

NYÉLÉNI

TOWARDS A GLOBAL FORUM ON FOOD SOVEREIGNTY



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WHO WE ARE

The International Planning Committee for Food Sovereignty (IPC) is an autonomous and self-organized global platform led by social movements of Indigenous people, small-scale food producers, consumers, and rural workers who aim to advance the food sovereignty agenda at regional and global levels.

Currently, IPC consists of 18 regional and global social movements and networks, with more than 6,000 organizations representing an estimated total of over 300 million people worldwide. The global social movements in IPC share the principles and the six pillars of food sovereignty as outlined in the Nyéléni 2007 Declaration and Synthesis report. The IPC is also supported by a group of allied non-governmental organizations (NGOs) that provide critical analysis and technical expertise.



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FOOD SOVEREIGNTY



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"Food sovereignty is the right of peoples to nutritious and culturally appropriate, accessible, sustainably and ecologically produced food, and their right to decide their own food and production system. It puts those who produce, distribute and consume food at the heart of food systems and policies, above the demands of markets and corporations. It defends the interests of - and includes - future generations.

It offers a strategy for resisting and dismantling free and corporate trade and the current food regime, and for harnessing food, farming, pastoral and fisheries systems to be managed by local producers. Food sovereignty prioritizes local economies and local and national markets, empowers peasants and family farming, artisanal fisheries, and traditional pastoralism, and places food production, distribution, and consumption on the basis of environmental, social, and economic sustainability. Food sovereignty promotes transparent trade, which guarantees decent incomes for all people, and the rights of consumers to control their food and nutrition. It ensures that the rights to access and manage our land, our territories, our waters, our seeds, our livestock, and our biodiversity are in the hands of those of us who produce the food. Food sovereignty implies new social relations free of oppression and inequalities between men and women, peoples, racial groups, social classes, and generations".

Nyéléni Statement, Sélingué, Mali 2007



WHAT WE'VE ACCOMPLISHED

The IPC plays a critical role as a coordination space for the food sovereignty movement worldwide and has articulated strategies and solutions for more just and ecological food systems since the 1990s. Through the IPC, social movements were able to organize the landmark Nyéléni Food Sovereignty Forum in 2007 and the Agroecology International Forum in 2015.

In the last two decades, IPC members have achieved great results for small-scale food producers, Indigenous Peoples, and consumers in general, defending and promoting the rights of those who produce a significant part of our food, although they are largely marginalized from decision-making spaces.

As a global political force, IPC has amplified the voice and perspectives of Indigenous Peoples and other groups in international treaties and policies.

For example, social movements were able to:

- include the rights of farmers in the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources (ITPGRFA) in 2001;
- influence the creation of an autonomous, self-organized mechanism for the participation of civil society groups in the United Nations Committee on Food Security (2010);
- contribute to the elaboration of the Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests in the Context of National Food Security (2012) and the Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries in the Context of Food Security and Poverty Eradication (2014);
- build a formal agreement with the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) to provide a space for the participation of social movements in the relevant processes at the United Nations.

The IPC provides social movements with a global platform that combines high-level technical expertise with a bottom-up decision-making process. The IPC facilitates global dialogue among social movements, Indigenous Peoples, small-scale food producers, consumers, and allies, building a powerful coalition capable of bringing their issues to the highest level of international governance, with the aim of ensuring full respect of their human, cultural, environmental and social rights.





TODAY'S CHALLENGES

Over the last 27 years, our collective has come a long way, but much remains to be done. The world is in unprecedented turmoil, and we are all facing deep-rooted overlapping crises - economic, social, democratic, ecological, health, patriarchal, and racist. The dominant mindset and the institutions it controls are unable to provide real solutions. We urgently need systemic, transformative change and support for the struggles of social movements.

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The interlinked challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic, climate crisis, fuel, or food-aggravated poverty, growing international tensions, conflicts, and rising hunger in both the Global South and the Global North, have illuminated the connections between different struggles for global justice. At the same time, however, they have forced many social movements to focus on immediate responses and local needs. Many vulnerable communities are not receiving the support they should have, and face increasing food insecurity and the impacts of climate change. Small-scale food producers are going bankrupt, while food and agricultural workers (many of them migrants) are losing their underpaid jobs and their access to food. At the same time their employers, large agribusinesses, absorb key public resources and continue to make unheard-of profits.

IPC members foresee that this crisis will reinforce an industrial food system that is responsible for environmental degradation and one-third of the global greenhouse gas emissions. This system contributes to global health crises such as the COVID-19 pandemic, generates poverty and hunger, provides little or no social protection for millions, and floods the global market with junk food linked to widespread non-communicable diseases such as obesity, cardiovascular disease, and diabetes. We call for a paradigm shift that reclaims food systems as public Commons for the well-being of people and the planet, based on the centrality of human rights, that puts food sovereignty into practice, recognizes the primacy of public policies, and strengthens a genuinely inclusive, democratic, and coherent model of governance able to attain the right to adequate food and nutrition for all, now and in the future.



BUILDING THE GLOBAL RESPONSE

IPC members are not sitting by idly, waiting for the catastrophe. We are fighting back and will continue to do so. That is why we are calling for a new mobilization within and beyond the food sovereignty movement, to build our response at both the global and local levels and tighten alliances with climate justice, antiracism, black movements, labor and feminist groups, and social and solidarity economy. It's now or never.

Twenty-seven years after the pronouncement of Food Sovereignty, the IPC is calling for a new and broader edition of the Nyéléni process, inviting global social movements, organizations, and networks to articulate an intersectional convergence towards joint proposals for a system change.

Through this multi-year process, we expect to bring together thousands of grassroots organizations and other allies to discuss and put forward a strong food sovereignty and climate, social, racial, and gender justice political agenda for the years to come. This is a critical and huge undertaking that will involve processes to create alliances and common political agendas in regions and territories in which the IPC is organized.

The outcomes of this global process will culminate in a Global Nyéléni Forum, to be held in 2025 in India, in which hundreds of delegates from all over the world will discuss strategies and solutions for more just and agroecological food systems and will relaunch a global alliance capable of counteracting the forces that are pushing the world into a deeper, multi-dimensional crisis.





UNPACKING THE INTERSECTIONAL CONVERGENCE

At IPC, we know that the struggle for food sovereignty, climate, gender, economic, and social justice is an intersectional systemic struggle. We know that, in recent years, more and more movements have been demanding radical system change, food sovereignty, social solidarity, and feminist economies, winning wide-reaching changes for workers' rights and those of peasants and Indigenous Peoples. We understand that the food sovereignty movement is not alone in facing these underlying systemic threats. This makes it imperative to converge with people facing different forms of oppression and agree with them on programs and strategies.

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The movements and organizations involved should have a strategic vision for systemic change. The process should be led by social movements and social organizations, not excluding NGOs and academics. They should share important aspects of the perspective and the vision of IPC: feminism, equity, anti-colonialism, peace, anti-racism, democracy, movement-led, anti-extractivism, anti-colonialism, anti-debt, anti-imperialism, equality, inclusivity, and diversity. They should place human rights at the center of their struggles.

Nyéléni is the territory and the platform for our multi-sectoral convergence process. Our methodology is founded on the principle of Internationalist Solidarity. It operates through a Dialogue of Knowledge ("Diálogos de saberes"), based on the heritage, patrimony, and diversity of peoples, cultures, and struggles, which builds unity while strengthening territorial organizational processes. Without strong and coordinated organizations, from the local to the global levels, there will not be sufficient resistance to the power of capital, conservative forces, or capacity to bring about systemic transformations.



FROM THE NYÉLÉNI PROCESS TO THE NYÉLÉNI FORUM

The process sets the parameters of common values in order to be able to engage in an effective debate among all participants. Only through a truly participatory process can we build a powerful transformative Nyéléni Forum.

As a first step, to kickstart the process, IPC members met in September 2022 in Rome to agree on the strategic lines of action to continue building the Nyéléni process. The gathering in Rome was key since it allowed members to debate on the features of multi-sectoral convergence. Emphasis was placed on the aspiration of reaching out to and building alliances among movements that are fighting the same battle against corporate capture and for reclaiming democracy from below, offering the experience of and building on the food sovereignty movement.

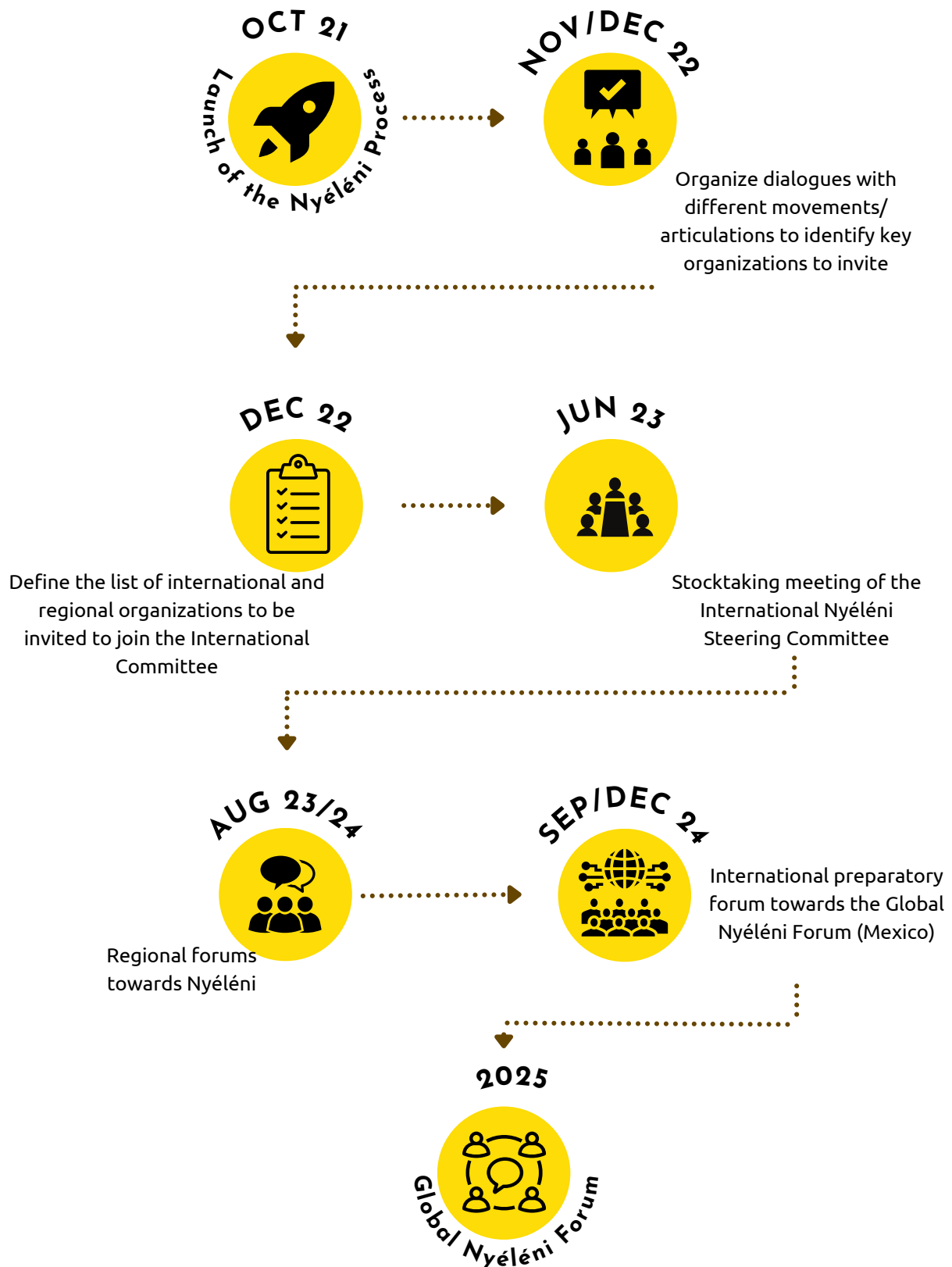
A new global meeting is planned for June 2023. Here new allies from outside the Food Sovereignty movement will be invited to join an International Steering Committee, which, together with IPC, will pave the way to regional processes.

Regional consultations will be organized in the Americas; Europe and Central Asia; Africa; the Middle East and North Africa; Asia and the Pacific region. In these consultations, social movements, NGOs, and scholars close to the IPC – together with leading grassroots organizers on climate justice, workers' rights, black and anti-racism movements, social solidarity economy, and feminist groups - will be invited to participate. The goal is to reach out to as many allied organizations as possible in order to have regional dialogues focusing on areas of convergence.

In the final phase, the Nyéléni Forum will build on the outcomes of the regional consultations to conduct cross-regional, cross-thematic discussions and make final analyses and decisions as well as achieving the other goals of the forum. These include (re)energizing and strengthening the food sovereignty movement, fostering solidarity, creating momentum to make the voices of grassroots organizations and people heard, and giving a common direction to the social movements for the years to come. But the end of this process is not the Forum, itself but rather the implementation of the decisions taken and the guidelines adopted throughout the process.



TIMELINE



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