adequate and safe food for all. The *Yatra*, beginning symbolically from Gandhi's Sabarmati Ashram in Gujarat on October 2 (the day of Gandhi Jayanti), passes through 20 states to end up at Rajghat in New Delhi. The symbolic opening of the *Yatra* as the Sabarmati Ashram marks the framing of the *Yatra* as an effort at establishing sovereignty. Here is the announcement of the *Yatra*, along with the call to sign online petitions to the prime minister (<http://www.kisanswaraj.in/kisan-swaraj-yatra/>):

The Kisan Swaraj Yatra is a nation-wide mobilization drawing fresh attention to the continuing agricultural crisis in India, and calling for a comprehensive new path for Indian agriculture—that will provide livelihood and food security for small farmers, keep our soils alive, and our food and water poison-free. The bus-Yatra will start at the Sabarmati Gandhi Ashram on Oct 2nd, and pass through 20 states to reach Rajghat, New Delhi on Dec 11th.

Tell the Indian government to stop anti-farmer pro-corporatist policies, ensure dignified livelihoods for farming community, and promote sustainable agriculture. Send this petition to Smt.Sonia Gandhi, chairperson of UPA.

The continuing agricultural crisis in India is framed within the structural configurations of neoliberal agricultural reforms that have opened up Indian agricultural markets to TNCs and have simultaneously undermined the local productive capacities of farmers. In this backdrop, the *Kisan Swaraj Yatra* serves as a call for an alternative paradigm that is rooted in self-sufficiency. Images of the *Yatra* carried out all across India are shared on Flickr. Fostering a discursive site for the enunciation of an alternative

framework of agriculture, the *Kisan Swaraj Neeti* is available for download on ASHA's website (<http://www.kisanswaraj.in/wp-content/uploads/kisan-swaraj-neeti-dec.20111.pdf>):

The Kisan Swaraj Yatra, in its long journey through scores of villages, towns and cities of India, found that farmers are indeed struggling to have a viable livelihood and dignified living through farming and to hold on to their resources. We found that the ecological crisis in our agriculture is real and the damage is being experienced tangibly, whether it is related to land or water or seed. We also found that seed sovereignty is no longer an ideological or theoretical concept—choices related to Seed are indeed narrowing down for farmers, with seed monopolies of big corporations growing; issues around good quality, affordable, locally suitable diverse seeds in an accountable system throw up the need to look into seed self-reliance urgently.

The conceptual basis of the *Kisan Swaraj Neeti* is based on the real observations of the participants in the *Yatra* during their visits across agricultural sectors of India, noting the pauperization of farmers, the struggles faced by farmers in living a dignified life, and the narrowing down of seed choices for farmers, with the increasing dependence on agribusiness monopolies in India that seek to take over the seed market. Seed self-reliance is offered as an alternative to the imperialistic transnational seed monopolies and serves as the organizing point for the resistance.

Similarly, the localized context of struggles over intellectual property rights defines another domain of organizing in the agricultural sector, with efforts of local agricultural communities being directed at challenging the co-optive structures of knowledge profiteering at the global centers that seek to make profit by turning indigenous knowledge and resources into commodities to be sold in the market (Dutta, 2011; Dutta & Pal, 2011). Framed within the ambits of transnational capital, the agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS) serves neoliberal agendas by facilitating the hijacking of indigenous resources that belong to the subaltern sectors of the globe by TNCs. TRIPS and the processes written into it enable biopiracy by inherently privileging technologies of manipulation that modify local knowledge and resources and by simulta-

neously not recognizing already existing indigenous knowledge as “prior art” so as to prevent the exploitation of such indigenous knowledge by TNCs (Dutta, 2011). TRIPS does not take into account the local ownership of genetic resources and the knowledge that is inherently tied to the uses of these resources in the subaltern sectors, and instead privileges technologies developed by TNCs, often through the stealing of subaltern knowledge and resources (DeSouza, Basu, Kim, Basnyat, & Dutta, 2008). As DeSouza and colleagues (2008) point out, biopiracy is constituted and facilitated by TRIPS through its policies favoring transnational exploitation of subaltern resources, and operates with relative ease on the basis of differentials in power and control in the neo-colonial spaces of global organizing of knowledge and value, with the TNCs in the developed countries staking their claims on indigenous germplasm that were developed originally by farmers in the subaltern sectors of the globe. The ability of TNCs to stake claim on indigenous resources, steal indigenous knowledge, and patent such knowledge for purposes of profiteering is intrinsically tied to the privileges of communicative access that TNCs enjoy to political structures of decision making and public policy where ownership laws get arbitrated. With the case of Basmati, DeSouza and colleagues (2008) demonstrate that the foregrounding of indigenous knowledge claims and the indigenous ownership of knowledge create a resistive framework for disrupting the exploitation of the subaltern sectors, and for resisting new forms of colonialism under neoliberalism that are carried out through the robbery of local knowledge. Knowledge here is critical in carrying out the neocolonial interests of global corporations, and knowledge, therefore, is also the site of resistance. It is by participating in the sites where ownership of knowledge are debated that indigenous communities secure alternative claims of ownership that resist the expansive efforts of TNCs in the agro-sector.

In seeking to change the structures of knowledge claim then, access needs to be fostered to the processes through which the rules of these structures are determined. Because the claims of knowledge are often made at global structures of arbitration that are far removed from the indigenous sites at which these knowledge claims might have been gener-

ated, and because the languages, technologies, and tools utilized in these forms of knowledge claims are often impermeable to indigenous communities whose knowledge is being stolen or exploited, essential to efforts of resistance is the formation of local-global networks of opposition that create awareness at the grassroots level in indigenous communities as well as develop information infrastructures about the processes of participation at global sites of arbitration. For indigenous communities to talk back to the structures of domination that enable the stealing of their resources through the discursive processes and practices of domination, local-national-global solidarity networks offer crucial entry points. The political networking between subaltern and dominant institutional structures is crucial to the success of social change processes. For instance, the implementation of the Biodiversity Law in Costa Rica that protects the rights of indigenous people and peasant communities to the local knowledge that has been developed in these communities was made possible through the development of linkages with resource-based allies at national and global levels (Miller, 2006). These resource-based allies understood the technologies and techniques of neoliberal structures of policy making, and therefore, they collaborated with the subaltern sectors to build alternative infrastructures of resistance that ruptured the manipulative agendas of neoliberal expansion through the stealing of indigenous knowledge. In the face of the neoliberal agendas that seek to bring knowledge under the control of TNCs, the Biodiversity Law in Costa Rica sought to protect the intellectual property rights of the rural communities for the uses they have developed for the natural resources and the plants and animals they have bred (Miller, 2006). In the processes of organizing that sought to create spaces for discussion, debate, and creation of regulatory policies that would check the growing threats of bioprospecting, a coalition of legislators, lawyers, and scientists came together to work with the National Indigenous and Peasant Boards. Essential to the development of the policy was the collaboration between the indigenous communities and the experts who had access to the structures of neoliberalism and understood the language utilized by these structures. The experts in the coalition were organized under the broader framework of the Office for Mesoamerica

of the World Conservation Union (IUCN) and the National University of Costa Rica. The power of neoliberalism that enables the expansion of TNCs was precisely resisted through localized power embodied in the solidarity between indigenous and peasant communities and expert communities, thus building regulatory structures in the form of the Biodiversity Law that put limits on biopiracy and bioprospecting.

The National Indigenous and Peasant Boards received outside support in the form of legislative involvement from among the political elite, legal and scientific advising from IUCN, and the support of the National University of Costa Rica through the Cambios Program that sought to train indigenous and peasant leaders about the biodiversity law debates and how to protect their indigenous forms of knowledge. Furthermore, international linkages were fairly crucial in developing the support structures for the processes of social change among the indigenous and peasant communities, with resources, information, training, and funding resulting from transnational linkages. Similarly, in the Philippines, the networks of scientific communities have worked collaboratively with legal experts and civil society to develop the biodiversity laws (Swiderska Dano, & Dubois, 2001). Similarly in India, NGOs working with indigenous communities have been actively involved in attempting to shape the biodiversity policies (Anuradha, Taneja, & Kothari, 2001). In the US, the filing of a lawsuit by OSGATA against Monsanto for contaminating the fields of farmers is another instance where resistance is articulated through the returning of the gaze. Consider the following excerpt from the voice of Bryce Stephens of Jennings, Kansas (<http://archive.constantcontact.com/fs074/1104248386985/archive/1109089069494.html>):

I don't think it's fair that Monsanto should be able to sue my family for patent infringement because their transgenic seed trespasses onto our farm and contaminates and ruins our organic crop. We have had to abandon raising corn because we are afraid Monsanto wouldn't control their genetic pollution and then they would come after us for patent infringement. It's not right.

Here Monsanto is understood as the pollutant, the one that contaminates the fields of farmers and then carries out the oppression of farmers

through charges of patent infringement. The co-optation of the very sites of meaning where oppression emerges becomes the strategy for resisting neoliberalism. The power of Monsanto to criminalize local farmers in the US is disrupted by turning the criminal frame onto Monsanto, defining its practices as trespassing and pollution of genetic resources.

### *Interrogating the Dominant Frames of Neoliberalism*

Central to the voices of resistance in the backdrop of agriculture is the interrogation of the dominant frameworks of neoliberal agriculture that are circulated in the mainstream. For instance, in questioning the land-grabbing that has become widespread under neoliberal governance, the global alliance against land-grabbing directly questions the negative impacts of the economic models of neoliberalism and capitalism.

The fight against land-grabbing is a fight against capitalism, neoliberalism and a destructive economic model. Through testimonies from our sisters and brothers in Burkina Faso, Columbia, Guatemala, Democratic Republic of Congo, France, Ghana, Guinea Bissau, Honduras, India, Indonesia, Mali, Mauritania, Mozambique, Nepal, Niger, Senegal, South Africa, Thailand and Uganda, we learned how land-grabbing threatens small scale, family based farming, nature, the environment and food sovereignty. Land grabbing displaces and dislocates communities, destroys local economies and the social-cultural fabric, and jeopardizes the identities of communities, be they farmers, pastoralists, fisherfolk, workers, dalits or indigenous peoples. Those who stand up for their rights are beaten, jailed and killed. There is no way to mitigate the impacts of this economic model and the power structures that promote it. Our lands are not for sale or lease. (<http://ewwaunel.wordpress.com/2011/11/22/stop-land-grabbing-now/>)

What is evident in this framework is the framing of the goals of the alliance in terms of a fight against the destructive economic model of neoliberalism. The framing of the economic model of neoliberalism as destructive directly challenges the dominant frame imposed by IFIs that articulate neoliberalism in terms of development and economic growth.

Along similar lines, the *La Vía Campesina* movement challenges the dominant frames of neoliberalism that seek to globally corporatize agriculture and turn food production systems over to the hands of agribusinesses. It does so by offering an alternative framework of food sovereignty that highlights the local growing capacities of farmers. Here is an excerpt from the movement website under the title of “Defending Food Sovereignty”:

Vía Campesina launched the idea of “Food Sovereignty” at the World Food Summit in 1996. This idea has now grown into a global people’s movement carried by a large diversity of social sectors such as the urban poor, environmental and consumer groups, women associations, fisher-folks, pastoralists and many others. It is also recognized by several institutions and governments.

Food sovereignty is the right of peoples to healthy and culturally appropriate food produced through sustainable methods and their right to define their own food and agriculture systems. It develops a model of small scale sustainable production benefiting communities and their environment. It puts the aspirations, needs and livelihoods of those who produce, distribute and consume food at the heart of food systems and policies rather than the demands of markets and corporations.

Food sovereignty prioritizes local food production and consumption. It gives a country the right to protect its local producers from cheap imports and to control production. It ensures that the rights to use and manage lands, territories, water, seeds, livestock and biodiversity are in the hands of those who produce food and not of the corporate sector. Therefore the implementation of genuine agrarian reform is one of the top priorities of the farmer’s movement. ([http://viacampesina.org/en/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=category&layout=blog&id=27&Itemid=44](http://viacampesina.org/en/index.php?option=com_content&view=category&layout=blog&id=27&Itemid=44))

Food sovereignty now appears as one of the most powerful responses to the current food, poverty, and climate crises. In viewing food sovereignty as an alternative framework, the movement seeks to return the decision-making capacity regarding agricultural policies and practices in the hands of local agricultural communities.

The hegemony of TNCs to define, control, and manipulate food systems to serve their markets is contradicted by the definitions of agriculture in terms of sustainability, local meaningfulness, cultural appropriateness, and the rights of farmers. The conceptualization of food sovereignty as the broader discursive structure for understanding and approaching global agriculture resists the framework of market-based agricultural policies that turn agricultural systems into the hands of corporations. The right of local communities to produce, consume, and distribute their own food challenges the neoliberalization of agriculture, thus offering an entry point into the emphasis of the movement on agrarian reforms. As an alternative to market-based corporatized agriculture, *La Vía Campesina* offers the alternative model of peasant agriculture in a document titled “Sustainable Peasant and Family Farm Agriculture Can Feed the World”:

The contemporary food crisis is not really a crisis of our ability to produce. It is more due to factors like the food speculation and hoarding that transnational food corporations and investment funds engage in, the global injustices that mean some eat too much while many others don't have money to buy adequate food, and/or lack land on which to grow it, and misguided policies like the promotion of agrofuels that devote farm land to feeding cars instead of feeding people. However, we cannot deny that our collective ability to grow enough food—including, crucially, how we grow it—is an important piece in the jigsaw puzzle of ending hunger. It is here where the corporate agribusiness model of large-scale industrial monocultures is failing us, and where peasant-based sustainable farming systems based on agroecology and Food Sovereignty offer so much hope. (<http://viacampesina.org/downloads/pdf/en/paper6-EN-FINAL.pdf>)

The food crisis and hunger are framed in terms of the control of food production and distribution systems, configured within structures of inequality. The promotion of agrofuels is offered as an example of misguided policies that serve neoliberal markets and simultaneously undermine the food security of communities. Peasant-based sustainable farming systems are offered as alternatives to agribusiness-based monoculture models of farming. The key tenets of peasant farming are the following agroecologi-

cal principles: (a) enhance biomass recycling, optimize the availability of nutrients and balance their flow; (b) secure favorable plant growth conditions through enhancement of soil biotic activity and the management of organic matter and ground cover; (c) minimize loss of air, water, and solar energy through increased soil cover; (d) species and genetic diversification of the agroecosystem; and (e) enhance biological synergies among agrobiodiversity processes. The document spells out the basis of peasant farming in the following terms:

The application of these principles in the complex and diverse realities of peasant agriculture requires the active appropriation of farming systems by peasants ourselves, using our local knowledge, ingenuity, and ability to innovate.

We are talking about relatively small farms managed by peasant families and communities. Small farms permit the development of functional biodiversity with diversified production and the integration of crops, trees and livestock. In this type of agriculture, there is less or no need for external inputs, as everything can be produced on the farm itself. (<http://viacampesina.org/downloads/pdf/en/paper6-EN-FINAL.pdf>)

The dominant framework of neoliberal development in the agricultural sector that seeks to privatize agriculture in the hands of TNCs is resisted through the articulation of an alternative framework of peasant agriculture that foregrounds local knowledge, local participatory processes, and the capacity of local farmers to grow food to address local and global food needs. The sustainability of local agriculture where everything can be produced on the farm itself is contrasted with the external, input-heavy, dominant model of agriculture under neoliberal restructuring of agriculture globally. This juxtaposition becomes further evident in the following comparison:

Despite the fact that agribusiness controls the majority of arable land and especially of good quality land—in almost every country in the world, it is due largely to peasants and family farmers that we have the food that is available today. In country after country, small farm-

ers control less than half of the farm land, yet produce the majority of the food that is consumed. (<http://viacampesina.org/downloads/pdf/en/paper6-EN-FINAL.pdf>)

The irony of the neoliberal logic serves as the foundation for the articulation of alternatives. The observation that in spite of the global control of arable land in the hands of global agribusiness, most of the food production in countries is done by small farmers at the local level, which offers openings for the articulation of peasant farming as an alternative to neoliberal structuring of agriculture. This contrast between neoliberal agriculture and peasant-based organizing of agriculture is evident in the following excerpt under the following subtitle “To Feed Future Populations, We Must Nurture the Land”:

Peasants feed people today, but how will we feed people tomorrow? If we follow the path of “business as usual,” we will find even more land in the hands of the agribusiness that are failing to feed people well today, and that are destroying the productive capacity of the land for future generations. Corporations move their production around the world through global outsourcing, and they have no attachment to any given place. Rather they extract the most they can as fast as they can, in the search for quick profits, and abandon a given area once production passes its peak and begins to drop through soil degradation. They move on, outsource from somewhere else, and leave devastated agroecosystems and local economies in their wake.

Peasant and small farm families, on the other hand, are rooted in the place where they and their ancestors have farmed for generations, and where their children and grandchildren will farm in the future. This gives them reasons to nurture the productive capacity of the land and surrounding environment. It is precisely in peasant and family agriculture where we see both traditional sustainable farming practices and the rapidly growing field of agroecology. (<http://viacampesina.org/downloads/pdf/en/paper6-EN-FINAL.pdf>)

The principles of corporate agriculture that focus on generating profits are contrasted with the principles of peasant agriculture that focus on sustainability and nurturing of land in order to pass along the land re-

sources through generations. The rationale underlying the alternative logic of peasant agriculture is offered in resistance to the profit-driven principles of global agribusiness that is focused on global outsourcing with the goals of generating maximum output and profit. The short-term nature of profit-driven agribusiness that focuses on immediate productivity and yield is critiqued for its unsustainability, pointing out that the agribusiness moves out of the area once the production passes its peak, thus causing devastating effects on ecosystems. The local system of peasant agriculture in contrast is driven by principles of nurturing the productive capacity of the land, constituted within local relationships.

The interrogation of the dominant framework of neoliberalism also is continuously articulated across several local sites. Navdanya, an organization of farmers led by the feminist ecologist Vandana Shiva, resists the global framework of neoliberalism by interrogating the assumptions in trade-related intellectual property rights. Navdanya was started as a program of the Research Foundation for Science, Technology, and Ecology (RFSTE) in the form of a participatory research initiative to provide support and direction to environmental activism through support for local farmers. One of the successful campaigns organized by Navdanya was its campaign against the patenting of the properties of neem. The intellectual ownership of the fungicidal properties of neem was interrogated by the neem campaign by framing it as biopiracy, as the stealing of biological resources. Consider the excerpt below from Navdanya's description of the campaign for protecting the rights of indigenous communities to neem, a tree with medicinal properties:

The new IPR laws embodied in the TRIPs agreement of WTO have unleashed an epidemic of the piracy of nature's creativity and millennia of indigenous innovation. RFSTE/ Navdanya started the campaign against biopiracy with the Neem Campaign in 1994 and mobilized 1,00,000 signatures against neem patents and filed a legal opposition against the USDA and WR Grace patent on the fungicidal properties of neem (no. 436257 B1) in the European Patent Office (EPO) at Munich, Germany.

Along with RFSTE, the International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements (IFOAM) of Germany and Ms. Magda Alvoet, former Green Member of the European Parliament were party to the challenge. The patent on Neem was revoked in May 2000 and it was reconfirmed on 8th March 2005 when the EPO revoked in entirety the controversial patent, and adjudged that there was “no inventive step” involved in the fungicide patent, thus confirming the “prior art” of the use of Neem. (<http://www.navdanya.org/campaigns/biopiracy>)

The new intellectual property rights (IPRs) laws embodied in the TRIPS agreement of the World Trade Organization are presented as an epidemic. Trade-related intellectual property rights are framed in a narrative of piracy of nature’s creativity and indigenous innovation. By framing intellectual property rights that are articulated in the dominant constructions of TRIPS as protective of property as piracy, the neem campaign returns the gaze of the dominant structures of neoliberalism and the assumptions that underlie these structures. Furthermore, through the discursive move of defining the use of neem as prior art, the campaign successfully worked through local-global solidarity networks to interrogate the patenting of the fungicidal properties of neem by the US-based corporation W. R. Grace. The dominant frame of intellectual ownership crafted by a powerful pharmaceutical TNC was resisted through the articulation of an oppositional frame that constructed the patenting of the fungicidal properties of neem as stealing. This act of re-framing then was central to the challenge offered by RFSTE to W. R. Grace within the legal structures of the EPO. Worth noting in this instance is the co-optive potential of grassroots resistance in challenging the exploitative practices of TNCs facilitated by neoliberal structures by circulating oppositional meaning frames within those structures. The terrains of intellectual property and definitions of property ownership are turned around in order to challenge the patenting of neem.

Similarly, in describing the processes involved in the development of Costa Rica’s Biodiversity Law, Silvia Rodriguez, chair of the Board of Directors of Genetic Resources Action International (<http://www.grain.org/>) and one of the key participants in the drafting of the law, notes the resistance to neoliberal definition of intellectual property as individual owner-

ship by foregrounding the logics of indigenous communities (<http://www.inmotionmagazine.com/global/sr1.html#Anchor-Costa-3800>):

Speaking now in relation to intellectual property rights (IPRs), we could see that indigenous peoples don't want intellectual property rights on products they are selling. They believe that is not the way to really protect their resources.

On the other hand, in the enterprises world, in the pharmaceutical companies world, and so on, they want IPRs as a mechanism, they say, to distribute benefits because without IPRs they won't have income to distribute to the people. But if you look at history, IPRs are a very new condition and you don't need to have them to commercialize these resources. Especially since communities think that in doing so, in granting intellectual property rights, the real control of the resource flies away from the communities and flies away from the country.

And not only are communities the losers with IPRs. We have found that the idea of national sovereignty goes away when you lose that control, because the different companies, or whoever is accessing your resources, take control of it and in exchange they just give very little money.

And it is not only a thing of money to pay for the samples taken. It is also that in the samples, adhered to those, is indigenous knowledge.

The very question of ownership that is tied to the depiction of intellectual property is interrogated in the knowledge articulations of indigenous communities. The framing of knowledge within the structures of ownership is interrogated through the foregrounding of indigenous rationalities of ownership that predate intellectual property laws. The discourse of resistance interrupts the basic framework of ownership by depicting how intellectual property laws become mechanisms for stealing the resources from communities and for undermining the sovereignty of communities and nation states. Also worth noting are the notions of indigenous knowledge that are intrinsically tied to the samples, and as a result, the resistive framing of bioprospecting as the stealing of indigenous knowledge.

... when you have indigenous knowledge. Indigenous people are not only giving you the material resource but also their knowledge. That knowledge is different from the knowledge that it is used in the so-called scientific world where it can be individually appropriated. Traditional knowledge grows out of sharing because if one person makes a step in the knowledge of a plant or whatever, to test its advantages he/she uses the trial and error system that can go over through generations, and little by little knowledge continues growing without being attributed to one single.

If isolated indigenous persons or even communities fall in the temptation to see this knowledge as individual property, that would kill their culture which is much more communally oriented and has its basis in sharing. They have an axiom that says “knowledge grows by sharing”. IPRs are the contrary. With IPRs you just say that for 20 years nobody can use your innovation unless they pay for it. (<http://www.inmotionmagazine.com/global/sr1.html#Anchor-Costa-3800>)

The processes through which indigenous knowledge is produced are fundamentally different from the processes of knowledge production as defined under the parameters of modernist science and embodied in patents and concepts of IPRs. Whereas tradition knowledge grows through sharing and through the building of the knowledge through various iterations that are passed down through generations, continually being open to changes and modifications through collective processes of participation, knowledge in modernist science as embodied in IPRs is founded on the principles of individual ownership and through the demarcation of terms of use through models of economic exchange. IPRs, founded on the concept of private property and individualized notions of knowledge production, therefore, are mechanisms for erasing the local cultures of indigenous communities, and for erasing the fundamental knowledge systems of indigenous cultures through the top-down imposition of neocolonial configurations that privilege private property and establish mechanisms of valuing knowledge based on the privileging of private property. The interrogation of the fundamental notion of private property becomes the basis for putting forth the logic of community ownership of knowledge and genetic resources:

we call bio-prospecting biopiracy. And it's not only a matter of legality, it's also a matter of the taking of some of the last resources that communities have. And those resources have to do with health and food.

These big pharmaceutical companies, these big seed companies, are taking away the information of those resources. With the advance of biotechnology what they want is either a gene or the chemical information. And then, they start competing with the community.

In Costa Rica, the Biodiversity Law gives space to the communities to draft their own intellectual community rights. They don't call it property rights because they associate property with individual possessions. They call it intellectual community rights. They say we can share all that we have. We can share all that we own. We can sell certain resources, but we cannot grant intellectual property rights. (<http://www.inmotionmagazine.com/global/sr1.html#Anchor-Costa-3800>)

Resistance to neoliberalism is offered through the definition of rights in terms of community ownership. Rather than defining knowledge as an individual possession, knowledge is defined as a resource for sharing. The contestation of the logics of neoliberalism is carried out through several strategies of resistance that draw upon the interfaces between local systems of knowledge and global sites of knowledge circulation that carry out the top-down agendas of neoliberalism.

### *Strategies of Resistance*

Essential to the global movements of resistance in the agricultural sector is the strategic utilization of resources in order to impact global policies and simultaneously impact local-level policies that influence the lives of farmers and the rural poor. For instance, the voices of resistance in the global alliance against land-grabbing point to the importance of creating pressure points by collaborating with international organizations and institutional structures. Also evident is the articulation of a framework of rights in order to frame the agenda of global resistance against land-grabbing. The broader framework of rights offers the rubric of meanings through

which the narratives of resistance are constructed in global alliances of interconnected networks (<http://ewwaunel.wordpress.com/2011/11/22/stop-land-grabbing-now/>):

Recalling the Dakar Appeal, we reiterate our commitment to resist land-grabbing by all means possible, to support all those who fight land-grabs, and to put pressure on national governments and international institutions to fulfill their obligations to defend and uphold the rights of peoples. Specifically, we commit to: *organise rural and urban communities against land-grabs in every form; strengthen the capacities of our communities and movements to reclaim and defend our rights, lands and resources; win and secure the rights of women in our communities to land and natural resources; create public awareness about how land grabbing is creating crises for all society; build alliances across different sectors, constituencies, regions, and mobilise our societies to stop land-grabbing; strengthen our movements to achieve and promote food sovereignty and genuine agrarian reform*

What is evident in the excerpt above is the local aspect of resistance in organizing for social change. Let's consider the specific sets of actions that are put forth by the global alliance against land-grabbing. Promoting food sovereignty and accomplishing genuine agrarian reform are two key objectives of the alliance, built through the partnerships. Specific actions outlined by the alliance as strategies of resistance include the following (collected verbatim from the Declaration at <http://ewwaunel.wordpress.com/2011/11/22/stop-land-grabbing-now/>):

- Report back to our communities the deliberations and commitments of this Conference.
- Institutionalise April 17 as the day of global mobilisation against land-grabbing; also identify additional appropriate dates that can be used for such mobilisations to defend land and the commons.

One of the key elements in the strategizing of resistance is the emphasis on carrying the messages back to the communities that are represented by the participants. Whereas on one hand, the alliance serves as a global platform for various representatives to come together and speak in a col-

lective voice, on the other hand, the participation of the representatives at the alliance is also tied to their role in reporting back to their local communities, in taking back the lessons from the deliberations and commitments of the conference to the localized sites of resistance. The physical meeting space at a global site becomes an organizing opportunity for deciding on the strategy to mark April 17 as the global day of mobilization against land-grabbing. The decision made at the global meeting then becomes an entry point for action at local community levels.

Yet another strategy for political organizing is the development of specific arguments that disrupt the logics of neoliberalism. Essential, then, to the building of arguments is the development of information infrastructures and information resources that offer entry points for engaging in key debates, offering alternative arguments, and exposing the hypocrisies and paradoxes that are embedded within neoliberal logics. Describing the active role of agricultural communities in India in voicing alternative rationalities of organizing agriculture, Shiva (2008, p. 279) offers the example of the *Beeja Satyagraha* (also known as seed *satyahgraha*):

According to Gandhi, no tyranny can enslave a people who consider it immoral to obey laws that are unjust. As he stated in *Hind Swaraj*: “As long as the superstition that people should obey unjust laws exists, so long will slavery exist. And a passive resister alone can remove such a superstition.”

*Satyagraha* is the key to self-rule, or *swaraj*. The phrase that echoed most during India’s freedom movement was “*Swaraj hamara janmasidh adhikar hai*” (“self-rule is our birthright”). For self-rule did not imply governance by a centralized state but by decentralized communities . . .

At a massive rally in Delhi in March 1993, a charter of farmers’ right was developed. One of the rights is local sovereignty. Local resources have to be managed on the principles of local sovereignty, wherein the natural resources of the village belong to that village. A farmer’s right to produce, exchange, modify, and sell seed is also an expression of *swaraj*. Farmers’ movements in India have declared they will

violate the GATT treaty, if it is implemented, since it violates their birthright. The positive assertion of local control over local resources has emerged as the *Jaiv Panchayat* (Living Democracy) Movement.

The depiction offered by Shiva of the concepts of *swaraj*, *satyagraha*, and *Jaiv Panchayat* create alternative rationalities for understanding the relationship of local communities with agriculture and agricultural resources, returning the scope of decision making into the hands of local communities, and drawing from cultural logics of agriculture that privilege the notion of sovereignty as birthright. As opposed to the neoliberal reforms being carried out across India that impose top-down privatization, industrialization and mining projects on communities without consulting them, and simultaneously shift the onus of responsibility at community and individual levels through programs of entrepreneurship, the alternative cultural logic that draws from the historical-political contexts of the freedom struggle articulates self-rule as a birthright and privileges the local decision-making capacity and sovereignty of a community in determining how best to allocate and utilize resources. The creation of an alternative narrative of relationship with seeds, food, and agriculture lies at the heart of the *Bija Vidyapeeth* (seed university) formed by Navdanya. The *vidyapeeth* offers education and training in community-based sustainable agricultural principles that draw upon local knowledge, and seeks to foster the principles of democracy, sustainability, participation, nonviolence, and self-sufficiency (Navdanya, 2009). The development of knowledge-based infrastructures for articulating and disseminating alternative ontologies and epistemologies lies at the heart of the *Bija Vidyapeeth*. This emphasis on building arguments is critical to organizing for social change. Consider, for instance, the following strategies that tie into the functions of information gathering in order to put forth effective arguments in policy platforms, public opinions platforms, as well as at juridical sites:

- Develop our political arguments to expose and discredit the economic model that spurs land-grabbing, and the various actors and initiatives that promote and legitimise it.

- Build our own databases about land-grabbing by documenting cases, and gathering the needed information and evidence about processes, actors, impacts, etc.
- Ensure that communities have the information they need about laws, rights, companies, contracts, etc., so that they can resist more effectively the business investors and governments who try to take their lands and natural resources.
- Set up early warning systems to alert communities to risks and threats.
- Establish a Peoples' Observatory on land-grabbing to facilitate and centralise data gathering, communications, planning actions, advocacy, research and analysis, etc.
- Strengthen our communities through political and technical training, and restore our pride in being food producers and providers.
- Secure land and resource rights for women by conscientising our communities and movements, targeted re-distribution of land for women, and other actions make laws and policies responsive to the particular needs of women. (<http://ewwaunel.wordpress.com/2011/11/22/stop-land-grabbing-now/>)

The organizing of change is built upon the concerted effort by the activist alliance to put together political arguments that expose the hypocrisies of land-grabbing that are framed under the language of development. Also critical to the efforts of resistance is the concerted attention paid to the actors, programs, and policies that promote land-grabbing. The gathering of evidence and information about specific cases of land-grabbing then becomes a key strategy for building a database about this subject. The information put together in the database serves as a key mechanism of resistance by attending to the evidence base that is needed regarding actors, impacts, and processes. Information emerges as a key strategy of resistance, and information about laws, rights, contracts, and companies

are put together in order to build a global database of evidence that can be used in efforts of organizing against neoliberal policies that facilitate land-grabbing. Simultaneously, early warning systems and peoples' observatory provide mechanisms for monitoring. Local information capacity is strengthened through training programs. Gender-based conscientising offers a framework for organizing to make communities more aware of the rights of women to their land, and specifically targeting land redistribution programs. Therefore, information also lies at the heart of localized forms of gender-based, consciousness-raising efforts.

The information gathering, dissemination, and monitoring functions strengthen the strategies of resistance. These strategies of resistance that are focused on building information capacities are accompanied by communicative efforts that emphasize alliance-building. Alliance-building is the emphasis on fostering local-global relationships among key stakeholders to foster the politics of resistance within local and national structures, as well as exert influence through global structures (Dutta, 2011; Smith, 2004; Sperling, Ferree, & Risman, 2001):

- Build strong organisational networks and alliances at various levels—local, regional and international—building on the Dakar Appeal and with small-scale food producers/providers at the centre of these alliances.
- Build alliances with members of pension schemes in order to prevent pension fund managers from investing in projects that result in land grabbing. (<http://ewwaunel.wordpress.com/2011/11/22/stop-land-grabbing-now/>)

The building of alliances then plays out at several levels and across various social, political, and economic stakeholders. Building these alliances at local and global levels, simultaneously fostering awareness and relationships with various stakeholder groups such as members of pension schemes, creates entry points of resistance against land-grabbing.

Yet another strategy of organizing for resistance is focused on holding local political structures and leadership accountable. Building information capacity and awareness about rules becomes a key resource in holding the local leaders be accountable to the rights of local communities:

- Make our leaders abide by the rules set by our communities and compel them to be accountable to us, and our communities and organisations.
- Develop our own systems of legal aid and liaise with legal and human rights experts.
- Condemn all forms of violence and criminalisation of our struggles and our mobilizations in defense of our rights.
- Work for the immediate release of all those jailed as a result of their struggles for their lands and territories, and urgently develop campaigns of solidarity with all those facing conflicts. (<http://ew-waunel.wordpress.com/2011/11/22/stop-land-grabbing-now/>)

Developing legal infrastructures and capacities are essential to social change efforts that seek to disrupt the large-scale land-grabbing that is carried out globally to feed the expansionist agendas of TNCs. Developing localized legal infrastructures is critical to the struggles for defending the land rights of subaltern communities across the globe. It is also through the legal structures that systems of monitoring are established, accompanied by participation in systems of social change that challenge neoliberal reforms of land-grab that are carried out in the name of development. Access to legal structures also becomes critical in the fight for social justice, as points of solidarity for local protestors who are jailed, and to develop adequate tools to fight within the legal systems. Global solidarity of legal knowledge creates the expertise base for fighting cases in courts.

The building of alliances with legal infrastructures is accompanied by the building of relationships with media institutions and infrastructures:

- Build strategic alliances with press and media, so that they report accurately our messages and realities; counter the prejudices spread by the mainstream media about the land struggles in Zimbabwe.
- Develop and use local media to organise members of our and other communities, and share with them information about land-grabbing.

- Take our messages and demands to parliaments, governments and international institutions. (<http://ewwaunel.wordpress.com/2011/11/22/stop-land-grabbing-now/>)

The targeting of the media with specific campaign messages and the building of strategic alliances with the media is accompanied by various forms of performances and direct action at local, national, and international sites that disrupt the taken-for-granted notions of neoliberalism that inhabit these sites:

- Identify and target local, national and international spaces for actions, mobilizations and building broad-based societal resistance to land-grabbing.
- Plan actions that target corporations, (including financial corporations), the World Bank and other multilateral development banks that benefit from, drive and promote land and natural resource grabs.
- Expand and strengthen our actions to achieve and promote food sovereignty and agrarian reform.
- Support peoples' enclosures of their resources through land occupations, occupations of the offices of corporate investors, protests and other actions to reclaim their commons. (<http://ewwaunel.wordpress.com/2011/11/22/stop-land-grabbing-now/>)

Ultimately, the language of individualized rights that permeate global structures of neoliberal governance are co-opted within the framework of resistance to depict the violations of human rights that are carried out through land-grabs:

- Demands that our governments fulfill their human rights obligations, immediately stop land and natural resource transfers to business investors, cancel contracts already made, and protect rural and urban communities from ongoing and future land-grabs. (<http://ewwaunel.wordpress.com/2011/11/22/stop-land-grabbing-now/>)

The voices of resistance in the global alliance against land-grabbing outline a series of strategies that simultaneously utilize the structures that are opened up through neoliberal governance to turn the logics of these structures on their head. The very language of neoliberalism, therefore, also becomes a tool for contesting the incongruences, paradoxes, and hypocrisies in neoliberal reforms.

Consider once again the organizing against Bt Brinjal that took place from 2008 to 2010, resulting in the landmark ruling that resulted in the ban on Bt Brinjal. In the call for the National Day of Fast on January 30, 2010, the “Save Brinjal” campaign drew upon the history of nonviolent resistance in India based on the Gandhian principles of *Hind Swaraj* (self-rule) and *satyagraha* (noncooperation). Here is an excerpt from the call that reflects this strategy of drawing upon culturally-based narratives to point toward specific structural inequities, to educate communities about the importance of resistance, and to mobilize concerted efforts of resistance (<http://aidindia.org/main/content/view/1177/442/>):

many seed companies (national and multinational) along with ICAR institutions are going ahead with another kind of agriculture development which will take away any kind of self reliance left with the farmers. Genetic Engineering of seeds of different crops in the country is part of this faulty approach. The first seed of this kind was approved in the country in 2002 despite stiff opposition from farmers, social activists and many experts. This was Bt Cotton. In just seven years’ time, the country has reached a stage where our cotton is owned by Monsanto, who by just franchising one gene—the Bt Gene—into all the Indian hybrids and varieties have subversively taken total control of the Cotton production in India.

Cotton was at one time a political tool used by Mahatma Gandhi to fight with the British. But what has happened to that tool? It has gone into the hands of Monsanto- a sinister American MNC who wants to control the entire food in the world through genetic engineering of seeds and take control through patenting of such seeds.

Now Monsanto-Mahyco and many Indian companies as well, franchised by them, are genetically engineering the Bt gene into brinjal,

rice, tomato and almost all other food crops. If Bt Brinjal is approved, then in another 2-3 years' time our brinjal seeds will also be in the hands of Monsanto. Eventually rice, tomato, cabbage, bhindi, . . . every seed will be lost to such multi-national corporates and we will have to stand in front of them with a begging bowl. They will dictate what we should grow and what we should eat. Our children will be at their mercy.

The voices of resistance presented here use the strategy of juxtaposition to draw out the imperialism that is embodied in the neoliberal principles of agricultural liberalization that opens up the local agriculture in farming communities to TNCs with their technologies of genetic engineering and patenting of seeds. The references to genetic engineering as tools of colonization draw out the eventual effects of such colonization that create food dependence and turn local communities into beggars that are dependent on the TNCs. The local ownership of agricultural communities of agricultural decisions are turned into imperial administrations of agriculture controlled by TNCs that dictate what the farmers should grow and what communities should eat. *Swaraj* becomes the basis for noncooperation (*satyagraha*), where locally based self-sustained agriculture disrupts the dependency-based colonial framework of GM seeds. The loss of local culture and local systems of production is narrated as the fundamental loss under colonialism, thus effectively erasing indigenous knowledge and simultaneously expanding the imperial control of TNCs through the expansion of markets and the fostering of dependency. The specific example of cotton is utilized to document how cotton served as a political tool in the independence movement in the fight against the British and now has been turned into a tool in the hands of Monsanto, which has taken over the production of cotton across India by franchising the Bt gene into all the Indian varieties and hybrids. The depiction of the reasons for the National Day of Fast then wraps up with the following call to action:

Towards achieving this, let us come together on January 30<sup>th</sup>, collectively remember Mahatma Gandhi, pray for his soul, understand what he told the nation during the freedom struggle and after independence, appreciate our diversity, culture and environment. Let us

observe a one-day fast, to cleanse ourselves of wrong thoughts and doings, in order to begin a struggle to liberate our country and our soul from the profit-greedy corporations and their ways.

Remember, 'We are what we eat.' Let us resolve to keep our food free from genetic contamination. Let us take a pledge together to make this a reality. Let us observe this year's Martyrs' Day with a one-day fast and join thousands around the country doing so. (<http://aidindia.org/main/content/view/1177/442/>)

The remembering of Mahatma Gandhi, a symbolic icon of resistance, serves as the call for observing the one-day fast for cleansing and for participating in a struggle to liberate the country from the profit-centric agendas of transnational capitalism. Freedom and independence, along with preservation of cultural diversity and the environment, are positioned as resistive frames to neoliberal reforms of the agriculture sector that would turn the control of agriculture into the hands of transnational monopolies dictated by their narrowly constrained greed. The profit-oriented "greed" of corporatization is resisted by the spiritual and cultural values of freedom and diversity of local cultures. The observance of the day as a day to pledge to protect the freedom of the food system from genetic contamination seeks to mobilize participation in nationally in the politics of change, thus offering a counter-narrative to neoliberalism.

### Conclusion

Through the various cases that we have explored in this chapter, we learn about the possibilities of social change in the domain of agriculture. These examples, drawing from specific localized struggles, also demonstrate the ways in which these struggles connect with each other, sharing resources, lessons, and strategies. Carrying the messages of social change across various global spaces, they offer a unified framework for mobilizing against the transnational mobility of global capitalism. The solidarity networks at the grassroots dispersed globally through webs of support find entry points into resisting global agribusiness at transnational sites. Ruptures

are articulated not only at local and national sites, but also at global sites, thus bringing momentum to the processes of social change. These global processes of social change express the agency of local communities. They also foreground the voices from the global South that render impure the conceptual categories of the global North (Dutta & Pal, 2010, 2011), and through this rendering impure of discursive spaces and processes in the dominant structures of neoliberal hegemony, they put forth alternative rationalities for organizing the agricultural sector. Local cosmologies from the global South emerge into the discursive sites of knowledge production as legitimate sources of knowledge, redefining in the process the ways in which the agricultural sector is organized around neoliberalism. Alternative frameworks emerging from activist networks in the global North join in with the global sites of resistance against neoliberalization of agriculture. Organizations such as Food First in the US carry on the theme of democratizing food systems and creating discursive sites for the participation of local communities in realms of decision making. Consider for instance the depiction of Food First:

Called one of the country's "most established food think tanks" by the New York Times, the Institute for Food and Development Policy, also known as Food First, is a "people's think-and-do tank." Our mission is to end the injustices that cause hunger, poverty and environmental degradation throughout the world. We believe a world free of hunger is possible if farmers and communities take back control of the food systems presently dominated by transnational agri-foods industries. We carry out research, analysis, advocacy and education with communities and social movements for informed citizen engagement with the institutions and policies that control production, distribution and access to food. Our work both informs and amplifies the voices of social movements fighting for food justice and food sovereignty. We are committed to dismantling racism in the food system and believe in people's right to healthy and culturally appropriate food produced through ecologically sound and sustainable methods, and their right to define their own food and agriculture systems—at home and abroad. (<http://www.foodfirst.org/en/about/programs>)

Essential to the organizing framework of Food First is the narrating of an alternative logic that challenges the dominant organizing discourses of agriculture in the US. Food justice and food sovereignty are defined in terms of the local rights of people to grow healthy and culturally appropriate food in sustainable ways and to have a say on how the agricultural system is organized. Concepts of food democracy, participation of farmers in agricultural systems and systems of decision making, and building local agricultural food systems emerge as the key strategies that are used by Food First; synergies across themes emerge in the narratives of Food First located in the global North and other organizations such as Navdanya and *La Via Campesina* from the global South.

Pointing to the oppressive forces of neoliberalism that constrain the capacity of local farmers to grow food that they want to grow, the voices of resistance from the South and North draw attention to the hypocrisies of neoliberalism that deploy the narratives of freedom and liberty to rob local communities across the globe of their fundamental freedom and liberty to grow and eat food. Yet another key point articulated throughout the chapter is the interpenetration of the North and the South. The transnational flows of power have consolidated power in the hands of global elite dispersed across geographic spaces and have simultaneously created pockets of impoverishment and inaccess within the very sites of global capitalism in the North. In connecting voices across spaces, opportunities of global resistance are envisioned. Alternative forms of knowledge that interrogate the processes through which knowledge is produced, the methods of knowledge production, the evaluation of knowledge claims, the ownership of knowledge, and the attaching of value to specific forms of knowledge. In summary, the many voices we engage with in this chapter offer us openings for interrogating the structures within which we come to understand our relationship with agriculture and more specifically with food.