Dialogue on Climate-resilient Farming Practices, Agroecology and Food Sovereignty

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Abstract

This session will involve farmers, non-governmental organization staff, social and natural scientists in a dialogue on different perceptions of climate change and ways to foster climate resilience and food sovereignty which take into account ecological context, social inequalities and local knowledge. Some session members are part of a long-term research project in Malawi, which is conducting participatory research with smallholder farmers on climate change adaptation strategies. This participatory research project involves 425 farmers conducting longitudinal experiments on agroecological approaches to climate change adaptation, alongside cross-sectional surveys, soil health and crop diversity studies and in-depth interviews on climate change perceptions. Social and natural scientists alongside a farmer leader and a non-governmental organization staff member will share their findings and perspectives from the last four years. Scholars conducting research in northern Ghana and Brazil will provide contrasting perspectives on issues preventing and fostering climate change adaptation and food sovereignty. In northern Ghana, gender inequalities linked to control over food supplies and agricultural labour are crucial dimensions that exacerbate food insecurity under worsening climatic conditions. Historical processes have shaped the contemporary food insecurity in northern Ghana, and farming households also face additional threats in the form of land grabs and declining rainfall. In Brazil, a long-term effort by the social movement the MST to develop agroecological approaches to addressing food sovereignty in newly formed communities face multiple challenges. In all three cases we will examine multiple perspectives on climate change adaptation, food sovereignty and resilience. The questions explored during the session include: what are effective farming strategies for climate change adaptation to improve food security? Is food sovereignty possible, and if so, how can we work to achieve it? What are inclusive and ecological approaches to developing resilient agrarian communities in the face of multiple threats?

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