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

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

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

We sow it
We reap it
We can’t afford to eat it!

AOTM & DECENT WORK
- Structure of US agricultural labor relations has changed dramatically over the past 50 years - shrinking rural communities; growing suburban/urban populations
- Family labor once dominated small and mid-scale agricultural production. Now hired labor is prominent in mid-scale operations producing food for wholesale markets (as traditionally with large-scale operations)
- Larger small-scale farms are also increasing their hired labor, including migrant workers

As a result, employing hired labor under “decent conditions of work” has become a limiting factor for Agriculture of the Middle (AOTM)

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

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

- Did the USA sign the Treaty of Versailles and join the League of Nations?
  - NO TWO-THIRDS MAJORITY IN US SENATE

- What organisation dealing with labour standards & conditions was set up as part of the League of Nations and when?
  - INTERNATIONAL LABOUR ORGANIZATION, 1919

Where was the first International Labour Conference of the ILO held, and when?
- WASHINGTON D.C., 1919. ILO OFFICE THEN ESTABLISHED THERE, + PARIS, LONDON, ROME

No international agricultural bodies were established in 1919

International Organisations: Framework

- When did the USA join the ILO? Which President was in power?
  - 1934. THE ONLY LEAGUE OF NATIONS ORGANISATION THE USA JOINED. ROOSEVELT

- Declaration of Philadelphia 1944: refined the ILO mission & set up the modern ILO. "Labour is not a commodity"

- What international body was established in 1945 to replace the League of Nations?
  - UNITED NATIONS

International Organisations: Framework

- Where is the headquarters of the UN?
  - NEW YORK

- Why do you think one of the main reasons its headquarters are in USA, not Switzerland?
  - TO ENSURE USA WAS A UN MEMBER

- 1946: ILO became a UN specialised agency & the oldest UN organisation. Promotion of social justice & internationally recognized human and labour rights

- 1948-1970: David Morse, ILO Director General from US

- DECENT WORK became an ILO theme from 1999 onwards. Now taken up by FAO and other international bodies & stakeholders

International Organisations: Framework

- When was the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) established?
  - 1945

- Where is the headquarters of FAO?
  - ROME

- When did the USA join FAO?
  - 1945

International Agricultural Organisations Rome-based

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

International Labour Organization (ILO)

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

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

ILO & FAO & National Counterparts

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

ILO & Workers/Employers in Agriculture

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

FAO & Hired Agricultural Workers

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

International Farmers’ Organisations

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

International Agricultural Trade Union/Labor Organisations

- 1994: “merged” with International Union of Food Workers - as International Union Food, Agricultural, Hotel, Restaurant, Catering, Tobacco & Allied Workers’ Associations (IUF)
- “Merger” - IFPAW had circa 20 staff, two of whom - one policy officer (Sue Longley), one accountant - moved to IUF
- Decrease in financial resources/person power for international work on agricultural workers, their families and communities
- Food workers trade/labor unions in effect “subsidising” the agricultural trade/labor unions in IUF. Food workers unions’ membership now declining in many parts of the world
UN Millennium Development Goals

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

Agenda 21

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