

Activity: Debate



TIME ESTIMATE

50-60 minutes



MATERIALS

Electronic devices (for preparation required ahead of debate) and writing materials for all participants

PURPOSE

To understand the impacts of different approaches on equitable governance of international food systems and global development.

DESCRIPTION

Participants will debate strategies employed by the Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa (AGRA) and the Alliance for Food Sovereignty in Africa (AFSA) to understand the impacts of different approaches on equitable governance of international food systems and global development.

FACILITATOR NOTE

This activity requires some pre-class preparation. Please provide the pre-debate instructions to participants with sufficient time for them to prepare for the activity. Some of the topics discussed may be sensitive for some participants. Refer to the Facilitator Guide with particular attention to the section on microaggressions to ensure a respectful tone is carried out throughout the debate.

PRE-DEBATE (Outside of class time)

- 1 Randomly divide the group into two equally sized groups, one representing the Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa (AGRA) (referred to as Team AGRA), and one representing the Alliance for Food Sovereignty in Africa (AFSA) (referred to as Team AFSA).
- 2 Ask participants to spend approximately one-hour outside of class time preparing for a debate representing their assigned organization on the question: How should agricultural development be conducted in Africa?
 - Give the students the debate questions outlined as follows:
 - A. What kinds of interventions are favoured by your group and why are those interventions beneficial to aid recipients?
 - B. What are some groups your organization partners with to achieve its goals and how do those partnerships ensure success in achieving those goals?
 - C. What, according to your organization, is the path toward food systems sustainability in Africa?
 - D. How would you characterize your organization's theory of change and why is it an effective framework for achieving food security?
 - E. How do you see the opposing organization's ideas and practices finding complementarity with your own organization?
 - F. How might the opposing organization's programs benefit smallholder farmers?
 - Choose two questions from A-D and one question from E-F to fit within time constraints.

MODULE 6: FOOD SYSTEMS GOVERNANCE

- 3 Provide participants with the respective resources listed below to assist in their research, and ask that they take notes on the partner organizations, funding sources, and the types of interventions advocated for by the group to prepare for the debate.
- AGRA
 - [AGRA: Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa](#)
 - [How we work: Alliance for Green Revolution in Africa](#)
 - Holt-Gimenez, E. (2008). Out of AGRA: The Green Revolution returns to Africa. *Development*, 51, 464-471. doi.org/10.1057/dev.2008.49
 - AFSA
 - [AFSA: Opportunities for Amplifying Agroecology](#)
 - Shilomboleni, H. (2017). African Green Revolution, food sovereignty and constrained livelihood choice in Mozambique. *Canadian Journal of African Studies*, 52, 115-137. doi.org/10.1080/00083968.2018.1483833
 - Held, L. (2020, August 11). [US Groups Invest Billions in Industrial Ag in Africa. Experts Say It's not Ending Hunger or Helping Farmers](#). Civil Eats.

DEBATE (30 MINS)

- 4 Read the prompt aloud: How should agricultural development be conducted in Africa?

Commence the debate. Each team will have an opportunity to present their arguments and form a rebuttal to the other team's arguments for each of the questions (i.e. rebuttal should be an argument against the opposing team's remarks). The debate will proceed as follows:

1. Give the Team AGRA five minutes to present their initial argument - their argument should touch on responses to the selected questions.
2. Team AFSA will then have two minutes to prepare a rebuttal and three minutes to present their rebuttal. Team AFSA will then present their initial argument.
3. Team AGRA will then have two minutes to prepare a rebuttal and three minutes to present their rebuttal.
4. Team AGRA will then have five minutes to offer their closing argument.
5. Team AFSA will then have five minutes offer their closing argument.

DISCUSSION (30 MINS)

- 5 After the debate, bring the group together for an open discussion related to any of the topics discussed. Use the following guiding prompts, as well as any themes that emerged from the debate to guide your discussion:
- Did the process of debating change anyone's mind on a certain topic?
 - Did the exercise help deepen their understanding of the issues or develop a more nuanced outlook?
 - Are foreign interventions into local agricultural interventions an interference into the lives of locals?
 - What is the role of Western academia's role in these interventions? How does one's positionality affect the intervention? What role do academics play in ensuring a more just future in agriculture and global development?

ASSESSMENT: PARTICIPATION OR WRITTEN REFLECTION

Learners are assessed based on their level of participation in the debate, both within their teams as they formulated their points, as well as during the debate itself. To have group members assess each other's participation, a peer assessment tool such as iPeer can be used. Learners could also write a reflection on whether the process of debating these topics changed their perspective on the topic or gave them a more nuanced understanding of a complex topic.