

## Which way forward?

### *Description of the project*

Collaboration of Parties of the project: ETC Group's international *Which Way Forward?*, which is intended to facilitate grassroots conversations focussed on the current food system crises and the risk of them worsening through the un-regulated development of new technologies and scientism, and research oriented towards profits and private interests rather than the common good, particularly in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic.

### *Process*

- Groundings – people share their experiences of recent events, with particular reference to the food system. Examples of questions may include: How has pandemic impacted your relationship with the food system? How has technology been more (or less) useful during the pandemic?
- Pathways – people explore the different aspects of a range of possible solutions including the role of technologies, corporations and agroecosystems. (Curriculum developed by ETC Group with other parties)
  - Explore different pathways for the future of the food system. This will include corporate-driven visions, such as genetic biotechnology (gene editing, synthetic biology, gene drive organisms), precision/digital agriculture and other applications of machine learning (robots, artificial intelligence).
  - Allow the community to evaluate these potential futures on their own terms, informed by the views of a range of professional experts and those whose expertise comes from their life experience.
- Based on their discussion of a range of alternative possible solutions, they contribute to the development of a framework for assessing technologies that considers:
  - i) The vision of the future that lies behind scientific research and development of its applications. An analysis of who is imagining these futures (e.g. corporations, states, farmers),
  - ii) The social, cultural, political and economic contexts in which different potential future technologies would be embedded,
  - iii) A critical overview of technologies potentially relevant to the food systems, including the influence of powerful corporations and others on their development.
  - iv) Which technologies are best for systems of food production based on the principles of agroecology.
  - v) How discuss alternatives to corporations dictating the future regarding technology, including the validation of grassroots knowledge.

Reflection and conclusions – people reflect on what they've heard and maybe reach consensus on their conclusions. Where possible, undertake an analysis encompassing different national & regional contexts.