

International Experience

- UK on farms 4 days a week for over 12 years; ag college
- Working internationally for over 25 years (Feb 1991 onwards)
- World Wide Fund for Nature International - pollution prevention, and climate change programme
- International Union of Food & Agricultural Workers - global health, safety & environmental specialist
- International Labour Organization: global Hazardous child labour specialist, health and safety specialist, cooperatives
- Food & Agriculture Organization - working with FAO on labour rights/conditions in agriculture, fishing, including child labor
- International Fair Trade Labelling Organisation - ex head of worker rights & trade/labor union relations

Decent Work in Agriculture & the Global Food Chain An International Framework

Peter Hurst,
Domestic Fair Trade National Conference, Portland, Oregon
8 December 2016: Racial Justice & Fair Trade in Our Food & Agricultural System

**We sow it
We reap it
We can't afford to eat it!**

AOTM & DECENT WORK

- Structure of US agricultural labor relations has changed dramatically over the past 50 years - shrinking rural communities; growing suburban/urban populations
 - ◀ Family labor once dominated small and mid-scale agricultural production. Now hired labor is prominent in mid-scale operations producing food for wholesale markets (as traditionally with large-scale operations)
 - ◀ Larger small-scale farms are also increasing their hired labor, including migrant workers
- As a result, employing hired labor under "decent conditions of work" has become a limiting factor for Agriculture of the Middle (AOTM)

Why an International Framework & Perspective?

- US Food System(s) is not isolated. US as a food Exporter and Importer has an impact on the global food system & vice versa
 - Family farming - AOTM - under threat in many parts of the world
 - Corporation agriculture
 - Good to learn of others experiences, good practices
 - Important to publicise what your doing on AOTM and on domestic fair trade to the rest of the world
- To think and strategise on how to promote decent work in context of sustainable agriculture and fair trade



International Organisations: Framework

- Which peace treaty ended World War 1?
 - **VERSAILLES**
- Which US President was in office at the time?
 - **WOODROW WILSON**
- As Part of the Treaty of **Versailles**, which international body was set up to promote world peace and development?
 - **THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS**
- Where was its international headquarters?
 - **GENEVA, SWITZERLAND**

International Organisations: Framework

- ◀ Did the USA sign the Treaty of Versailles and join the League of Nations?
- ◀ **NO TWO-THIRDS MAJORITY IN US SENATE**
- ◀ What organisation dealing with labour standards & conditions was set up as part of the League of Nations and when?
- ◀ **INTERNATIONAL LABOUR ORGANIZATION, 1919**

Where was the first International Labour Conference of the ILO held, and when?

WASHINGTON D.C., 1919. ILO OFFICE THEN ESTABLISHED THERE, + PARIS, LONDON, ROME

No international agricultural bodies were established in 1919

International Organisations: Framework

- ◀ When did the USA join the ILO? Which President was in power?
- ◀ **1934. THE ONLY LEAGUE OF NATIONS ORGANISATION THE USA JOINED. ROOSEVELT**
- ◀ Declaration of Philadelphia 1944: refined the ILO mission & set up the modern ILO. "Labour is not a commodity"
- ◀ What international body was established in 1945 to replace the League of Nations?
- ◀ **UNITED NATIONS**

International Organisations: Framework

- ◀ Where is the headquarters of the UN?
- ◀ **NEW YORK**
- ◀ Why do you think one of the main reasons its headquarters are in USA, not Switzerland?
- ◀ **TO ENSURE USA WAS A UN MEMBER**
- ◀ 1946: ILO became a UN specialised agency & the oldest UN organisation. Promotion of social justice & internationally recognized human and labour rights
- ◀ 1948-1970: David Morse, ILO Director General from US
- ◀ **DECENT WORK** became an ILO theme from 1999 onwards. Now taken up by FAO and other international bodies & stakeholders

International Organisations: Framework

- ◀ When was the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) established?
- ◀ **1945**
- ◀ Where is the headquarters of FAO?
- ◀ **ROME**
- ◀ When did the USA join FAO?
- ◀ **1945**

International Agricultural Organisations Rome-based

- 1945 UN Food & Agriculture Organisation (FAO) established
- 1946: International Federation of Agricultural Producers (IFAP) established as the official world farmers body to FAO
- 1961: World Food Programme
- 1971: Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR) Consortium. International Food Policy Institute (Washington DC) is a member organisation of CGIAR
- 1977: UN Committee on World Food Security (CFS)
- 2000: UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Food - UN Human Rights Council

International Labour Organization (ILO)

- Tripartite governance - Governments, Employers' Organisations, Workers' Organisations
- The only UN organisation where employers and workers **HAVE THE RIGHT TO VOTE**
- So every ILO standard is adopted as a result of **tripartite voting**
- ILO **Conventions** are the main international standards:
- **Non-binding** until a country freely decided to ratify a Convention
- **Ratification**: the ILO Convention must be turned into national law and applied
- For each Convention ratified, the country's must make regular reports to ILO regarding progress in implementation
- **National Employers' & Workers' organisations can disagree with their government's report(s)**; ILO must take such disagreements into account when evaluating progress

ILO & Workers, Employers in Agriculture

- **International Organisation of Employers (IoE):** organises & coordinates national & regional employers' organisations' representation & participation in ILO
- **International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC):** organises & coordinates national and regional workers' organisations' representation & participation in ILO. Maintains links with Global Union Federations (GUFs)
- **Multinational (transnational) companies** - who greatly influence human & labour rights and conditions, and agricultural prices/wages in the global food chain - are **not** directly represented in the ILO unless they are there as employers. Structural weakness of ILO

ILO & Workers/Employers in Agriculture

- Trade/labor unions mostly organise hired agricultural workers on plantations/larger farms. Hired agricultural workers on medium/small farms weakly represented in ILO
 - Farmers are weakly represented in ILO
 - ILO: National Farmers Unions (usually representing commercial farmers/plantations) represented if they are members of their national employers' organisations
 - Many national farmers' organisations/networks representing small to medium-sized farmers are **not** members of their national employers' organisations. So small to medium-sized farmers only weakly represented - if at all - in ILO
- No direct NGO participation in ILO

ILO & FAO & National Counterparts

- ILO's national counterparts are government Ministries or Departments of Labour
 - Plus national employers' & workers' organisations
 - In many countries government Ministries of Labour do **not** have the (parliamentary/government) mandate and/or outreach/capacity to work, promote employment in agriculture/rural areas. Limited contact with farmers/workers
 - FAO's natural counterparts are government Ministries or Departments of Agriculture (and usually Fisheries & Food).
 - FAO focuses especially on smallholder to medium-sized farms (poverty reduction, food security). Less work on hired labour.
- FAO now has a Decent Rural Employment Team. Reducing poverty & creating decent ag & non-ag employment

FAO & Hired Agricultural Workers

- Late 1990s: hired agricultural workers pretty well "invisible" to FAO & international agricultural organisations
 - No technical, financial or political support to support the labour/human rights and "sustainable livelihoods" & living conditions of hired workers, many of them, migrant labour
 - IUF & allies: campaigned/lobbied - successfully - to change that
 - With FAO, world farmers, agri-business, ngos, science groups, set up the Sustainable Agriculture & Rural Development Initiative (SARD - Agenda 21, Chapter 14; FAO UN taskmaster)
 - Agriculture/rural development - including organic farming - cannot be truly sustainable unless decent pay, labour rights & working & living conditions for hired labour
- FAO/ILO/IUF: Agricultural Workers & Their Contribution to SARD.

International Farmers' Organisations

- 1946: International Federation of Agricultural Producers Organisations (IFAP) set up as the official body for world farmers to FAO. 600 m farmers - North and South
 - 2007: Set up the International Partnership for Cooperation on Child Labour in Agriculture (signed by FAO & ILO DGs). IFAP joined & also seeing it as a wider entry point to ILO
 - 2008: IFAP badly hit by world financial crisis. Filed for bankruptcy in 2012 and was liquidated by the French Courts
 - World Farmers Federation set up. Still in early stages so weaker. Tensions between N - S farmer organisations
- Many regional farmers'/agricultural producers' organisations represented in FAO, International Fund for Agricultural Development, Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research et al

International Agricultural Trade Union/Labor Organisations

- 1959: International Federation of Plantation, Agricultural & Allied Workers - International Trade Secretariat for agriculture sector. Geneva based. Went bankrupt in early 1990's
 - 1994: "merged" with International Union of Food Workers - as International Union Food, Agricultural, Hotel, Restaurant, Catering, Tobacco & Allied Workers' Associations (IUF)
 - "Merger" - IFPAAW had circa 20 staff, two of whom - one policy officer (Sue Longley), one accountant - moved to IUF
 - Decrease in financial resources/person power for international work on agricultural workers, their families and communities
- Food workers trade/labor unions in effect "subsidising" the agricultural trade/labor unions in IUF. Food workers unions' membership now declining in many parts of the world

UN Millenium Development Goals

- 1. Eradicate Extreme Poverty and Hunger
- 2. Achieve Universal Primary Education
- 3. Promote Gender Equality and Empwer Women
- 4. Reduce Child Mortality
- 5. Improve Maternal Health
- 6. Combat HIV/AIDS, Malaria, and Other Diseases
- 7. Ensure Environmental Sustainability
- 8. Develop a Global Partnership for Development

Agenda 21

- 1992: World Conference on Environment & Development
- **Agenda 21: Blueprint for sustainable development for 21st century**
- Agenda 21, **Chapter 14: Sustainable Agriculture & Rural Development. (SARD)**. FAO is UN Taskmaster
- Section III. Strengthening the Role of Major Groups in SD
- 24. **women**
- 25. **children & youth**
- 26. **indigenous people & their communities**
- 27. **NGOs**
- 28. **local authorities**
- 29. **workers & their trade/labor unions**
- 30. **business and industry**
- 31. **scientific and technological community**
- **UN**
- **U**
- 32. **farmers**