



# **ECOLOGICAL JUSTICE: A CALL TO ACTION**

**LEARNING EARTH ISSUES – A TRAINING MANUAL FOR  
URBAN SOCIAL JUSTICE ORGANIZATIONS**

# INTRODUCTION

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## WHO WE ARE AND WHAT WE DO

The Movement Generation Justice & Ecology Project provides in-depth information and analysis about the global ecological crisis and facilitates strategic planning for action among leading organizers from urban Bay Area organizations working for economic and racial justice in communities of color.

Originally initiated by SOUL (the School of Unity and Liberation) and the Movement Strategy Center, The Justice & Ecology Project developed out of Movement Generation's strategy training work among Bay Area organizers of color. Organizers wanted support in better understanding environmental issues and the opportunities and challenges facing working class communities of color in relationship to ecology and sustainability.

In 2007 MG, in collaboration with the Occidental Arts and Ecology Center, developed a set of two three-day training retreats to address this set of questions. The training and discussion sessions were designed to develop practical strategies to address the increasing economic and social impacts of global environmental problems on urban low-income

communities and communities of color. We came together looking at issues of peak oil, peak water, losses in biological and cultural diversity, climate change, environmental toxins, food security, sustainable agriculture and food systems, as well as new opportunities for the development of local, sustainable, socially-just economies and participatory democracy.

Since the initial meetings, we have engaged over 50 organizations through intensive retreats, trainings, workshops, curriculum development, strategic support and more. Our work has expanded to include the integration of an ecological lens onto existing work within organizations, as well as ongoing work to develop shared strategies that harness the collective power of participating organizations to advance an urban justice based approach to ecology.

## WHAT THIS CURRICULUM AIMS TO DO

Through this curriculum, we hope to expand strategic thinking and action around ecology within the racial, economic and environmental justice movements in the United States.

It has become clear that a dramatic change in course is needed on our planet if we are to navigate the coming decades in a sustainable and equitable fashion. The intensifying nature of ecological crisis is hitting poor and marginalized communities particularly hard, and the situation stands to get a lot worse if nothing is done soon. Building ecological literacy within our movements has become a central priority – a vision for a healthy planet rooted in the needs and voices of poor people, indigenous people, and communities of color is a strategic necessity.

To this end, Movement Generation is sharing many of the curriculum tools we've developed around ecological justice over the last 2 years. Our desire is to broaden this crucial conversation. By analyzing the intersecting root causes of racism, poverty and environmental destruction and by learning from inspiring environmental jus-

tice movements from around the world, we hope our communities will build the people-power needed to construct local, living democracies rooted in equity and ecological sanity.

We are also honored to highlight the amazing tools our sister organizations, like the Partnership for Immigrant Leadership and Action (PILA) and Asian Pacific Islander Youth Promoting Advocacy & Leadership (AYPAL), have created to support this conversation.

The goals of this curriculum are to:

- Highlight the intensifying nature of the ecological crisis faced by our planet and how it's severely impacting poor communities, indigenous communities, and historically marginalized communities.
- Support the formulation of 'ecologically just' solutions to our planet's problems that are rooted in the voices of impacted communities.

**WHO THIS CURRICULUM IS DEVELOPED FOR: THE AUDIENCE**

Movement Generation mainly works with grassroots organizations organizing for racial and economic justice in an urban context - these curriculum tools were developed with that community in mind. However, this manual can definitely be used by anyone interested in developing leadership and awareness around ecological justice. Feel free to tailor this curriculum to meet the needs of your participants.

**WHO THIS CURRICULUM IS DEVELOPED FOR: THE TRAINERS**

This manual is designed for all community organizers, service workers, and educators who are interested in leading trainings on the interrelationship between ecology, race, and poverty.

**HOW TO USE THIS MANUAL**

This manual is for public use. As long you credit the source, we'll be happy you've used it.

We've tried to create relatively short 'stand-alone' tools that can be inserted quickly into your organization's staff or member meetings, one at a time. Alternatively, you can create a full-day training by combining various tools within the same workshop. Within the binder you will find some proposed full-day training agendas, as is the case in the section that highlights the day-long co-created by our partners at the Partnership for Immigrant Leadership and Action.

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A Sample Full Day Agenda

## SALIAGUA: A STORY OF ECOLOGICAL INJUSTICE

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### What Is It?

Interactive activity – in the form of a play – that outlines the social, political, economic, and ecological impacts of oil extraction in a country in the Global South.

This exercise serves as an introductory tool to talk about the interrelationship between race, poverty and the environment in a global context.

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### Why Do it?

- Help participants integrate an 'ecological lens' into their existing political work.
  - Get participants to see the inter-related nature of social, economic, and ecological injustice.
  - Highlight the intensifying nature of the ecological crisis our planet is facing and how this crisis severely impact poor communities, indigenous communities, and displaced communities.
  - Highlight the importance of resisting these impacts and the importance of building a movement for ecological justice anchored around the needs and vision of poor people, indigenous people, and communities of color.
  - Understand how globalization, industrialism and capitalism are driving ecological destruction on a global level.
  - Connect participants' personal experiences with ecological destruction to the broader economic forces causing it.
  - Provide a contrast between the ecological balance found in many indigenous communities and the social/ecological degradation imposed once big corporations start mining resources from indigenous land.
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**Time** 1 hour

## Materials Needed

- Photocopied scripts for each of the 10 characters in the play + the narrator (11 copies)
- Simple props for the 10 characters in the play. Possible examples:
  1. Villager: *Abuela Aguaslimpias*  
(PROP – Fishing net and Basket of vegetables)
  2. Water: *Corrientes River* (PROP: Fish cardboard cutout)
  3. Indigenous person: *Chief Strongheart*. (PROP – Bow & Arrow)
  4. Trees/Forest: *Lacundún Forest*. (PROP – Tree cardboard cutout)
  5. Landowner: *Dr. Dinero* (PROP – Tie, Blazer & Cell Phone)
  6. President of Saliagua: *El Presidente* (PROP – Sash)
  7. MegaBank Banker (PROP – Top Hat with \$\$ signs + Timer)
  8. Oil Company Executive: *Chevron CEO*  
(PROP – huge Chevron logo pinned to chest)
  9. Migrant Worker: *Miguel Migrante*  
(PROP – Hard Hat & Bottle of Alcohol)
  10. Agribusiness Company Executive: *Carphill CEO*  
(PROP – Tie, Blazer & GMO Corn Sign)
- Additional Props:
  - a. Fish Cardboard cut-out for *Abuela Aguaslimpias*
  - b. Big cardboard \$2 billion check
  - c. Sign that says 1 YEAR LATER
  - d. Poisoned Fish Cardboard cut-out for *Abuela Aguaslimpias*
  - e. Toxic Icon for the *Corrientes River*
  - f. Cut Tree icon for the *Lacundún Forest*
  - g. Sign that says 10 YEARS LATER
  - h. Beer bottle for *MIGUEL MIGRANTE*
  - i. Sign that says 12 YEARS LATER
  - j. Big cardboard \$4 billion check
  - k. Sign that says THE END
- Butcher paper with *Training Goals* on it (see below)
- Butcher Paper & Markers to scribe participants' reactions to the play, with the *Debrief Questions* written up on them in advance.

## Directions

1. Prior to the play, you should create a 'stage' area with 10 chairs on 'stage' for the characters. The characters' props and their script should be placed on their respective chairs.
2. Begin the training by telling your audience that you are about to enact a play that will last about 20 – 30 minutes. Quickly review the *Training Goals* of the play with your audience:
  - To see the interrelated nature of social, economic, and ecological injustice.
  - To highlight the intensifying nature of the ecological crisis our planet is facing and how this crisis severely impact poor communities, indigenous communities, and marginalized communities.
  - To understand the importance of resisting these impacts and the importance of building a movement for ecological justice anchored around the needs and vision of poor people, indigenous people, and communities of color.
3. Ask for 10 volunteers to be characters in the play. (You may want to choose and prep some volunteers ahead of time for the bigger roles, like *Abuela Aguaslimpias*.)
4. You (the lead trainer) will be the narrator. You read all of the *Narrator* parts
5. When the Script is finished, break participants into small groups and have them discuss the Debrief Questions for 20 minutes:
  - Do you know of anyone who has lived an experience like the one described in the play? Family members? Friends?
  - How is the situation in the play connected to our lives here in the U.S.?
  - Do similar situations and dynamics play out here in the U.S?
  - How should our organizations be responding to the eco-crisis described in the play? How is it relevant to the work our organization does?
6. If time permits, have a reporter from each small group briefly summarize what each group talked about. (Feel free to conduct some or all of the debrief questions in the big group if that feels more appropriate.)

## ACT I – The Set-Up

**Script**

**Narrator:** *Welcome to all! This is the story of a fictitious country called Saliagua - a country in the Global South, also known as the 3rd World. The events we are about to witness are the story of what's happened and what is still happening to many, many places - all over the world. It's the story of a specific community - a group of people - who've lived on their land for a long, long time. And it is the story of the river, the forest, and the animals who've lived alongside them.*

*So I need 10 volunteers to play the characters in this story...(10 Volunteers recruited from audience and come up on stage)*

*Great, thank you for volunteering, come on up and sit in these 10 chairs. Please put on the props on your chair – they represent your character for the next 30 minutes. I'll introduce each of you to the audience as the story develops...*

*Are you all ready?  
Let's get started!*

*So this is a community called Aguaslimpias, a small village in Saliagua along a river that runs through a lush, rainforest. This is an elder, one of the residents of Aguaslimpias:*

**Abuela Aguaslimpias:** *We are subsistence farmers – [Holds up basket*

*with corn, tomatoes, squash, etc.] We grow, eat and also sell this corn, squash and tomato at the local markets. Our land is rich and fertile. We are also fishing people [holds up fish]. It is a gift from the river, the Corrientes River. We love living here.*

*Introduce the river...*

**Corrientes River:** *I am a powerful tributary that births in the highlands of the Lacandún forest. I run all the way east to the Atlantic Ocean. I am proud to be the home of many trout, bass, catfish and other fish. My currents are strong and my waters are crystal clear. The kids around here learn to explore me at a very early age...*

**Narrator:** *Across the river are indigenous communities who maintain their traditional way of life, hunting and fishing. They have been there for thousands of years. Like the villagers, they have strong ties to the river, as well as to the Lacundún forest within which they live.*

*Introduce Indigenous person.*

**Chief Strongheart:** *We have been practicing our land-based ways for many, many generations. We depend on traditional healers and doctors when we get sick. The success of our crops and fishing fluctuate annually based on the weather and seasons. Our health*

depends on the river's health and well-being. (Chief Strongheart walks over to the Corrientes River and puts his arm around the River.)

In this community we share our resources and live communally. Some years are tough, others are bountiful. Overall, we are happy – we control our own destiny. We have lived under the care and watch of the Lacundún Forest forever, she takes care of us.

*Introduce Character #4 – Lacundún Forest.*

**Lacundún Forest:** My name is Selva Lacundún - Lacundún Forest My earth is rich and fertile and covered in amazing plant life. I am teeming with animals – jaguar, monkeys, wild boar, tons of fish. There are 50+ languages spoken by the original peoples that live within my ecosystem. There are more species living here than anywhere else on the continent. The rivers born here in my headwaters provide life to peoples thousands of miles from here...

**Narrator:** *Folks in both Aguaslimpias and the Lacundún forest (point to villager and indigenous person) would be considered poor by city standards, as they have no schools, hospitals or fancy infrastructure. But they have basically everything they need and have practiced self-governance for a long time.*

*Not far away from the Aguaslimpias village- about 300 miles- is the capital of the country, Progreso. A large and growing city. The city has high unemployment, but as people are pushed off the land in the country to make way for the production of cash-value goods, from textile manufacturing to tropical export cash crops, more people move to the cities, where work draws them in.*

*This is Dr. Dinero, one of the biggest landowners, in Saliagua:*

**Dr. Dinero:** I come from a powerful, land-owning family that has been growing coffee for many generations in Saliagua.

**Narrator:** *How did you get your land?*

**Dr. Dinero:** Over the years we have gradually acquired more and more. Our family has been friends with the ruling government. We have recently tried to help the peasants by loaning them the money to plant their harvests, but when there is a bad harvest and they can't pay, we have to take their land to get our money back. I take their fields and plant coffee, because I can make lots of money growing it for Starbucks and McDonald's up in the U.S.!

**Narrator:** *Do you own any land around the Lacundún forest?*

**Dr. Dinero:** Not yet. There are no good roads up there. It takes 13 hours to get from the capital to Aguaslimpias! But someday...I heard the land up there is very fertile!

**Narrator:** *This is the president of Saliagua, El Presidente! (Gesture towards El Presidente). He has big plans for the country.*

**Presidente:** I am the president of Saliagua. I'm seeking re-election next year. "Progress for All" is my campaign slogan. We promise affordable electricity to the whole country. I just need to find the money to make it happen...

**Narrator:** And how do you plan to make that happen?

**Presidente:** I just returned from taking my family to Disneyworld up in Miami – it was my daughter's 5 year old birthday! While in the U.S. I made this great new friend. He's got a lot of cash and wants to help our country. (Gestures & winks at MegaBank Banker)

**MegaBank Banker:** I am MegaBank, a private, commercial, U.S., bank.

**Abuela Aguaslimpias:** (pointing to MegaBanker) These people are new to our country. Before we never saw Bank of America, Citicorp, or MegaBank. I have no idea what they are doing here.

**Narrator:** What are you doing here in Saliagua?

**MegaBank Banker:** We are interested in loaning and investing money in Third World countries. They are "emerging economies." This is where we can really make money.

**Narrator:** *And what is that timer for?*

**MegaBank Banker:** We have a timer because, for banks, "Time is Money." We need to know when to collect interest payments.

**El Presidente:** Fantastic! In partnership with MegaBank, I will bring wealth and prosperity to our great country! In fact, I have a new plan I would like to announce right here: We have just discovered vast oil reserves in the western part of the country, by the Lacandún forest!

*(MegaBank and Dr. Dinero applaud.)*

**El Presidente:** The loans from MegaBank will help us build the roads and infrastructure needed to get to that area of the country. By extracting and selling that oil we will become a wealthy country! I intend to sell blocks of land off for exploration, and, if sufficient oil is discovered, the private companies will have the right to exploit the oil. These companies will pay handsome royalties to the government. This will help us bring cheap electricity to all! And we will pay for new schools, new hospitals and create new jobs.

**MegaBank Banker:** Dear Presidente, have I got the perfect business partner for you! My golfing buddy at the country club in Houston is Dick Tarbucks, the CEO of Chevron, one of the biggest oil companies in the world. Here, take a \$2 billion dollar loan so that you can start building roads into Aguaslimpias.

*(Banker takes out cell phone, calls Chevron CEO and invites him to Saliagua. Banker then passes a big cardboard \$\$\$ check to El Presidente)*

*(Chevron CEO enters stage right)*

**Chevron CEO:** Presidente! What a pleasure to meet you! I hear you've discovered oil! Well, well, well...I can offer \$200 billion to invest in your country. We will bring jobs, technology and progress to your people. When do we start, tomorrow?

**El Presidente:** How about today? Dr. Dinero, besides owning a lot of farmland, you also own the main asphalt company in the country, correct?

**Dr. Dinero:** Absolutely.

**El Presidente:** Here's a government contract for you to build the road up to Aguaslimpias

*(El Presidente gives Dr. Dinero the big cardboard \$\$\$ check just received from MegaBanker)*

**El Presidente:** Can you have the road done in 6 months?

**Dr. Dinero:** Consider it done....

**Chevron CEO:** Phenomenal!

**Abuela Aguaslimpias:** I don't know about this, things are moving a bit too fast...

*(End of Act I)*

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**ACT II – 1 YEAR LATER**

*(Narrator holds up a sign that says 1 YEAR LATER)*

**Narrator:** *So 1 year has passed since oil exploration was begun up in the Lacandún forest. Mr. Presidente, how are things going?*

**El Presidente:** They couldn't be better. Chevron found a huge oil field right by the village of Aguaslimpias; it cuts right across the river. It's the biggest oil find of our country's history! We're building a pipeline to move it to the sea. The dollar signs are crossing before my eyes...!

**Narrator:** *Abuela, how are things looking up in the village?*

**Abuela Aguaslimpias:** Well look for yourself... [She points to her surroundings...] The trees in the village have been cut down. The lands are dry and dusty. They are filled with Coca-Cola cans, plastic bottles and Styrofoam plates. As we lose our land, some of the younger members of the village are establishing new plots on the indigenous people's land. The Corrientes River, once wide and generous, is now merely a stream. [She shows empty basket with only one poisoned fish].

**Corrientes River:** That's because of all the dynamite they are throwing into my river to open oil pits! Not to mention all those nasty chemicals! And I'm filling up with silt! Dying fish is no coincidence. If you want this village's name to remain Aguaslimpias – Clearwaters – then please stop what they are doing to me...

*(Narrator pastes a toxic icon on the Corrientes River character)*

**Chief Strongheart:** Conflicts have developed between the villagers of Aguaslimpias and my people. As their land is destroyed, they are coming in and seizing our land. And as the

Chevron people discover new oil in the heart of the forest, the government has set up a military outpost right by our community. We are no longer allowed to hunt in the area richest in wild boar!

**Abuela Aguaslimpias:** For a moment we got excited because the Chevron workers started paying good money for our produce and livestock, but I've noticed that some of our villagers can no longer afford basic food since the prices have gone up at our market. New workers from the capital want food, sex, entertainment, and drugs, and they have the money to pay for it. As our villagers can no longer grow or buy all the food they need, I've noticed some of the young women and children going out to sell themselves at night... It's terrible!

**Chief Strongheart:** I am very worried to. The introduction of new people is destroying our livelihoods and culture, and bringing disease. I'm also concerned about the new construction. We've always harvested wood very carefully from the Lacandún forest – we know that our health is dependent on her health. But now big machines are cutting trees down by the hundreds! Where are all our fellow creatures – the monkeys, the jaguar, the birds – who call this place home supposed to go? And what will we eat when they are gone?

*(Narrator pastes a cut tree icon on the Lacandún Forest character)*

**Narrator:** *Anybody else want to tell me how things are going for them?*

**Dr. Dinero:** Things are fantastic! My business is exploding! Now that we built the road, I am

finding new land to purchase for my coffee plantations! A lot of the villagers seem willing to sell their land at cheap prices! (Winks at Abuela Aguaslimpias) I also took some of the money the government gave us for the Asphalt contract and I invested it in a new company – a wood export company! There are exotic woods in the Lacundún forest that fetch incredible prices in the U.S. and Europe. Our company just shipped 2 tons of exotic lumber to Mel Gibson, who is building a new mansion in Malibu!

**MegaBank Banker:** I'm doing great as well. El Presidente just asked me for another loan – to

build the oil pipeline from the forest all the way to the ocean. He also wants to build a dam at the headwaters of the Corrientes River to provide more electricity to the big cities. So I'll be preparing him a 3rd loan soon...

**Chefron CEO:** What can I say? With the price of oil going up every month, I'm a happy man! I'm so glad we invested here in Saliagua! Oops! I have to go. I have to run to an election fundraiser for El Presidente back in Progreso...

(End of Act II)

### ACT III – 10 YEARS LATER

*(Narrator holds up a sign that says 10 YEARS LATER)*

**Narrator:** *So 10 years have passed since oil exploration was begun up in the Lacandún forest. The place has changed a bunch. Let find out how...*

**Chief Strongheart:** Our population has shrunk considerably. Much of the land we've lived on has been seized. Diseases brought in by the newcomers sickened and killed many of our people. As we lost our capacity to support ourselves, our young people started migrating to the city, others discovered alcohol. We are losing our language – some of our children no longer know our native language. I am worried that what happened to other native people deeper in the forest will happen to us – that we will disappear as a distinct peoples...

**Lacundún Forest:** I am under serious, serious stress. I lost 30% of myself in 10 years. That's 1/3 of my ecosystem gone in a decade! What was once lush forest teeming with animals and native peoples quickly became coffee fields and oil pits... All of my original inhabitants – insects,

birds, mammals, humans – are struggling to survive.

**Dr. Dinero:** Oh, come now it's not that bad! Once I entered the logging business I realized that I could make money while helping the forest regenerate. My banker friend here said I could receive a 'Green Development' loan to plant new trees, which helps the environment! (Point to MegaBanker) I'm planting a bunch of teak and eucalyptus trees in previously cut down areas. I've planted over 5,000 new trees! I help the forest and then I get certified as a 'green business' back in the U.S.! Everybody wins...

**Lacundún Forest:** Teak & eucalyptus trees are not native to this area. Furthermore, they are super invasive species - they suck all the nutrients from the soil and choke out the remaining native plants and trees. In turn, insects and animals lose even more of their food sources. Your 'green development' plan is not helping at all. It's throwing things even more off balance...

Look, past oil and gold exploration has already caused the extinction of 30 indigenous languages spoken here. This round of oil extraction will knock out more languages and native people. Indigenous peoples carry the ancestral knowledge of this ecosystem – how to take care of me properly.

**Abuela Aguaslimpias:** Our village has become a full-blown town – people from other areas still come looking for work, even though it's hard to come by. Now there is electricity. There are schools, but they are not very good. Kids now work instead of play – mostly selling goods on the street. Our original villagers can no longer subsist and grow their own food. Our land has been completely poisoned by all the toxic development of the oil fields, and the oil spills...

**Corrientes River:** Most of this toxic waste is poured directly into me! I am now completely poisoned. My lovely fish are all gone. I run dark and murky 24 hours a day. 3 years ago Chevron had a massive oil spill...for days thousands of gallons of petroleum spilled into me. I still have that gunk stuck to my riverbed. I feel horrible – it pains me to see the village children still swimming in me. I love them but they shouldn't be visiting me anymore...

**Abuela Aguaslimpias:** Our original community has changed too. As we lost our capacity to subsist, many of our younger adults have migrated to the city. My grandson Alberto moved to Progreso five years ago. He works as a security guard at a Burger King in one of the wealthy neighborhoods. He dislikes it but at least he is able to send us a little bit of money. The extra cash comes in handy, as we now have to buy expensive produce trucked in from other parts of the country since our soil is poisoned or has been converted to coffee fields. And working in the coffee fields, we don't make enough to survive...

**Corrientes River:** After 10 years, the oil is now harder to get – so they pump harder and use bigger tractors. They need more water for this – so they are draining me more than ever before. For the first time, the people around here are experiencing water shortages. In the dry season, I sometimes look like a creek rather than a mighty river. This was never the case before...

*(Introduce new character Miguel Migrante – migrant worker)*

**Miguel Migrante:** I moved to Aguaslimpias 2 years ago looking for work. I lived in Progreso for 15 years before that. But I'm originally from a small village on the other side of the Lacandun forest, in the Sierra Alta Mountain range. I came here looking for work because I had a hard time making ends meet in the city. Since I had done some work in construction before, I figured I could get a job working machinery here. That way I could send some money back to Progreso to support my grandkids.

But I also came because I missed life in the countryside. I miss my hometown – it was beautiful when I was a child. I played in the river and the forest all day. But 25 years ago, they began digging for gold right by our village. The village isn't even there anymore – it was destroyed. The mercury from the gold mining poisoned the area. So I came to Aguaslimpias hoping to find some of that rural tranquility and beauty, but I'm afraid I came too late. I console myself at night with my only constant friend – I call her 'mi botellita' - 'my dear little bottle'...

*(Miguel Migrante takes a swig from a bottle of alcohol)*

**Chief Strongheart:** One of the hopeful changes, however, has been the fact that the original villagers and my people began organizing together. After some of our initial conflicts over land,

we realized that we were not enemies. We realized that the oil company – Chevron – was responsible for the negative changes in our community. So we began meeting and making demands. We sent some delegates to a conference in the city, where we learned that the gas flares the oil company was running – 100 foot high gas flares that were in operation 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, were illegal. These flares caused much of the asthma, cancer and acid rain in our communities. We organized a campaign against the flares, and recruited allies in the city and had some strikes and eventually forced the company to stop the flares.

**Abuela Aguaslimpias:** That victory built more unity between villagers and indigenous people. Together, we have built a local organization called ‘Tierra es Vida’ = “Land is Life”, and we have joined a national network called the ‘Movimiento Sin Tierra’ = the Landless Peoples Movement, to coordinate our struggles for dignity on a national scale. Recently, the chief and I went to an international conference on people’s movements. There we talked about indigenous sovereignty, and land struggles and climate

change. We met good people from the Northern countries too, people who pledged to support our struggle here by convincing Americans to consume less oil and change their consumption habits, putting less pressure on communities like ours. That was encouraging.

**Narrator:** *Presidente, are there any final thoughts you have after 10 years of oil extraction?*

**El Presidente:** I have to say that the Chief and Abuela make some good points. The oil extraction produced a lot of wealth, but most of it didn’t even stay in the country. And most of the loans he gave me (points to MegaBanker) had high interest rates, so the country is now in debt, even though we are an oil producing country! I have grandkids too, and I don’t want them to live in a world completely ruined by climate change...so I think we may have to rethink this whole oil business. We need some alternatives...

**Narrator:** *Okay, thank you. We are now ready for the last Act...*

#### ACT IV- 12 YEARS LATER

*(Narrator holds up a sign that says 12 YEARS LATER)*

**Chief Strongheart:** We have a great success story to share with all of you! Since we last saw you, Chevron discovered new oil reserves in the depth of the Lacandun forest. An area that still has no roads and is ecologically in good shape. They wanted to drill in there too. But our organization, “Tierra es Vida” has grown and it spearheaded an international alliance to prevent this

exploration and we won! Our government denied Chevron new drilling rights...

**Abuela Aguaslimpias:** That’s right! International NGO’s supported us, the Landless Peoples Movement supported us, civic organizations in the capital supported us. The Chief and I even went on a speaking tour in the U.S. and

got 50 municipalities there to pass resolutions supporting us. Some Americans & European allies even organized a boycott of Chevron! Now we are suing Chevron and demanding that they pay for the damages and clean-up of our community for the harm committed this last decade... We are on the move!

**El Presidente:** Wow, given that oil drilling has become more controversial, I'm trying to figure out what kind of development we should focus on now...

**MegaBank Banker:** I have a great alternative for you! As the international community is looking for alternatives to fossil fuels, there is an excellent "Green Development" business opportunity! People in the U.S. and Europe still need gasoline for their cars and scientists have figured out how to make gasoline out of palm oil from palm trees! You already have the roads and infrastructure up by Aguaslimpias – take out the coffee fields and vegetable fields and plant palm trees in their place! You can make billions selling 'biofuels' to Northern countries! I can give you a \$5 billion dollar loan to get you started...

**El Presidente:** Really? That sounds promising.

**MegaBank Banker:** Plus, I've got another perfect business partner for you! He's also my golfing buddy. This is Chad Corndollars, the CEO of Carphill, one of the biggest agribusiness companies in the world. (Gesture towards Carphill CEO) He will lease all of this land, and extract, transport and sell the palm oil for you. They are the experts in this emerging 'biofuels' market.

**Dr. Dinero:** This sounds fantastic. A new market for a new product! I know Americans love their cars...if we end up producing the 'new fuel' for them, we will become rich. I can't wait to start working with you Mr. Corndollars. I will happily lease my land to you!

**MegaBank Banker:** It's settled then! Here is your first loan. \$4 billion for you Mr. Presidente, \$1 billion for you Dr. Dinero...

*(Hands each of them another big \$\$\$ loan prop)*

**El Presidente:** (In a booming voice) Dear citizens of Saliagua, I would like to announce a new and exciting development plan that will bring wealth to our country...

**Abuela Aguaslimpias:** WAIT A MINUTE! Food prices around the world are going up! Poor people everywhere are hurting. Some of that is caused by drought related with climate change, but some of it is being caused by what you are suggesting – taking land that was used to grow food and converting it into 'agrofuels' for cars. That won't help us, it will hurt us!

**Corrientes River:** I also have something to say. This guy (points to Mr. MegaBanker) had the original idea of inviting Chevron here in the first place. He put up the money for it. Thanks to you I'm now polluted. You helped kill all of my fish; starve the animals that depend on me; choked me with roads; tarred my riverbed with oil. You expect me to trust your opinion? What you are suggesting will drain the little water I have left to grow a single type of tree to make a new oil for a new kind of car to feed the same old polluted system in the U.S. that is causing global warming... and I'll die in the process.

**Lacundún Forest:** That's right! Along with Chevron, the MegaBanker and his friends like Dr. Dinero are responsible for the damage done to me. You've cut me down, you've robbed me of original languages spoken here – those that hold my deepest knowledge; you've depleted me of the animals & insects that kept me strong and vibrant; many of my medicinal plants are now gone. You destroyed many of my original peoples. If you start making loads of money from

this 'palm oil' - these so-called 'biofuels' - what's going to stop you from chopping down the rest of this beautiful ecosystem so that you can plant even more palm trees for your personal profit? I also say NO to this shortsighted idea...

**Chief Strongheart:** We see through this ruse! We will not fall for it! Our alliance will not allow this new plan to go forward. The international networks we are part of – networks of farmers, peasants and indigenous people like “Via Campesina”, are already resisting these attempts around the world. We believe in community control over our own development; we believe in healthy and safe communities; we believe in clean water, land, and air; we believe the land belongs to those who work it and respect her. We are the true stewards of this place; we've known how to care for her correctly for thousands of years. Our cultures tell that we shall leave this place in better

shape than when we got here. It is our responsibility to our grandchildren, to the animals that feed us, to the forest that gives us lodging, and the waters that give us life...

**Abuela Aguaslimpias:** We stand united in this struggle. If we can't grow our own food, if can't meet our own needs and maintain our diverse cultures and languages, we are not truly free. We believe in local living democracies. No amount of imposed development – electricity, schools, money –will convince us otherwise. We are now organized - our struggle will prevail. Our children and our ecosystem demand it. Our dignity and that of the land around us are one and the same. Land and freedom!

*(Narrator holds up a sign that says THE END.  
Invites all actors to bow...)*

### Debrief Questions for small group discussion

- Do you know of anyone who has lived an experience like the one described in the play? Family members? Friends?
- How is the situation in the play connected to our lives here in the U.S.?
- Do similar situations and dynamics play out here in the U.S.?
- How should our organizations be responding to the eco-crisis described in the play? How is it relevant to the work our organization does?

## FREEDOM FIGHTING WHILE DEFENDING THE EARTH

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### What Is It?

A power point presentation that provides an overview of:

- The various forms of 'ecological crisis' faced by our planet
  - The root causes behind these crises
  - 'Solution' frames that racial, economic, and environmental justice organizations can be applying to confront these crises
- 

### Why Do It?

- Highlight the intensifying nature of the ecological crisis faced by our planet and how it's severely impacting poor communities, indigenous communities, and historically marginalized communities.
  - Support the formulation of 'ecologically just' solutions to our planet's problems that are rooted in the voices of impacted communities.
  - Understand how globalization, industrialism and capitalism are the underlying forces behind ecological destruction on a planetary level.
- 

**Time** 45 minutes to 1 hour

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**Materials Needed:**

- Power point projector
- Laptop computer
- CD with Freedom Fighting While Defending the Earth power point (Contact Movement Generation at [www.movementgeneration.org](http://www.movementgeneration.org) if you need a CD)
- Butcher Paper & Markers for debrief

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**Directions**

1. Prepare ahead of time by reviewing the power point presentation and becoming familiar with the subject matter. Take some time to customize your own facilitator's notes for each slide. Feel free to include comments & examples that will speak to your specific audience's experience and background.
2. Run through the power point with your audience
3. Debrief the power point with your audience. Some possible questions:
  - What are your initial reactions to this information?
  - Why is this information relevant to our organization and/or our community?
  - What are some immediate steps we can be taking to incorporate this analysis into our organization and/or our community?
  - What are some of the long-term implications for our organization / and/or our community?

## UNDERSTANDING OUR FOOD SYSTEMS

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**What Is It?** A workshop to uncover the roots of our food system

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**Why Do It?**

- Help people understand the ecological/social crisis of our current food and farming system.
- Illustrate the relationship between racial, economic, and ecological justice through the example of food and agriculture.

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**Time** 2 hours (including 1 hour for optional small group activity)

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**Materials Needed**

- Butcher Paper
- Markers
- 2 Handouts (see attached)

## I. INTRODUCTION

2 min

**Directions**

1. Ask everyone to take 1 minute to come up with a headline (can be tabloid style, funny, or not) about some food/diet/farming related article they've read or heard about.

Give them 1 minute to think

2. Ask people to share but not to repeat themes.

*(Optional) Write up headlines on butcher paper.*

If people are really stuck, suggest some themes like:

- Food riots
- High food prices to continue
- Corn for ethanol
- Farmer suicides
- Black folks die of diet-related diseases more than white folks
- Poor communities lack access to fresh produce
- Hunger in Africa

3. **Summarize:** "We all have some idea that something is wrong with our food system—the way we grow, get, and eat food. It is closely connected to some of the systemic forces we know are problematic—like capitalism, racism, and sexism. Let's go deeper and try to connect the dots."

II. PARADIGMS

50 minutes

**Directions**

- Put up Butcher Paper with the following information written up but leave off the examples (e.g.,).

*(Alternatively, just write up the left side dominant paradigm and have folks fill in right side based on what they know of indigenous or other systems)*

Dominant Paradigm	People & Nature-centered Paradigm
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>profit-centered—food grown for marketplace rather than self-sufficiency</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>centered on sustaining people &amp; environment—meeting people’s food needs while restoring what’s used</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>industrial &amp; driven by corporate-controlled technology</li> <li>requires import of often toxic/dead inputs—hybrid or GE seed (which can’t reproduce itself), fertilizers, pesticides, herbicides, fossil fuel for tractors, etc.</li> <li>toxic outputs—groundwater contamination, global warming due to massive fossil-fuel based transport system</li> <li>social upheaval—people displaced by imports and by technology/fossil fuel to go work in factories in other parts of the world (like Mexican farmers working in the meat processing plants in the Midwest—both farming communities impacted by industrialization)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>place-based technology derived from generations of knowledge of growing culturally appropriate crops on the land in that place</li> <li>utilizes locally available inputs that are biological rather than chemical</li> <li>outputs are useful either to people (food or other uses such as for housing or art), livestock, or other species (birds, bees, soil microorganisms, etc.)</li> <li>agrarian life holds people, meets social needs—different tasks for people with different family roles, celebration, etc.</li> </ul>

Dominant Paradigm	People & Nature-centered Paradigm
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ monocrop &amp; monocultural—e.g. genetically engineered “vitamin A rice” as a huge monocrop</li> <li>■ requires wiping out biodiversity (a field of corn vs. the kind of gardens you see here)</li> <li>■ only highly productive at producing one output—easier for mechanization/industrialization</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ diverse &amp; polycultural—e.g. native rice grown in small paddies surrounded by indigenous plants including green leafy vegetables with high vitamin A content</li> <li>■ highly productive but not in producing just one output</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ concentrates increasing levels of power and control in a smaller number of corporations</li> <li>■ biopiracy—theft of indigenous knowledge for profit (like attempt to patent Neem)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ control of technology (seeds, knowledge) land, and other resources in the hands of the people</li> <li>■ resources are distributed to meet needs</li> </ul>

Unfortunately, while the dominant paradigm really does exist in a pretty pure form, the people-centered alternative has had a hard time surviving.

5. Ask people to take turns reading each box. Go through each aspect of the chart one at a time. Ask people to speak up if they can think of an example that illustrates the point.
6. If people can't volunteer with examples, facilitator should provide some.
7. Ask: What would the headlines about food/diet/farming look like if we had the food system on the right rather than what we have today?

## III. SMALL GROUP EXERCISE

1 hour

**Materials Needed**

- handout of chart (see below)
- 2 butcher papers each for report back
- markers

**Directions**

1. Explain activity
  - We've got 3 different food items here, with 2 versions of each item. In each case, one marketed as sustainable and one put out through the mega food chain that ends up in Safeway.  
*Corn: GMO corn & organic local corn*  
*Chicken: Tyson Chicken & one raised for SF Farmers' Market or CSA*  
*Bread: Wonder Bread & locally grown/baked bread*
  - We'll break into six small groups and each group will each get one item in one of the versions. (Note: Take items out of the mix if there are fewer than 6 groups.)
  - Your task is to identify the costs that are not reflected in the price and who pays the price for those. Read the instructions on your handout. (These are called "externalities.")
2. Count off or bunch up depending on space. Groups should have no more than 5 people for optimal participation
3. Pass out the a copy of the Info Sheet for 1 item + blank chart + butcher paper + markers to each group
4. After 25 minutes in small groups, bring groups back to large group for report back. Ask them to select one item to report back on (corn, chicken, or bread) and have the sustainable and industrial group send a representative up to share for 5 minutes.
5. Ask: What are the costs you identified for your product? In the process of turning this item into something people eat, who pays and who benefits? How does that compare with what the other group with your item (i.e. the sustainable or industrial one) found?
6. After both groups have reported back, ask: What did you discover? How much do you feel like you know about what you eat? Why do you think this information wasn't made clear to you by the manufacturer/farmer/etc. if it wasn't?

### IV. WRAP UP/CLOSING

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While personal consumer choices are often the first place we jump to when we learn this kind of information, we know that what's available to us is a systemic issue. How is this a systemic issue? Where do most people buy their food? Are there other options, especially in working-class neighborhoods?

## APPENDIX 1: ACTIVITY HANDOUT FOR SMALL FOOD GROUPS

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### SMALL FOOD GROUPS CHART

Read your handout about the two items & then fill out this chart.

Choose someone to report back.

For each item, discuss & write answers into the chart or butcher paper:

*What did it cost (environmental externalities, labor, land use, actual price, etc.)*

- *What were the inputs? – land, water, seed, chemicals, petroleum, labor, ...*
- *What was the waste output? – greenhouse gases, chemicals in the soil & water,*

*Who paid?*

*Who benefited?*

Item: \_\_\_\_\_

Item: \_\_\_\_\_

	<b>COST</b> (\$ and environmental externalities)	<b>SOCIAL/RACIAL JUSTICE</b> (Who pays/Who benefits?)	
		<b>+</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Seed</b>			
<b>Farm</b>			
<b>Transport</b>			
<b>Market</b>			
<b>Consumer</b>			
<b>Dump/Compost</b>			

Instructions for report back

- Send a rep up to describe the costs they identified for their product.
- Talk about who pays/benefits
- Try to add to, not repeat things that prior groups identified
- Discuss how what your group found compares with the other group that had the same item (corn, chicken, or bread)

## APPENDIX 2: CHICKEN HANDOUT

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### The tail of two chickens

**Tyson Whole Chicken, raised in confinement on a South Carolina factory “farm”, shipped and bought at Wal-Mart in Oakland**

1. The chicken is a clone developed for maximum breast size, water retention, and docileness, raised on a “contract farm” in South Carolina. It is one of 1 50,000 chicken being raised in small cages in massive warehouses. Each 211 by 211 cage holds 6 chickens, whose beaks were melted off when they were chicks to limit the damage they can do to each other as they peck each other in their cramped conditions. The chickens never leave their cage, and are killed along an industrial conveyer belt that processes 5,000 chickens each day.
2. The chicken is actually owned by the Tyson Corporation, and the “farmer” leases the life to raise and sell it, using all Tyson supplied genetically engineered feed corn, antibiotics, growth hormones and other drugs. The farmer gets a set price for each chicken, but bears most the liability if there is a catastrophe.
3. The “farm” and chicken processing/packing plant is staffed by non-union documented and undocumented immigrant laborers who earn minimum wage with no benefits. The job security is nil. The work is very dangerous and difficult.
4. The chicken is frozen and shipped frozen by train and truck to Wal-Mart, where it is sold at \$5.95 for a whole chicken.

**Happy Chicken, raised on a small organic farm in Petaluma, trucked to Community Market in El Cerrito.**

1. The chicken is one of 1,000 raised each year by the middle-size “Happy Chicken Farm” in Petaluma. The chicken was fed organic, locally grown feed, and is “free-range”, meaning it ran with its chicken sisters in an open pasture. The chicken received no hormones, antibiotics or drugs.
2. The farm is primarily operated by the owning family, and has a dozen nonunion farm laborers, mostly undocumented immigrants, who work for \$10/hour. Many have worked with the farm for years.
3. The chicken is slaughtered by hand and packed fresh the day it is shipped to Community Market in El Cerrito, where it costs \$13 for a whole organic chicken.

## APPENDIX 3: CORN HANDOUT

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### Who's got your ear? (of corn)

**Genetically engineered corn grown in Iowa, shrink-wrapped into a 12-pack. Purchased at Costco in Oakland.**

1. The "Roundup Ready Corn" is genetically engineered so that the corn plants are resistant to Roundup herbicide (meaning that when the farmer sprays Roundup herbicide via airplanes on his/her fields, all plants are killed by the herbicide except the corn).
2. Seed is owned by Monsanto Corporation. It is leased to the farmer for a premium price, and grown under a contract that prohibits the farmer from saving or sharing her/his own seed. The farmer must buy new seed from Monsanto each year.
3. The corn is grown on a 20,000-acre farm in Iowa, using satellite watering systems, massive machine tillers, planters and harvesters. The operation employs only a handful of laborers who, unlike fresh produce farming, do not work in the fields, but manage large machinery used to process the corn from harvester to truck-trailers to be shipped around the US. The packers are non-union undocumented workers being paid \$6/hour.
4. The farm environment is a "mono-culture", with nothing growing for hundreds of square miles but corn and soy (on this and neighboring "farms")
5. To get to Oakland's Costco, the corn was shipped 1500 miles by train and truck.
6. The corn costs \$.20/ear by the dozen.

**Organic heirloom corn grown on a small farm outside Sebastopol, sold by the ear by one of the farmers at a farmers market in Oakland.**

1. The corn is an old heirloom variety, grown for its great taste and adaptation to the growing conditions in Sebastopol. No synthetic fertilizers or herbicides are used on this farm. Compost, made as part of the farming operation, enriches the soil and corn. The farm is very diverse, with over 2 dozen crops, and lots of local birds, pollinators and wildlife.
2. The seed is owned by the farmers. She/he saves her/his own seed, selecting each year for a more robust variety for that farm's conditions.
3. The farm is 40 acres, and is primarily farmed by the farming family and two full-time, resident employees. They also hire 4 farm laborers during harvest. They are non-union undocumented laborers paid \$10/hour.
4. To get to the farmers market, the farmers drive their bio-diesel truck 45 miles.
5. The corn cost \$.40/ear direct from the farmers.

## APPENDIX 4: BREAD HANDOUT

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### Wonder Bread... Wonder how?

#### Wonder Bread. Purchased at Safeway online & delivered to your home.

1. The flour is purchased from the mills of Cargill who purchase it from large farms all over the world but mostly in the U.S. At the mill, the germ and bran are taken out of it to be sold separately and the resulting flour is white.
2. Most of the wheat is grown on farms that are 10-20,000 acres large and are in the Midwest, using satellite watering systems, massive machine tiller, planters and harvesters. The farm operations employ only a handful of laborers who, unlike fresh produce farming, do not work in the fields, but manage large machinery used to process the wheat from harvester to truck-trailers to be shipped to the mills.
3. The farm environment is a "mono-culture", with nothing growing for hundreds of square miles but wheat (on this and neighboring "farms"). Synthetic fertilizers, herbicides, and pesticides are used.
4. The mill workers are non-union undocumented workers being paid \$7/hour.
5. Interstate Bakeries Corporation buys the milled flour and delivers it to a bakery in San Leandro where it is combined with 13 vitamin and mineral additives and various natural and chemical ingredients to make bread. The factory employs 300 union workers at wages from \$10-\$18/hour.
6. It is delivered to a unionized Safeway (slightly higher wages than the bakery) in Oakland and then delivered to your home.
7. By the time it gets to your home, it has traveled over 1700 miles by train and truck.
8. The bread costs \$2.50/loaf.

#### Organic Wheat Bread from grain grown on a farm in Yolo County, baked and sold at Arizmendi in Emeryville.

1. The wheat is sold whole, grown for its hardiness and adapted to the northern California climate. No synthetic pesticides, herbicides or fertilizers are used. The farmer owns the seeds, selecting from the plants most suited to the local conditions each year and saving them to plant the next year.
2. A draft horse is used instead of a tractor to till the soil, plant the wheat, and harvest. This minimizes oil use on the farm.
3. Organic methods are utilized including utilizing aged manure from a local dairy, growing cover crops to replenish the soil, rotating crops, and growing a diversity of plants to support a healthy ecosystem—bugs (including ones that eat the pests), birds, bees, and other wildlife.
4. The farm is 50 acres, and is primarily farmed by the farming family and two full-time, resident employees. They also hire 2 farm laborers during harvest. They are non-union undocumented laborers paid \$10/hour.
5. The farmer delivers the grain to Arizmendi Bakery in her diesel truck—90 miles.
6. The grain is ground fresh daily at the bakery and made into bread. The bread is made by members of the cooperative who are paid \$16/hour plus excellent benefits and profit sharing.
7. A loaf of bread cost \$4.50

## APPENDIX 5: SUPPLEMENTAL FACILITATOR NOTES

### II. WHAT'S GOING ON TODAY

First Globally (with the US being a major player), and then bringing it home to the impact on US communities.

#### Rising food prices

##### A. Long Term Causes over the last 20-30 years

1. **Structural adjustment & other neoliberal policies** caused a shift from farming for local consumption to export agriculture.
2. At the same time, continued **subsidies in the EU and US and dumping** of commodity crops makes it impossible for small farmers to compete.
3. World bank & IMF forced governments to **sell off food reserves**
4. Market power of **transnational corporations**. Ability to hold huge amounts of food in warehouses on speculation of price increase. Also small number of corporations controlling how people get their food—through supermarkets, through a few brand names.

DRAW bottleneck of the hourglass: intermediaries/middlemen, distributors

The result was:

- Smallest margin in recent history between supply & demand.
- Many countries are more and more dependent on food imports (no productive agriculture and no food reserves).
- Examples:
  - ⊗ Mexico: From being an exporter of corn a generation ago, Mexico now imports 30%

(and prices have been impacted by corn ethanol production)

- ⊗ Indonesia: From self-sufficiency of soy for tofu & tempeh, Indonesia allowed cheap US soy to flood the market. Now it imports 60% of soy and when prices doubled within weeks in January 2008, this dependence caused a crisis.

##### B. Short Term Causes over the last 1-2 years

1. **Agrofuels** putting food cropland to use for oil crops due both to rising oil costs and to need for policy makers to look like they're doing something about climate change. ("biofuels" sounds very eco)

##### Sideline...AGROFUELS

Agrofuels are a good example of how when solutions to ecological problems are framed by the ruling class, poor people, in this case mainly in the global south, will pay the price.

— limited amount of agricultural land available

— EU & US are trying to up the amount of agrofuel they use as % of total fuel consumption.

Note that, especially in the U.S., there is little to no attempt to curb consumption.

— But the oil for this agrofuel must be produced on farmland which is in limited supply in the U.S. and E.U. compared to what they want to consume

— so they are looking to agribusiness to ravage the farmland of the global south to meet their demand. Brazil, Indonesia, Philippines have all devoted huge increases in land to agrofuels.

\* The secretary-general of the Indonesian Farmers Union Federation & coordinator of Via Campesina:

“At least 1.5 million tons of Indonesian crude palm oil is exported to Europe, and nearly all is turned into agrofuel. On the other hand, hundreds of people have to queue for subsidized cooking oil. This shows that agrofuel gives rise to competition between cars and human beings and the environment.”

Who do you think will win?

“Those who can afford to drive are certainly richer than those who are in danger of starvation, and money is the major weapon in this capitalistic world.”

-additionally, agrofuel, may in fact exacerbate global warming. According to George Monbiot, each ton of palm oil that is turned into agrofuel releases 33 tons of carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) emissions, 10 times more than the emissions released by fossil fuels.

*According to an official EU Commission impact assessment, “increased use of biofuels in the EU will be accompanied by an increased external demand for biofuels and their feedstocks, which is likely to have various effects on developing countries... In addition, there are substantial CO<sub>2</sub> losses if grassland is ploughed up or forest cleared. These losses can be expected to outweigh CO<sub>2</sub> gains from biofuels for many years.” It clearly states that “there will be increasing pressures on eco-sensitive areas, notably rainforests, where several millions of hectares could be transformed into plantations.” Among the social effects the paper acknowledges the competition with food, the higher food prices which would hit the poor in developing countries and the pressure on vulnerable communities (to move away or drastically adapt their lifestyles).*

—included in the long list of corporate interests behind the agrofuel push are agribusiness (Cargill, Dupont, ADM), big oil (BP), and finance capital.

In addition to agrofuels...

2. **Cost of oil**=> higher cost of fertilizer, pesticides, and transport. Because our food system has become increasingly dependent on these inputs and transport, the rising cost of oil has greatly impacted the cost of food.
3. Entry of **speculators** into food markets. Shift of \$ from mortgage loans to food commodities. \$70 billion of new money into food commodities creating a bubble that leaves food out of reach of poor people and will lead to wiping out millions more small farmers when it bursts.
4. **Climate change** is also affecting people’s ability to produce food in the global south—loss of cropland, inability to grow the things they used to grow there—set to become even worse over time

- Desertification in Africa
- Increased flooding in SE Asia

### ■ Food riots

- ⊗ Organizing by organizations within the global network of Via Campesina
- ⊗ Clear analysis of the problems of neoliberalism, push to force Global South countries into the global capitalist industrial economy, in particular in the agricultural sector. Small farmers around the world have a much better understanding of the WTO, etc. than people in the US do.

US

In the US, along with the impact of rising food prices, there are other impacts

{Ask people to talk about what issues are facing the communities they're organizing in}

- Supermarket access
- Rising obesity and health problems from diet, especially in poor communities of color in US. This is becoming a global phenomena as US brand name fast food and processed food become globalized. 1 billion in the world people now considered obese.

- ⊗ framed as "personal choice" but actually an access issue
- ⊗ Illusion of choice/food security, especially in poor communities. Little or no access to fresh produce in Bayview Hunters Point impacts health!
- ⊗ Making food into a commodity
- ⊗ We buy products rather than food.

For example, coffee is a pretty pure food item but by controlling the packaging and distribution process, big food corporations are able to make huge profits.

- ❖ Example of Nestle (like our Folger's) in Raj's book—coffee farmer gets only 0.14/kilo. Nestle sells it for \$26.40/kilo—nearly 200 times the cost in Uganda.
- ❖ On the supermarket shelf, it looks like there is a lot of choice but really many brands owned by same TNCs.
- ❖ For example...

Cargill brands

ACT II, PARKAY ANDY CAPP'S, PATIO BANQUET, PEMMICAN, BANQUET BROWN 'N SERVE, PENROSE BLUE BONNET, PETER PAN CRUNCH 'N MUNCH, POPPYCOCK DENNISON'S , RANCH STYLE FIDDLE FADDLE, FLEISCHMANN'S , RO\*TEL GULDEN'S, ROSARITA, JIFFY POP, SNACK PACK, KNOTT'S BERRY FARM, SWISS MISS LA CHOY, VAN CAMP'S LIBBY'S, WESSON LUCK'S, WOLF

II. BRIEF HISTORY OF FOOD & AGRICULTURE

More than 800 million people around the world will go to bed hungry tonight. 2/3 are farmers and food producers. M

ore than 50% of the world's population are farmers

At the same time, 1 billion people are now classified as obese.

How has this happened?

**Though there have been different methods used throughout the last two centuries, food has consistently been used as a tool of imperialism.**

As the logic of capitalism played out, and today we see it in the uber-marketism of neo-liberalism, land and food were commodified—things to be bought and sold—rather than as resources to meet human needs.

### Period I. 1800s-WWII

Think of sugar, tea, and spices where under colonialism, imperialist nations took over land and imposed cultivation of these products for export to Europe and America. Assuaging white workers with the tastes of caffeine and sugar by enslaving black and brown peoples and putting their agricultural production onto the world market

### Period II. Post WWII-early 1970s

- Industrialization—food processing—1950 intro of TV Dinner when less than 10% of US households had a TV.
- Green Revolution—better living through chemistry—
  - ⊗ Agricultural colonization
  - ⊗ Domination of nature & indigenous forms of knowledge by western science
  - ⊗ Control of seed—move to monocropping
  - ⊗ Control of inputs—need petrochemical inputs produced in factories versus local compost, neem, etc.
  - ⊗ The cost of this was not included in the price the consumer (or TNC) paid. Not full-cost pricing. Land, water, air contamination. Disasters like Bhopal.
- New framework of development & food aid
  - ⊗ Place to dump excess commodities & in the process create new future markets (e.g., wheat creates new markets for bread)
  - ⊗ Political motivated food aid during cold war

By 1968, nearly 80% of US food exports went to the global south:

### Period III. Early 1970s-present

- Shift from food aid to loans with structural adjustment conditions
- Along with continuation of green revolution, now with more money for loans to farmers for inputs
- GATT expands to include agriculture under WTO—countries (although US & EU continue) supposed to lower subsidies and other barriers to imports.
- Results in shift to export agriculture

### Who Pays?

\* Small farmers, rural communities in Global South

— Farmer suicides globally—remember 1980s in the US (FarmAid/Bruce Springsteen), now farmers in India and elsewhere in the global south—are on the rise.

Close to 150,000 Indian farmers committed suicide in nine years from 1997 to 2005.

\* Consumers who are not given real choice but instead forced to eat mostly processed food that is causing health problems. Current epidemic of Type 2 diabetes

## UNDERSTANDING CONTROL MYTHOLOGIES

**What Is It?** Brainstorm, Discussion & Theater of the Oppressed interactive activity (involving physical movement and some optional contact) that explores United States' mythologies around ecological problems and environmentalism and allows participants to express their thoughts and emotions about being subject to such mythologies.

**Why Do it?**

- Helps people understand how even as conscious, progressive, left people, we are still controlled by myths that keep us from constructively engaging in a problem that is so huge & important (the ecological crisis)
- Allow people to process what they've learned about the global ecological crises in a more physical and emotional way
- Allows people to take a look at their personal, as well as organizational and political orientation to the problem
- Gives people an opportunity to envision how they can integrate the ecological justice frame into their current political work

**Time** 2 Hours 30 min

**Materials Needed**

- Butcher paper, markers, tape, easel pad
- Facilitators' list of control mythologies (Attached at the end of this curriculum)
- Material and/or props for group report-back:
  - butcher paper*
  - markers*
  - scratch paper & pens*
  - banners/blank posters*
  - bullhorn, mic, protest props, etc.*

**Directions****PART 1****45 min**

## Set up

1. Have at least 2 sheets of butcher paper ready for a brainstorm, and give the top paper the title of "Control Mythologies".

## Brainstorm

2. Set the context:

*Now that we have spent some time learning about the global ecological crises (bio-cultural diversity loss, water scarcity, food scarcity and collapse of agricultural systems, waste & toxics and energy climate change), we understand that no matter what sector of economic or racial justice we work in, the issues and communities that we care about stand to be severely impacted as ecological breakdown continues to worsen world wide.*

*This is not a new phenomenon, many social justice leaders have had this notion for a long time, yet the social justice movement as a whole is just now beginning to explore how it can best respond to the eco-crisis while still maintaining a racial & economic justice agenda.*

*The mainstream US is even farther behind in acknowledging and accepting the significance of the current and soon-coming ecological breakdown. We suggest that there is a whole world of control mythologies (perpetuated by the corporate/ government complex) that keeps people in the US from facing the most significant threat to humanity it will ever see, and keeps even us conscious, progressive, intelligent left radical people from engaging in this problem that is so huge that it underlies and encompasses all the separate issues we individually work on.*

3. Invite the group to begin brainstorming some of these mythologies with you. Explain that once we have a good list, the facilitator will select a few of them and the whole group will go through an activity that will give people a chance to physically and emotionally express the way they feel and are affected by these mythologies.

4. Model brainstorming a control mythology by beginning with an “easy” one, and then letting the group escalate to more challenging mythologies, including several that represent the control mythologies that are entrenched in the left and have kept us from addressing these issues.

**Start with “HUMANS ARE SEPARATE FROM NATURE”.**

5. Encourage any and all ideas, and refer to the facilitator’s list of mythologies to make sure those concepts get covered. (A facilitator’s list is attached at the end of this curriculum)

As people brainstorm, make sure to explain any mythologies that are not clear to the whole group.

Once the core mythologies have been covered and the list feels complete, thank everyone for their really great ideas!

**Theater of the Oppressed: Modeling Our Responses**

6. Before explaining the activity, take a moment to select 4 mythologies that you want the group to model for this activity. Make sure that 2 of them are mythologies that pertain especially to controlling Left-wing politically conscious folks.

Ask the group to count off by 2’s, so that you end up with 2 groups of equal number.

(If your participant group is uneven, you may step in as a participant while you facilitate in order for everyone to participate.)

7. Ask one group to be the ‘inner circle’ and the other group to be the ‘outer circle’. Help the groups position themselves, with the ‘outer circle’ surrounding the ‘inner circle’.

The people in each circle should be facing one another so that each person is lined up with one person in the other circle. Let people know that the circles will switch places half way through this activity.

8. Explain that the people in the ‘outer circle’ start off being the molders and the people in the ‘inner circle’ start off being the clay. Using one control mythology at a time, the facilitator will give a prompting question to the molders, who “mold” the clay to illustrate their response to the prompting question. This process should be done in silence to the degree possible.

Explain that we will also start with a simple still modeling and then add motion, sound/word, sentences, props, etc. to give more complexity to the responses.

\*\* If someone does not feel comfortable being physically handled the molder can verbally guide the clay into the position/shape that is the molder’s response \*\*

9. Choose the simplest of your selected mythologies, then:

- State they mythology out loud (Example: "You can buy your way out of any problem...")
- Ask the prompting question: What does this control mythology look like? How is this mythology manifested in the world?
- Instruct the molders to mold the clay to reflect their answer to your question

*Allow about 2 minutes for molding. Once everyone is done, let the outer circle walk around the inner circle so that everyone gets to see everyone else's clay*

10. Choose a second mythology:

- State they mythology out loud (Example: "Environmentalism is for white people")
- Ask the prompting question: How does this mythology make you feel?
- Instruct the molders to mold the clay to reflect their answer to your question, and add a motion to their clay

*Allow about 2 minutes for molding. Once everyone is done, let the outer circle walk around the inner circle so that everyone gets to see everyone else's clay*

11. Now have the 'inner circle' and the 'outer circle' switch places so the clay are now the molders & vice versa. Choose a third mythology:

- State they mythology out loud (Example: "Food comes from the supermarket")

- Ask the prompting question: How does this mythology connect to the work that you do?
- Instruct the molders to mold the clay to reflect their answer to your question, and add a motion and one repetitive sound to their clay

*Allow about 2 minutes for molding. Once everyone is done, let the outer circle walk around the inner circle so that everyone gets to see everyone else's clay*

12. Choose your fourth mythology:

- State they mythology out loud (Example: "Technology will provide the solution.")
- Ask the prompting question: How do you see yourself resisting this mythology in your life?
- Instruct the molders to mold the clay to reflect their answer to your question, and add a motion, a sentence and a prop (if available) to their clay

*Allow about 2 minutes for molding. Once everyone is done, let the outer circle walk around the inner circle so that everyone gets to see everyone else's clay*

13. Thank everyone for letting themselves be seen and doing a great job!

Explain that we'll be taking a 15 minute break. When we come back we will break into groups for some deeper discussion on these how these control mythologies affect us.

## 5 MINUTE BREAK

**PART 2****1 hour 30 min****Small groups**

1. Explain that we will create three rounds of small groups (5 or less) in which the groups are different every time. We will use counting-off, life-boats, or some other way to set up groups.

Each round will take 20 minutes (including the time to create the groups). The group will have ~15 minutes to discuss a different question. With each round, the questions will build on each other, and the last group will answer the last question with a creative report-back method.

2. Use a method of your choice to create 3 groups of 5 people or less. Once groups are established:
  - State discussion question #1: How are you controlled by these mythologies (personally and politically)?
  - Allow remaining time for group discussion. Give the groups a 5 minute warming and a 1 minute warning. When the 20 minutes for that round has passed, call everyone back together to create the next round of groups.
3. Use a method of your choice to create another 3 groups of 5 people or less. Once groups are established:
  - State discussion question #2: How do these mythologies impact the sector/issue/area you work on: i.e. racial justice, economic justice, youth development, etc?
  - Allow remaining time for group discussion. Give the groups a 5 minute warming and a 1 minute warning. When the 20 minutes for that round has passed, call everyone back together to create the next round of groups.

4. Use a method of your choice to create another 3 groups of 5 people or less.

Remind people that for this discussion question the group will come up with a creative way to present their discussion to the other groups. After having 20 minutes for discussion, they will have an additional 15 minutes to develop their report back. They can create a series of sound-bites, chants, a skit, a newspaper front page, political poster, or action role play that shares one way their group sees addressing the ecological crisis in the future.

Once groups are established:

- State discussion question #3: How do you envision integrating what you've learned into your life/organization/political work? (Understanding that there are many ways for us to engage these ideas, and that groups may form networks, or other formations outside of their existing organization).
- Allow remaining time for group discussion. Give the groups a 5 minute warning and a 1 minute warning.

At the 20-minute mark, let groups move around to get any supplies they need for their report-back.

When the 15 minutes for creating the report-back has passed, call everyone back to begin the presentations.

5. Let groups self select who will perform first, second and last. Cheer loud and congratulate everyone on their performances!

Remind people that this creative space can be the first step in planning concrete steps for their organizations (or wherever they do their political work) to begin integrating goals around ecological sustainability into their personal, organizational practice and their program plans.

## APPENDIX 1 – FACILITATOR’S LIST OF SOME CONTROL MYTHOLOGIES

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Humans are separate from nature.

Humans are more important than animals/nature.

The creativity of “the market” will solve the problem.

Technology will provide the solution.

(Economic) Growth is Good.

Progress is Inevitable. (here, progress refers to technological progress, as above, and capital-intensive industrial development, as progress)

There is nothing we can do about it - the crises are natural/normal part of the planetary life-cycle

Resources are infinite (Resources = minerals, metals, water, wood and so on)

You can buy your way out of any problem

Conscious consumerism alleviates the problem

Environmentalism is for white people

People of color don’t care about the environment

Food comes from the supermarket

The ecological crisis is FAR AWAY

Corporations will solve the problem

Humans have to dominate nature

The earth is in crisis (Rather than humans being the ones in crisis)

Poor people have too many babies — population is root cause of problem

It’s all China’s fault – if they’re not doing something, why should we?

Taxing the rich hurts the economy

## ECOLOGICAL CRISES IN DA HOOD

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### What Is It?

This workshop explores how the Ecological crises play out in urban communities through examining consumption patterns in poor communities of color, how corporations destroy our ecosystem and ways folks can fight back. This workshop will also examine the food, water and climate crises impacting the communities that we live in as well as third world countries where many poor immigrant communities come from. The entry point of this workshop is an interactive interpretation of the 30-minute film *The Story of Stuff* ([www.storyofstuff.org](http://www.storyofstuff.org)).

This workshop was designed for use with youth of color in urban areas, but is good for general use with modifications.

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### Why Do It?

- To learn about the factors and issues that contribute to the climate crisis, water crisis, and food crisis and how it affects our survival today and into the future. (The PROBLEM)
  - To understand the root causes of how our societies are creating this environmental crisis, and how we can stop companies and people in power from maintaining their harmful practices. (The SOLUTION)
  - To find ways in which individuals and organizations can take action to stop the destruction of our environment in order to prevent the permanent damages caused by the environmental crisis. (The ACTION)
- 

**Time** 3 hours

**Materials Needed**

- Butcher paper with Goals of Workshop
- Hand-outs for Materials Flow Exercise (see exercise instructions)
- Video: Inconvenient Truth
- TV + DVD Player
- 3 empty water bottles
- A gallon or so of water to fill up water bottles
- A small packet of hot cocoa mix
- 30 cups

**Created by**

Asian Pacific Islander Youth Promoting Advocacy & Leadership (AYPAL), [www.aypal.org](http://www.aypal.org)



**Agenda at A Glance**

1. THINGS TO DO BEFORE THIS WORKSHOP
  - Have youth do their "Ecological Foot Print" online [<http://www.earthday.net/footprint.php>]
2. Front Load Exercise: 4 Corners Exercise (5min)
3. Activity 1: Materials Flow Drawing (Story of Stuff) (45min)
4. Activity 2: The Food & Water Crisis (45min)
5. Activity 3: The Climate Crisis (30min)
6. Activity 4: Solutions / Actions (30min)
7. HOMEWORK – Do This Within 2 Weeks
  - Produce no trash for 48hrs (2 days) – imagine any trash you throw away will be stored in your room

## Frontload Exercise (5 minutes)

We're going to introduce the themes of this workshop by playing an activity called 4 corners. Each corner of the room will represent a different response.

Facilitator designates corners by putting up a sign at each that reads:

- Corner 1: Always
- Corner 2: Sometimes
- Corner 3: Rarely
- Corner 4: Never

*I will read a statement and depending on your response, you will move to the appropriate corner*

Facilitator reads following statements:

- *I take more than 20 minute showers*
- *I use disposable plates, cups, utensils*
- *I leave lights on while I'm not in a room*
- *I leave the T.V. on even though I'm not watching it*
- *I buy new phones or new shoes*
- *I only drink water from bottles*

*Today, we will be talking about the environmental crisis because it's something that is affecting us today, has been affecting us in the past, and will cause devastating problems in our lives very soon – 50, 20, even less than 10 years from now!*

*We call it an "environmental crisis" because it's not just "global warming" – it's a problem that we can stop if we choose to do the right thing. But the reason why it's become so bad is because many people in power – governments and big business – chose to not stop this environmental crisis from happening ON PURPOSE.*

*Our goals today are to talk about how the Climate, Food, and Water Crisis happen, what we can do to stop it on a big scale (using community organizing), and what we can do on a small scale (us in our individual lives).*

*At AYPAL, we focus on community organizing because it can solve the root causes of the problems, and because we want change to happen on a large scale, not just a small scale!*

What do we mean by Community Organizing to win large-scale change? Here's an example: Help pass a law that would make businesses cut down less trees, use no plastic, use less toxic chemicals, and use more eco-friendly materials to make their products.

By small-scale change we mean: Individual actions like recycling our cans and bottles.

**BOTH ARE NECESSARY!** Community organizing changes POLICIES and affects our communities on a large scale. If thousands of businesses are prevented from causing major pollution in the environment, that's a huge help!

## ACTIVITY 1: MATERIALS FLOW DRAWING – THE STORY OF STUFF (45 MIN)

### Goal of Activity

An interactive interpretation of the film *The Story of Stuff* ([www.storyofstuff.org](http://www.storyofstuff.org)), this activity looks at how the production, consumption and disposal of 'stuff' affects communities at home and abroad, and exposes the connections between a large number of environmental and social issues. Facilitators should watch this short film online to familiarize themselves with the topic before running this training.

### Directions

1. Give a short explanation for the activity: *We are about to look at how the production, consumption and disposal of 'stuff' affects communities at home and abroad, and exposes the connections between a large number of environmental and social issues. We are going to break into 5 groups and examine what it takes to make, transport, sell, use and eventually throw away a consumer item like an iPod.*
2. Divide the group into to 5 Groups.
  - Extraction
  - Production
  - Distribution
  - Consumption
  - Disposal
3. Give each group their respective Group Handout. As a group they need to draw what is written on the handout. It doesn't have to be fancy – participants can even draw stick figures, but make sure all the key points from the handouts are highlighted. The drawings should be big enough so people in the back of the room can see what the drawing looks like
4. Choose 2 people from each group to report back to the bigger group.
5. Everyone must be involved in drawing something on the sheet.
6. Ask to borrow someone's side kick or iPod or Nike dunks. Before the groups start presenting ask them what they think went into making this particular product. As you go through the stages the facilitator should give examples or request examples for the item in hand (iPod, for example).
7. When the groups present make sure they present according to the sequence.
  - Extraction
  - Production
  - Distribution
  - Consumption
  - Disposal

**EXTRACTION  
(Handout 1)**

Draw a beautiful natural setting with clean rivers, beautiful mountains, clean air, animals and people living off the land growing there own food to sustain their community.

**Write down these facts towards the bottom of the drawing.**

**Facts: ([www.storyofstuff.org](http://www.storyofstuff.org)).**

- In the United States, we have less than 4% of our original forests left. Forests are being cut down.
- Forty percent of waterways have become undrinkable.
- The U.S. has 5% of the world's population but we're consuming 30% of the world's resources and creating 30% of the world's waste.
- If everybody consumed at U.S. rates, we would need 3 to 5 planets. And you know what? We've only got one.

Now draw some of the consequences of these facts on your 'beautiful natural setting'.

**PRODUCTION  
(Handout 2)**

Draw a Factory with hella people lining up at the door to go to work because there is no work in your community. The big box factory has a massive chimney that pollutes the air causing people to get sick. Draw a polluted river where these factories dump toxins and harmful chemicals into the drinking water of the community.

**Write down these facts towards the bottom of the drawing.**

**Facts: ([www.storyofstuff.org](http://www.storyofstuff.org)).**

- There are over 100,000 man-made synthetic chemicals in commerce today.
- Only a handful of synthetic chemicals have even been tested for human health impacts and NONE have been tested for synergistic health impacts.
- In the U.S., industry admits to releasing over 4 billion pounds of toxic chemicals a year.

**DISTRIBUTION  
(Handout 3)**

Draw a big Wal-Mart Super Center store/distribution center, where people are buying loads and loads of stuff in their shopping carts. Draw people working really hard at Wal-Mart for long hours, no health benefits and getting very little pay.

**Write down these facts towards the bottom of the drawing.**

**Facts: ([www.storyofstuff.org](http://www.storyofstuff.org)).**

- As an example, CEO's get compensated up to 871 times more than U.S. Wal-Mart Workers, & 50,000 times as much as Chinese Workers
- The idea of Externalizing Costs is also being played out here. There are many real costs of producing things (like using water, dumping waste, contributing to climate change, paying sick worker's medical care), which are incurred by producing things, but are ignored by the company owners. Since the company owners don't pay for these real costs, but shift them onto the public and the environment, they are said to "externalize" them, which means making someone else pay for them.

**CONSUMPTION  
(Handout 4)**

Draw an apartment complex where someone is chilling watching T.V. Next to it draw a circle that shows a cycle where someone is:

1. Working at a hard job like McDonald's or Construction to make money
2. Then they go home to watch T.V. where they see advertisements that say they're too fat, too skinny, too tall, too stanky and make them feel insecure about themselves so they need to shop to feel better
3. Then lastly to complete the cycle they go to the store to buy more stuff to feel better.
4. Connect to the first arrow, which is for them to work hard at their job to make more money to buy more stuff.

**Write down these facts towards the bottom of the drawing.**

**Facts: ([www.storyofstuff.org](http://www.storyofstuff.org)).**

- The average U.S. person now consumes twice as much as they did 50 years ago.
- We each see more advertisements in one year than a people 50 years ago saw in a lifetime.
- In the U.S. our national happiness peaked sometime in the 1950s. On average, the U.S. population has become less happy, despite having access to more stuff.
- In the U.S., we spend 3–4 times as many hours shopping as our counterparts in Europe do.

**DISPOSAL  
(Handout 5)**

Draw an apartment complex full of stuff like Nike air dunks shoes, clothes, iPods, flat screens, etc. Then draw an incinerator (garbage dump where they burn garbage) where all the stuff will be taken into and burned and disposed of, which pollutes the air, the water and the community. Draw a dumpsite with all the stuff people buy.

**Write down these facts towards the bottom of the drawing.**

**Facts: ([www.storyofstuff.org](http://www.storyofstuff.org)).**

- Average U.S. house size has doubled since the 1970s.
- Each person in the United States makes 4 1/2 pounds of garbage a day.
- That is twice what we each made thirty years ago.
- For every one garbage can of waste you put out on the curb, 70 garbage cans of waste were made upstream to make the junk in that one garbage can you put out on the curb.
- 90% of what we buy is thrown away within 6 months.
- When people say I am going to through something away. There is no away, it goes someplace, someone's community.

**Processing Questions**

**What is wrong with this cycle? What is wrong with this “Linear Materials Flow”?**

*This system is unsustainable and destroying the earth. People are being harmed at all points of the cycle whether or not it’s destroying the rich natural resources, exploiting third world peoples, exploiting workers, making people feel insecure about themselves just for the bottom line which is to make money.*

**Who benefits and who suffers in this system?**

*Corporations make money and expand their business to third world countries. The people suffer most because they are being exposed to toxins, their communities being destroyed, exposed in harmful working conditions.*

**What do you think needs to happen in order to change the system?**

*We need to create a system that is sustainable that does not pollute water, does not pollute people, a system that is not wasteful, a system that does not pollute the air. We need a system that respects the systems of nature. In the natural web of life - nothing is garbage; nothing goes to waste. There is Zero Waste. One creature’s waste is another’s creature’s food source. By adapting human settlements back towards this ‘closed loop’ system, we can reestablish a sustainable way of life for all, humans included.*



**WHAT DO WE MEAN BY EXTERNALIZED COSTS?**

Say you have a green radio that is being sold at Wal-Mart for 4 dollars and 99 cents. You are probably wondering how \$4.99 could possibly capture the costs of making this radio and

getting it to my hands. The metal was probably mined in South Africa, the petroleum was probably drilled in Iraq, the plastics were probably produced in China, and maybe the whole thing

was assembled by some 15 year old in a maquiladora (Sweatshop like conditions) in Mexico. \$4.99 wouldn't even pay the rent for the shelf space it occupied until I came along, let

alone part of the staff person's salary that helped me pick it out, or the multiple ocean cruises and truck rides pieces of this radio went on. That's how I realized; I didn't pay for the radio.

## ACTIVITY 2: THE FOOD AND WATER CRISIS (45 MINUTES)

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**Goal of Activity** To explore the causes of the current food and water crisis.

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### Directions

1. Give a short explanation for the activity:

*For this activity, we'll be diving deeper into the Food Crisis & the Water Crisis. We'll be separating you into 2 groups & each group will go to a different station – a Food Station and a Water station. Each station will have their own activities & some processing questions. We'll rotate the groups after about 15 minutes. After everyone is done with both groups, we'll return to the larger group and do a larger processing.*

2. Separate the larger group into 2 smaller groups.
3. Send one group to the Food Crisis Station & the other to the Water Crisis Station.

## Station 1: Food Crisis Station

**GOAL:** Show how corporations have seized control of agriculture and made farmers and indigenous people dependent on corporations.

**FORMAT:** Get participants to improvise a small skit. First read them the context out loud & then break them into 2 groups:

Group 1: Indigenous Peoples of the Philippines

Group 2: Monsanto Agribusiness Corporation

Give each group a few minutes to review their roles and then have them role-play their situations out loud.

Context (Read out loud by Facilitator):

*During the 1970s, Ferdinand Marcos, the dictator of the Philippines, supported foreign businesses as they entered the country and became increasingly dominant in many sectors of the economy. Marcos often said these foreign businesses were good for the people, environment and development of the Philippines. He 'Green washed' for these businesses. Green washing is a term used to describe the perception of consumers that they are being misled by a company about the environmental practices of the company or the environmental benefits of a product or service. In reality, the companies' ultimate goal was to make profits, control markets, and sell harmful products to the once sustainable peasant communities in the Philippines.*

**Group 1  
Handout:****INDIGENOUS PEOPLES OF THE PHILIPPINES**

You're a group of indigenous farmers who live in the Cordillera region of the Philippines. For thousands of years your community has been able to survive off the land planting your own rice and crops to feed your community. Over the years you've seen your community being destroyed by a dam and your communities' supply of rice has decreased since your community has purchased rice from Monsanto, an agricultural business that sells products to farmers. Recently your community has been wondering, why do these rice crops die after one use? So you decide to talk to the Monsanto business corporation to get answers.

**Group 2  
Handout:****MONSANTO AGRIBUSINESS CORPORATION**

You're the business representative of Monsanto Corporation. You're job is to make money by selling rice seeds to farmers across the world. What the farmers don't know is that these seeds are genetically modified and die off after 1 use. This way, peasants are forced to be dependent on your product & have to buy new seeds. When Farmers come to you to ask why these seeds die off after one use, your response is "We want to ensure that you have high quality rice products every season and you don't have to use the same seeds from the previous year." Overall, your goal as a business representative is to make that bottom line which is a come up on the buck!

## Processing Questions

### What happened in this skit?

*Farmers are being screwed by Monsanto, who is selling them rice seeds that die of after one use. Monsanto makes billions and billions of dollars from keeping farmers dependent on their products.*

### Who benefits in this situation and who suffers?

*Monsanto Corporation benefits from this situation and the farmers suffer.*

### What's going to happen to the farmers who have successfully lived off the land for thousands of years?

*They're going to be dependent on Monsanto business for their food supply, making the community insufficient to live off the land. Soon the land is going to be taken over by the company.*

## Processing Facts

- In Years past Indonesia was self sufficient in Soy. Currently 60% of Soy is Imported or brought in from another country, which means that they are unable to produce there own soy. (Movement Generation Retreat)
- The Philippines is one of the highest rice producing country in the world. However, people in the country can't afford to buy rice. The world price of rice has jumped by close to 80 percent since January 2007. The Rice prices are up in the Philippines by 20 to 30 percent. (Washington Post April 08)
- Because of the high demand for bio-fuels to feed cars, a lot of land is being used for producing these bio-fuels instead of using the land for food. This, along with depleting food yields from climate change, is causing the increase in food staple prices. (MG Retreat)

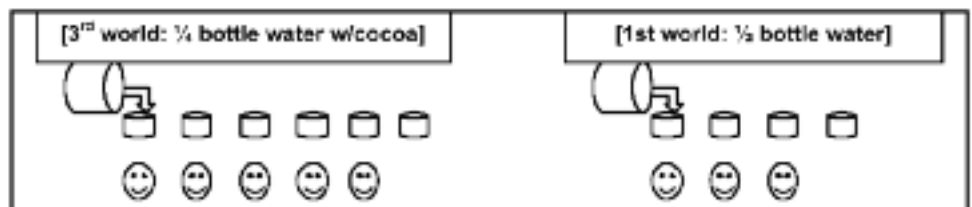
## Station 2: Water Crisis Station

**GOALS:** Show the unequal distribution of water. Illustrate the current conditions of the fresh water crisis on the planet.

**FORMAT:** Physical activity meant to illustrate the current state of water on the planet.

**FACILITATOR'S NOTE** - Be sure to read these goals before you start! But don't tell participants till the end.

- The purpose of this activity is to show the unequal distribution & usage of water. It also highlights the condition (quality) of people's drinking water (note the cocoa in the water).
- The smaller group will represent a 1st world country (like the United States) & will get half a bottle to share amongst its group
- The other larger group is a 3rd world country & has less access to water. They get a quarter of a bottle to share amongst its group. In addition, add a pinch of hot cocoa in their bottle.

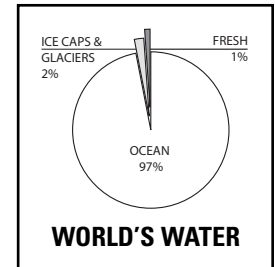


**Instructions**

1. Separate the group into 2 uneven groups (1 Larger Group & 1 Smaller Group).
2. *For this activity, each group will be given a task to do.*
3. *After the group has completed the task, I (the facilitator) will give your group some water to stay hydrated.*
4. *The water will be distributed to your groups' water bottle.*
5. *Your group has to distribute the water evenly amongst its group members to quench your thirst.*
6. *The game will have 2 rounds.*
7. *The first activity is to do 15 jumping jacks to represent manual labor. Go!*
8. *After each group is done, give each group will be given an amount of water (see facilitator's note for allocation).*
9. *You're goal is to distribute the water evenly amongst all group members. Feel free to drink your water.*
10. *Ready for Round II? Now everybody has to do 20 jumping jacks.*
11. *After each group is done, each group will be given an amount of water (see facilitator's note for allocation).*
12. *Again, you're goal is to distribute the water evenly amongst all group members. Feel free to drink your water.*
13. *At this point, the participants in the large group are probably in open rebellion. Ask them why they are upset. Get quick comments from both groups. Then reveal to them what this simulation is meant to illustrate:*
  - *The unequal distribution & access to clean, drinking water between 1st world & 3rd world peoples. The small group with clean water represented the 1st world. The large group with dirty water represented the 3rd world.*
14. *Quickly jump into a review of the Water Facts below, to give participants some context:*

## Water Facts

- 97% of the world's water is held in the salty Ocean
- 2% of the world's water is locked up in Ice Caps & Glaciers
- Only 1% of the world's water is fresh water; ½ of which is already polluted
- Global consumption of water is doubling every 20 years, more than twice the rate of population growth.
- Currently, 12 percent of the world's population uses 85 percent of its water. (Wealthy, 1st world communities.)
- The largest uses of water are for agriculture (70 percent) and industry (20 percent), with domestic use lagging far behind at 10 percent.
- According to The Economist magazine, "Five big food and beverage giants-Nestlé, Unilever, Coca-Cola, Anheuser-Busch and Danone - consume almost 575 billion liters of water a year, enough to satisfy the daily water needs of every person on the planet."
- In California, as much as 80% of California's water is used in agriculture (farming)
- In the World, the average use of Water goes as thus1:
  - 69% Agriculture (mostly irrigation/watering)
  - 23% Industry
  - 8% Domestic Use (household, drinking, sanitation)
- Access to water: who has access to water
- According to the World Health Organization an estimated 1.7 billion people still lack access to clean water. 2
- 2.3 billion people suffer from water-borne diseases each year.
- While the demand for water is on the rise, the supply is shrinking. Water-intensive agriculture, population growth, industrial pollution, and other ecological threats that are depleting freshwater supplies.
- Under current patterns of climate change and water mismanagement, 3 billion people could be under permanent water stress by 2050. Climate change is decreasing our fresh water sources (like melting the Sierra snow caps) & decreasing the predictability of water flow.



## The Solutions Frame to the Water Crisis

(Can be converted into a Handout)

We must become true guardians of our local watersheds! Here are 4 concepts for 21st Century Water Warriors:

1. **Water Commons:** That water belongs to the earth and all species and must be understood for all time to be a universal common trust
2. **Water Justice:** Water is a fundamental human right to be distributed equitably as a public service and never appropriated for profit
3. **Water Stewardship:** Water must be conserved and renewed, rather than wasted, contaminated and depleted; Humanity must once again respect water's sacred place within the natural worlds
4. **Water Democracy:** Water management decisions must involve local community participation – local stewardship is the best safeguard for a water-secure future – not private business

## Processing Questions to Wrap up Activity 2

To be done once everybody has already completed both Stations.

What is one thing that you learned about the food crisis?

What is one thing that you learned about the water crisis?

What was most shocking to you?

Who benefits?

Who suffers?

## ACTIVITY 3: THE CLIMATE CRISIS (30 MINUTES)

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**Goal of Activity** To explore the causes of the current food and water crisis.

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**Format** Watch clips of An Inconvenient Truth and follow up each clip with a pause and a set of processing questions.

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### Video Cues at a Glance for An Inconvenient Truth

Chapter 3 & 4: How Global Warming Occurs/ the Government	(Start: 8:53 for 2.5 min)
Chapter 7: Glaciers Melting/Water	(Start: 16:22 for 2 min)
Chapter 12: Weather Patterns	(Start: 30:02 for 3 min)
Chapter 14: Floods and Storms	(Start: 36:47 for 2.5 min)
Chapter 19: Seasons Changing	(Start: 51:27 for 3 min)
Chapter 21: Greenland	(Start: 57:16 for 2 min)
Chapter 23: Our Society Today	(Start: 103:29 for 2 min)
Chapter 24: Technology and our Government	(Start: 105:13 for 3-4 min)
Chapter 26 & 28: The Anti-Environmental Crisis Side	(Start: 102:06 for 3 min)

## Processing Questions

Chapter 3 & 4:

**How Global Warming Occurs/the Government (Start: 8:53 for 2.5 min)**

1. Where does CO<sub>2</sub> come from?  
*Cars, factories, pollution, the burning of resources, etc.*
2. What's the moral of the story of the cartoon? How can politicians and people in power make global warming worse?  
*They come up with solutions that don't really take care of the real problem – because they don't want to really change the way our society works. (see later about how politicians profit from global warming).*

Chapter 7:

**Glaciers Melting/Water**

**(Start:16:22 for 2 min)**

1. How does global warming affect mountain snow and glaciers? What does that mean for humans?  
*The snow and ice are melting, which means that drinkable water sources for many people will disappear.*
2. What percent of people in the world get their water from glacier runoff? 40%
3. What are some of the countries that will be affected?  
*Argentina, Peru, Nepal, etc.*

Chapter 12:

**Weather Patterns**

**(Start: 30:02 for 3 min)**

1. How does global warming impact weather patterns?  
*Creates typhoons, tornados, hurricane*
2. How does the weather impact people all over the world? Give examples from different countries.  
*Hurricane Katrina*

*\*\*\* Mention about Katrina – if we faced a national disaster, would the government come in to help us? Notice that there WERE storm warnings and that scientists predicted exactly how a hurricane would impact the region – yet nothing was done to prevent the disaster ahead of time.*

Chapter 14:  
**Floods and Storms**

(Start: 36:47 for 2.5 min)

1. How does the environmental crisis affect precipitation (rain, snow etc.) – and how does it affect people?  
*Hotter climates = hotter winds, which means more moisture in the air to create rain – but the rain can be harmful because it both creates flash flooding (the ground can't soak in the water), evaporation from oceans, AND droughts, because the moisture gets sucked out of certain areas and spread to new areas. This means starvation and destruction for many people all over the world.*
2. How would the bay area or other parts of the world be affected by global warming? What would happen to us?  
*\*\*\* Also mention that if the ice caps melt, the freshwater pouring into the Atlantic Ocean would stop the warm trade winds from circulating. That would mean that Europe wouldn't get any heat and could get thrown into an ice age, just like it did centuries ago.*  
*\*\*\* Pacific Islands will be no more! They will be under water.*
3. What happens to animals like polar bears, trees or buildings when the earth gets hotter due to the environmental crisis?  
*Trees get uprooted when the soil/permafrost becomes unstable, and polar bears drown because there are no more ice caps! Buildings get torn down because the ground becomes unstable too.*

Chapter 19:  
**Seasons Changing**

(Start: 51:27 for 3 min)

1. How does global warming affect animals? What is the ultimate effect? *The food chain gets altered because due to global warming, insects and animals hatch at different times, which would lower the food sources for animals like bird that depend on the caterpillars to feed. If they can't eat, their species can die off.*
2. What are other threats to humans if the climate changes in this chapter? *Changing climates means that new diseases can reach humans, which means disaster.*

Chapter 21:  
**Greenland**

(Start: 57:16 for 2 min)

1. Which areas would be greatly affected by Greenland disappearing? Why?  
*When Greenland melts away, the area would flood. When the sea levels rise due to glacier melting and rain, cities near sea level will be underwater like the bay area, Florida, parts of China and Asia, the Pacific Islands, etc.*

Chapter 23:  
**Our Society Today**

(Start: 103:29 for 2 min)

1. What factors have contributed to why we are producing more greenhouse gases that affect the environment?  
*The population boom: 1945 à 2.3 billion people / 2005 à 6.4 billion people / 2050 à 9.1 billion people. Forests burning are a natural way of life, but all those fires release carbon monoxide into the air, which contributes to the environmental crisis.*

Chapter 24:  
**Technology and our Government**

(Start: 105:13 for 3-4 min)

1. How can technology actually contribute to environmental problems?  
*Warfare and technology can harm and alter our environment by putting new chemicals and problems into the earth, affecting the people.*
2. The U.S. is responsible for how much of all the greenhouse gases that lead to global warming? 30%!
3. What is the lesson of the frog in the pot? How does that have to do with us and our relation to the environmental crisis?  
*We don't do anything about this huge environmental disaster because to us, it seems unnoticeable or gradual, so it's hard to see. If it creeps up on us gradually, it may one day be too late to stop it before it kills us.*

Chapter 26 & 28:

**The Anti-Environmental Crisis Side**

**(Start: 102:06 for 3 min)**

1. How many articles disagree with the idea that there is an environmental crisis? 0
2. How do some politicians and big corporations view the climate crisis? What is their argument to trick us into not believing in the existence of an environmental crisis?

**They say that it's a "THEORY" NOT A "FACT" – make the public believe that there are doubts in the idea.**

## ACTIVITY 4: SOLUTIONS & ACTIONS (30 MINUTES)

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**Goal of Activity** To explore solutions to the ecological crisis

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**Format** Large group discussion. Facilitate a large group discussion using some of the sample bullet points below to direct the conversation. Capture participants' thoughts on butcher paper.

## Discussion Bullet Points

### 1. Community Organizing around ecological crisis:

- Get involved in a campaign that fights/advocates to solve the ecological crisis
- Making corporations accountable, creating policies that prevent illegal dumping, pollution, production of toxic products
- (i.e.) Truck drivers oil strike in Europe because of high gas prices.
- Bolivia fighting privatization of their water. Corporations trying to make money off of people's drinking water.
- Fighting the rice crisis in the Philippines by pushing for more sustainability of producing rice.
- Equal agrarian distribution: Redistribute land equally for people in the country to benefit.
- Push for 0 emission public transportation

### 2. What we can do here in the US:

- Work around watersheds so we can control access to water. Watersheds are natural plots of land where water naturally flows.
- Community Gardens to grow sustainable food for the community
- Roof top gardens in inner city to feed the people in your apartment complex

### 3. Have concrete practices

- Minimize your use of trash
- Recycle
- Educate your self about the conditions in our environment.
- Don't dump your trash everywhere.
- Don't use water bottles
- Buy local food that is produced here in the US that don't require high cost of transportation.
- Take shorter showers
- Tell others about these conditions.
- Hand-outs of what folks can do
- Save Water!
- Stop Using Bottled Water!

**Final  
Processing  
Questions:**

1. What are some things we can do (as individuals) help stop the Environmental Crisis?
2. What are things we can do to make this Environmental Crisis Worse?
3. What are some things we can do as an organization (AYPAL) / Community to stop the Environmental Crisis?
4. What can we do personally to stop the environmental crisis from happening?
  - Use less power at home!
  - Create less waste and trash
  - Talk to everyone so that they can change their habits too! That makes a bigger impact
  - Talk to your local newspapers to make sure they inform other people
  - Find out which chemicals are in your products and don't buy those goods! Buy the safe ones.
  - Be involved in community organizations that help create change
  - Walk, don't drive as much to lessen the car emissions that pollute the environment
  - Use energy saving light bulbs
  - Recycle trash
  - Get people elected into power that will promote cleaner environmental practices
  - Buy green! Buy recycled! Buy environmentally friendly products that were made without causing major destruction to the environment.

## LOCAL AND GLOBAL FIGHTS FOR HEALTHY LAND, FOOD, WATER, AND AIR

### A SAMPLE FULL DAY AGENDA

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#### What is it?

This curriculum will explore how the Ecological crisis globally is connected to struggles locally in low-income immigrant communities and communities of color. It will also examine the intersections of ecological issues and the disproportionate impacts facing low-income communities - which threaten the well being of all people and the future of our global home. This curriculum will look at the local and global connections through the framework of food, land, water, air, and displacement, and provide opportunities to explore personal experiences with these issues from our home countries and the connections to the work in the US locally. This curriculum is tailored for low-income, immigrant and communities of color in urban areas, but is good for general use with modifications. This exercise is based on groups of people looking at maps and the environmental impacts associated with a loss of healthy land, food, water, and air and the ability to live self sustainable lives, rooted in ancestral cultures and cultural diversity.

**Why do it**

To provide a space where multi ethnic organizational community leaders and members can engage in political education on the unfolding ecological crisis

To engage with a diverse group in peer learning and dialogues linking our struggles together to explore the interrelated nature of social, economic, political, and ecological injustice.

To highlight the intensifying nature of the ecological crisis our planet is facing and how this crisis severely impacts poor communities, indigenous communities, and displaced communities.

To understand the cumulative nature and harm of these many impacts.

To begin formulating 'ecologically just' solutions to our planet's problems rooted in the voices of impacted communities

To understand how ecology and ecological stress interacts with experiences of displacement, migration, racism and poverty.

Understand broad connections between the ecological crisis impacting poor people all over the world and how it plays out in different countries, and how it relates to our organizing work in the US

Understand the connections between our personal experiences with migration and our home countries and the issues of access to healthy food, air, water, land and freedom from displacement

Explore the role that indigenous cultures, community control, and ownership of land and resources play in building ecological justice and a sustainable planet for all

**Created By**

Partnership for Immigrant Leadership and Action & Movement Generation with guidance from our Grassroots Leadership Gathering planning committee including the Chinese Progressive Association, the Center for Political Education, and the Community Justice Network for Youth.



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**Who is PILA**

The Partnership for Immigrant Leadership and Action (PILA) works to increase civic activism among low-income immigrant communities to strengthen democracy and advance social justice. PILA provides training and technical assistance to Bay Area organizations and communities to support grassroots leadership development and movement building electoral and grassroots issue based organizing. We facilitate ongoing peer learning, networking and alliance building among organizations and communities to strengthen a multi-ethnic movement for social justice. PILA feels that the ecological crisis is a critical issue, which has a cumulative and large-scale impact. This crisis affects people as a whole, and has a disproportionate impact on low-income communities and communities of color globally. Many of our partner organizations and allies who work with immigrant communities are looking for ways to support their leaders and members in discussing how ecological issues relate to them, as well as think of ways to include this framing in their analysis and organizing work. We hope that we can partner with immigrant communities and organizations to develop their solutions to the ecological crisis, prepare for its impacts, and add their voices to the forefront of the struggle for ecological justice in the US and around the globe.

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**Time needed**

6 to 7 hours

### Sample Agenda for the Day Long Curriculum

The core components of this day-long curriculum are in bold. They will also work as stand-alone pieces.

Welcome and Introductions	15 min
Ecological Framing	15 min
Overview of the training	5 min
<b>Saliagua: A Story Of Ecological Injustice</b>	1 hour
Break – lunch	30 min
Home Country Map Exercise	1 hour 40 min
<b>Freedom Fighting While Defending The Earth</b>	45 min
Break	10mins
Stories of Resistance	1 hour 30 min
Close/Evaluation Process	10 min

**Materials Needed**

- Sound system (speakers, mics, stands):
- Food tables with topics/questions
- Goals on butcher paper
- Large icons on poster board:



Food



Community



Water



Displacement



Land



Toxins



Healthy Environment



Resistance

- LCD projector and computer for powerpoint
- Powerpoint Presentation titled, "Freedom Fighting While Defending the Earth"
- Photocopied scripts for each character in the Saliagua play + the narrator (11 copies)
- Simple props for the 10 characters in the Saliagua play. (see script)
- Maps for the Home Country Map Exercise

### Optional Breakfast "Icebreaking Activity:

"Food Stations" with teaser questions. One way to get participants to begin to think about the day's theme is by setting up your breakfast in "food stations." These food stations could be set up with the intention of getting people to engage in initial conversations of what it takes to get the morning's edibles from their place of origin to the table at hand. Some example food station questions are found below:

**Beverage Station** – What is the journey that this coffee/tea/juice took to get here today? How much energy was spent to produce and transport it to where it is being used today?

**Pastries Station** – How many different products are used to make the food you are eating? Are these produced locally or abroad?

**Fruits Station** – Are the fruits at this table locally and organically grown? What are the benefits of such production?

Note – These questions are to urge conversation. If you want to do this activity it would be good to research answers to this question that you can have in a fact sheet. A good resource is <http://www.storyofstuff.com/>.

## 1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS (15 MIN)

We would like everyone to sit by someone you do not know. Welcome to today's daylong training. Before we get started we would like to take the next 5 minutes and ask you to introduce yourself to your neighbor and tell each other why you are here and what organizations you volunteer or work for.

Hope you got to meet someone you didn't know before and we hope that during the day you take a chance and talk to people about what you are thinking and absorbing as a way to help digest all this information we are about to review together.

## 2. ECOLOGICAL FRAMING (15 MIN)

To set the stage for the day's theme ask the large group to answer the following questions popcorn style. Have a co-facilitator/volunteer raise the icons on poster board. The facilitator should let participants brainstorm answers and then introduce the icons on placards.

We all aspire to live in healthy communities. What are some of the things that we need to live?



Food



Land



Community



Water



Healthy Environment

What are some of the things that communities need to be free from & resist to live harmoniously and healthy lives?



Displacement



Toxins

Displacement and struggles against repression are connected to land, food, water, air and healthy communities in the US and in other countries. What is happening here in our neighborhoods is happening all over the world. During the days activities we will explore the themes represented in these icons and how they affect our daily lives and the lives of other people throughout the world. We will learn how the impacts of the environmental crisis and issues of land, food, water, and air are connected.

Before we begin and we will repeat this later we want to put out a couple of assumptions we are working off of and check with you to see if there is agreement.

First, that we need clean:



Food



Land



Community



Water



Healthy Environment

And that we need to be free of and resist



Displacement



Toxins



Resistance

And all these things are necessary and required for survival and we believe all people have a right to these things. In order to have healthy communities, we must have a clean and healthy environment.

---

Second – there are impacts that are caused by humans and those that are natural. Humans have always been part of their environment. While there have always been “natural” disasters – more and more disasters are being caused by human actions.

If needed, provide an example. For example, climate change from greenhouse gas emissions is causing the ice caps / glacier melt resulting in extreme weather changes causing floods, hurricanes, and drought. A good example of the increase and intensity of hurricanes exacerbated by eroding of the coast, and nature's protections of the wetlands and the government's failure is hurricane Katrina. New Orleans and the Gulf Coast has always had hurricanes, but the frequency and intensity of recent hurricanes, like Katrina are not “natural”. The government destroyed the natural barriers of marshlands, erected crappy barriers, and then levies failed to protect people. The government's intervention post Katrina worsened a situation already bad. People in jail were left in water for days and people who took food in abandoned store shelves were villainized as thieves. As a contrasting point, a similar level hurricane in Cuba, resulted in evacuation of people, with zero deaths and practically no injuries. Caring about the disproportionate impact on poor people can make a huge difference.

### 3. OVERVIEW OF THE TRAINING (5 MIN)

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- Review goals and agenda for the day (on easel paper)
- Review logistics (bathroom, translation, childcare, etc.)

## 4. SALIAGUA: A STORY OF ECOLOGICAL INJUSTICE (1 HOUR)

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### **Description**

Interactive activity – in the form of a play – that outlines the social, political economic and ecological impacts of oil extraction in the Global South. This exercise serves as an introductory tool to talk about the interrelationship between race, poverty, displacement and the environment in a global context.

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You will find the instructions and script to Saliagua in Chapter 1 of this Manual

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**We will now break up into small groups and discuss the Debrief Questions for 20 minutes:**

1. Please assign someone to be a reporter from each small group – they will briefly summarize what each group talked about.
2. The debrief Questions for small group discussion (have on easel paper):
  - *Do you know of anyone who has lived an experience like the one described in the play? Family members? Friends?*
  - *How is the situation in the skit connected to our lives & work in the U.S.?*
  - *Do we see similar situations / dynamics playing out here in the U.S.?*
  - *How should our organizations be responding to the eco-crisis described in the skit? How is it relevant to the work our organization does? (Facilitator's note: This last question should be left out if you are doing the Home Country Map Exercise immediately after, as it will be addressed there.)*

If time permits, have a reporter from each small group briefly summarize what each group talked about. (Feel free to conduct some or all of the debrief questions in the big group if that feels more appropriate.)

## **5. BREAK – LUNCH (30 MIN)**

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## 6. HOME COUNTRY MAP EXERCISE (1 HOUR 40 MIN)

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### Description

This workshop will explore how the Eco crisis globally is connected to struggles locally in low income immigrant communities and communities of color, as well as the intersections of these issues and disproportionate impacts facing communities and threatening the well being of all and the future of our global home.

This workshop will look at the local and global connections through the framework of food, land, water, air, and displacement, and provides opportunities to explore personal experiences with these issues from our home countries and the connections to the work in the Bay Area locally. This workshop is tailored for poor, immigrant and communities of color in urban areas, but is good for general use with modifications.

This exercise is based on groups of people looking at maps and the environmental impacts associated with a loss of healthy land, food, water, and air and the ability to live self sustainable lives, rooted in ancestral cultures and cultural diversity.

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### Facilitators Notes On Uses And Modifications

This workshop was developed and used as one part of a day long curriculum for the Grassroots Leadership gathering, and conducted with an audience of 40 – 50 immigrant members and leaders of grassroots social justice organizations that already had some level of political development and experience organizing around local issues. However, this

tool can be used as a stand alone and modified for a smaller or larger group. As written, this exercise is designed to follow Saliagua: A Story of Ecological Injustice, a popular theatre skit, which illustrates the themes of ecological crisis and displacement. It can be used as a stand alone, if the facilitator feels the group has some context around these themes.

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**Exercise Goals**

- Understand broad connections between the global ecological crisis impacting poor people
- Understand how the ecological crisis plays out in different countries
- Understand how the ecological crisis relates to our organizing work in the US
- Understand the connections between our personal experiences with migration and our home countries and the issues of access to healthy food, air, water, land and freedom from displacement

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**Materials Needed**

- Agenda and workshop Goals on butcher paper
- Markers, Butcher Paper, Tape
- Copies of the facilitator guide for each small group facilitator
- For each small group, provide 2 – 3 maps of home countries
  1. Unites States
  2. Mexico
  3. China
  4. Philippines

You can prepare and include the popular theatre skit Saliagua first if time permits, or you can include an Icebreaker here and jump directly into the Home Country Exercise.

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**Directions**    **Introduction (10 minutes)**

(As we've just seen in the play Saliagua), displacement and struggles against repression are connected to land, air, food, water and healthy communities in the US and in home countries.

What is happening here in our neighborhoods (in the US) is happening all over the world, with different intensity and scale. We are going to take the next hour and 40 minutes to get into smaller groups. We'll take this time to get to know each other better, we'll look at a few examples of the impacts in other countries of the environmental crisis and these concepts of land, air, food, water, and displacement to see what ways these struggles are connected to the issues we are working on here in our local communities.

### Small Group Exercise

In order to do that we are going to divide the room into smaller groups, to give more time for people to review the maps and have discussions and get to know each other a little better. (If dividing the room by specific category, then provide instructions. Everyone who's preference is Spanish will go to one side of the room and everyone who's preference is English will go to another side of the room.)

Facilitator Tips on the recipe of break out groups: You can instruct participants to count off to get into small groups. Below is a sample chart of break out groups (in this example we based the number of groups on the total number of participants as well as the languages spoken of the group. To facilitate more active participation, each group should have no more than 6 – 7 people in it. Depending on the group's dynamics or demographics, you can consider dividing the group by geography, demographics, and language spoken or by counting off. Make sure to prepare small group facilitators in advance with the maps and curriculum.

Sample: small groups clustered by language

Spanish ( group 1)	English (group 2)
Facilitator US Mexico El Salvador	Facilitator US China Philippians
Spanish (group 3)	English (group 4)
Facilitator US Mexico El Salvador	Facilitator US China Korea

**Pair Exercise (10 min):**

In Small Groups by Language: *Before we get started, we're going to get into pairs and share how our personal experience relates to the issues of ecological crisis and the themes of food, air, water, land and displacement. If you have personal experience with these countries, you can also share. (If you have used the play Saliagua then you should refer to it here. Most people have experienced some connection to these issues directly or through their ancestor's experiences). You will then have a few minutes to report back to the larger group: your answers (how your experience relates to the play).*

**Facilitator Premise in Small Group (5 min):**

Before we look at these maps and what is happening in these countries, we want to put out some assumptions we have and check as a group to see if we agree.

*First is that – Clean food, air, water, land, and healthy communities free of displacement – all of these things are necessary & required for survival. We believe people have a right to these things. In order to have healthy communities, we must have a clean healthy environment.*

Check for general agreement.

*Second – There are impacts that are caused by humans and those that are natural. Humans have always been part of their environment. While there have always been "natural" disasters – more and more disasters are being caused by human actions.*

If needed, provide an example. *For example, climate change from greenhouse gas emissions is causing the ice caps / glacier melt resulting in extreme weather changes causing floods, hurricanes, and drought. A good example of the increase and intensity of hurricanes exacerbated by eroding of the coast, and nature's protections of the wetlands and the government's failure is hurricane Katrina. New Orleans and the Gulf Coast has always had hurricanes, but the frequency and intensity of recent hurricanes, like Katrina are not "natural". The government destroyed the natural barriers of marshlands, erected crappy barriers, and then levies failed to protect people. The government's intervention post Katrina worsened a situation already bad. People in jail were left in water for days and people who took food in abandoned store shelves were villainized as thieves. As a contrasting point, a similar level hurricane in Cuba, resulted in evacuation of people, with zero deaths and practically no injuries. Caring about the disproportionate impact on poor people can make a huge difference.*

**Facilitators Tips:**

If you are using this exercise by itself, it would be important to not only go through the premises above, but also define some key words i.e. health, clean food, air, water and land.

Additionally, if those "aha" moments are happening (when a participant says, "Wow! I didn't realize only 1% of the planet's water is drinkable, and that the US consumes over 1/3 of the planet's resources!"), you should roll with it and its okay to get into it. Facilitation of Political Education has to have flexibility and often participants get more out of rolling with something than just sticking to the prepared agenda. Although tangents that don't have any connection or last too long are not good either ...



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**B. Small Group Discussion Questions (55 min):**

1. What stands out about the information present in these maps? Are there other examples you would want to add to these maps? (Participants can draw on the maps)
2. What are some of the common themes about the ecological crisis that impact poor people in these countries? Are there similarities / connections with what is happening in these countries and what is happening in your community here in the US?
3. How does this information (and what you saw in the play) relate to the work you are doing locally?
4. Why do you think these things are happening?
5. What solutions need to happen to address these issues? Discuss actions people can take personally, within our community, organization, community and where do we go from here.

Facilitator Note: Make sure there is enough time for the group to focus on question #5, and notes are taken on butcher paper to support the person who will be reporting back. Be prepared to help guide the discussion and make sure that people don't only focus on personal responsibility. People tend to assume personal responsibility instead of focusing on systemic and structural changes and the roles institutions play.

If time permits: The facilitator can ask people to go around and share a learning or "aha" moment and identify what further questions people have about this topic.

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**Report Back to Whole Group:**

**Option 1:** Report back (30 min) take turns - can be verbal to big group or visual on butcher paper to stick on the wall. Each small group presents to whole group answer to # 5. If you plan to use this method of report back, then make sure to include instructions to designate a person to do the report back and ensure someone takes notes of the themes on butcher paper to help aid the person reporting back.

**Option 2:** Report back (60 min depending on the number of groups) each group has 10 min to prepare a skit to demonstrate your report back to question # 5 from the small group. You're now going to have 10 minutes to plan a report back to the larger group in the form of a skit. You can also have people come up with a newspaper headline.

**Summarize main themes from today (5 min)**

Part of our goal today was for folks to walk away with a sense of the vast disproportionate impacts the ecological crisis has and will have on low income people everywhere, unless we prepare our communities, organize and build the political power necessary to formulate and win our own solutions. As we've seen from today, our personal experiences reflect a lot of the themes (you can reference the play here) around land, food, water, air and displacement caused in the struggle over resources and power. As we continue to navigate a world full of challenges, it's important to remember that solutions & responses to the crisis must be shaped and driven by those most impacted by the issues. We have a lot of the ideas and solutions, and vision for what healthy communities should be like to continue the fight for social justice for our people. We understand that we can't have healthy people without healthy environments, and that in fact, people are a part of the environment, and we cannot exist without it. It is critical that communities most impacted are central in the struggle to maintain and win back community control locally and around the globe.



## 7. FREEDOM FIGHTING WHILE DEFENDING THE EARTH

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### What is it?

- A power point presentation that provides an overview of:
- The various forms of 'ecological crisis' faced by our planet
- The root causes behind these crises
- 'Solution' frames that racial, economic, and environmental justice organizations can be applying to confront these crises

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### Why do it?

- Highlight the intensifying nature of the ecological crisis faced by our planet and how it's severely impacting poor communities, indigenous communities, and historically marginalized communities.
- Understand how globalization, industrialism and capitalism are the underlying forces behind ecological destruction on a planetary level.
- Support the formulation of 'ecologically just' solutions to our planet's problems that are rooted in the voices of impacted communities.
- Highlight the importance of resisting these impacts and the importance of building a movement for ecological justice rooted in the needs and vision of poor people, indigenous people, and communities of color.

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**Time** 45 minutes to 1 hour

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**Materials Needed**

- Power point projector
- Laptop computer
- CD with Freedom Fighting While Defending the Earth power point (Contact Movement Generation at [www.movementgeneration.org](http://www.movementgeneration.org) if you need a CD)
- Butcher Paper & Markers for debrief

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**Directions**

1. Prepare ahead of time by reviewing the power point presentation and becoming familiar with the subject matter. Take some time to customize your own facilitator's notes for each slide. Feel free to include comments & examples that will speak to your specific audience's experience and background.
2. Run through the power point with your audience
3. Debrief the power point with your audience. Some possible questions:
  - What are your initial reactions to this information?
  - Why is this information relevant to our community/ organization / work?
  - What are some immediate steps we can be taking to incorporate this analysis into our organization / work / community?
  - What are some of the long-term implications for our organization / work / community?

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**8. BREAK (10MINS)**

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## 9, STORIES OF RESISTANCE AND INSPIRATION (1 HR 30 MIN)

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### Materials

- Computer
  - Projector
  - Blank wall space
- 

### Bridge Statement (10 min)

*Now we are going to look at how communities are standing up for healthy and clean land, food, water, and air. We just did some in depth analysis of the global ecological crisis and we are now starting to think about solutions. We recognize many of you are already doing work that incorporates these issues into your existing work or you work directly on environmental justice issues in your community. Some of you may have further questions about impacts in your home country or how these questions of ecology connect to immigrant rights or other local issues. Others may be ready to jump towards what we can do about it, and we're here to support all of that. We are now going to hear from a couple of speakers to provide some local examples of their work on these issues.*

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### Stories of Resistance and Inspiration

During this section you want to prepare by having allied environmental justice organizations come and present on active campaigns in your community or show some video clips of ways in which communities are resisting and/or creating human/earth centered solutions to some of the environmental crisis we face. Below is a possible line up of resources, speakers & short films:

#### Good Resource Organizations:

Oil Watch International: [www.oilwatch.org](http://www.oilwatch.org)

Via Campesina: [www.viacampesina.org](http://www.viacampesina.org)

La Red Vida: [www.laredvida.org](http://www.laredvida.org)

#### Speakers from Environmental Justice organizations like:

Communities for a Better Environment (CBE): [www.cbe.org](http://www.cbe.org)

Alternatives for Community and Environment (ACE): [www.ace-ej.org](http://www.ace-ej.org)

We Act for Environmental Justice (WEACT): [www.weact.org](http://www.weact.org)

Asian Pacific Environmental Network (APEN): [www.apen4ej.org](http://www.apen4ej.org)

Youth United for Community Action (YUCA): [www.youthunited.net](http://www.youthunited.net)

#### Possible videos:

*Defending Forests, Family Farmers and Our Climate: Rainforest Agribusiness Campaign* film by Rainforest Action Network (15min)  
[www.ran.org](http://www.ran.org)

*The Greening of Cuba* produced by Food First (30 min):  
[www.foodfirst.org](http://www.foodfirst.org)

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**Pair Exercise (20 min)**

After listening to the ways in which other are actively engaging to resist some of the things affecting our environment we would like to think of ways in which you can help in this effort. Please pair up with the person sitting behind you and discuss the following questions:

- What actions can people take within our community and/or organization?
- Why is it important to think beyond what we can personally do, and focus on structural changes and the roles institutions play?
- Where do we go from here?

**Report back (30 min depending on size of group)**

Take turns - can be verbal to big group or visual on butcher paper to stick on the wall. We did this in a large groups popcorn style.

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**10. CLOSE/EVALUATION PROCESS (10 MIN)**

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*Thank you all for participating in today's training. We hope this training took us all one step towards a deeper understanding of the challenges our communities face both here and abroad and what we can do to support the struggle for a healthier environment for all. Today we started the day with the intent of accomplishing the following: [review goals outlined at the beginning of workshop and the agenda – on easel paper]*

*Please take an evaluation (in your packets), complete it and turn them into us. These are important to take your feedback and improve our trainings.*



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