Self-Reliance and Land-Grant Universities:
An Exploration of the Impacts of USAID Policy on Agroecological Possibilities

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ABSTRACT (Academic)

For land-grant universities (LGUs) and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), achieving food security is a longstanding and shared priority. International agricultural development is entangled in competing imaginaries and ideological underpinnings. The coordinated social movements of food sovereignty and agroecology seek to transform local and global food systems away from the dominant neoliberal paradigm. Using localized and participatory practices, agroecology seeks to develop self-reliant communities towards more just and equitable food systems. Similarly, the current policy framework of USAID advances "The Journey to Self-Reliance" (J2SR). Yet the discourse of self-reliance reflects varied discursive meanings. The first is an alternative imaginary to develop increased community autonomy, build social support structures, and protect ecologies. The second reflects neoliberal ideology articulating notions of individual responsibility and private sector leadership. Using Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) and focus groups, this research investigated how USAID's J2SR discourse is represented, how it affects agroecological opportunities, and subsequently the impact on land-grant university food security praxis. Analytically, CDA foregrounds discursive power by investigating how texts, interpretation, and action operate as a system to maintain or contest unequal power relations. I employed focus groups with land-grant international development scholar-practitioners as a form of critical praxis. My research illustrates how USAID's self-reliance definition reproduces neoliberalism as a dominant political-economic orientation through anti-welfare rhetoric and private sector leadership.

Alongside this, the J2SR discourse also actively promotes local participation and leadership. Subsequently, I contend, the discourse presents opportunities for scientific agroecology but also limits agroecology's transformative potential. A critical finding is that among sampled land grant actors, agroecology reflects epistemic complexity and competing imaginaries. Moreover, I illustrate how participants' responses to the policy corpus largely accept the embedded neoliberal ideology, while also demonstrating how some actors can use creativity to directly fund local research institutions. I contend that the creative modification observed among these actors represents the potential for land grant actors to serve as change agents and to support the agroecology movement. This research contributes to understanding how USAID frames self-reliance within their policy and where opportunities lie to challenge power structures and advance justice within international agricultural development.

ABSTRACT (General)

For land-grant universities (LGUs) and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), achieving food security is a longstanding and shared priority. Despite decades of commitment, food insecurity persists reflecting the complexity of the problem. Various visions exist for how food security can be achieved. The coordinated social movements of food sovereignty and agroecology are one such vision that looks to transform the global food system away from practices deemed harmful. A critical component of agroecology is to center local community participation towards developing self-reliant communities. The current policy framework of USAID advances "The Journey to Self-Reliance" (J2SR). Self-reliance, however, is a broad term with different meanings and uses. One definition of self-reliance seeks to develop local communities around increased autonomy, with support from the government to ensure basic needs, while also protecting the environment. The second self-reliance definition focuses on supporting individual responsibility and capacity to ensure basic needs alongside private sector growth. Using Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) and focus groups, this research sought to understand how USAID's J2SR is represented in a selection of policy texts, how this representation influences agroecological opportunities, and subsequently the impact on land-grant university food security efforts. Analytically, CDA centers power in policy texts by focusing on how the interpretations and actions of actors can support or challenge systems of inequity. I used focus groups to understand the reflections and actions of land grant actors involved in international development. My research illustrates how USAID's definition of self-reliance reflects an anti-welfare sentiment alongside a focus on private sector leadership. Moreover, the policy selections also emphasized local participation and leadership which could represent a marginal shift in development power dynamics. Subsequently, I argue the J2SR

makes environmental agroecology more possible than one seeking social, cultural, and political change. A key finding is how the perceptions of agroecology among sampled land grant actors represent the complexity, and at times, competition of various disciplines, values, and beliefs. Finally, from land grant participants, I illustrate how their responses to the policy corpus largely accept the embedded neoliberal ideology, while also demonstrating how some actors use creativity to increase the participation of local research institutions. This creativity, I argue, represents the potential for land grant actors to serve as change agents and to support agroecology towards fostering greater food security, equity, and justice globally. This research contributes towards an understanding of how USAID defines self-reliance and where opportunities lie to challenge unequal power relations and advance justice within international agricultural development.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Many scholars have identified the globalized corporate-led food system as problematic for its contributions to environmental degradation, climate change, and inequality while also failing to eliminate hunger and food insecurity (Bezner Kerr, 2012; HLPE, 2019; Holt-Giménez et al., 2012; Holt-Giménez & Altieri, 2013; Holt-Giménez & Shattuck, 2011; IASSTD+ 10 Advisory Group, 2020; McMichael, 2010; Morens & Fauci, 2020; Swinburn et al., 2019; Wittman et al., 2010). This industrialized model for the Global South dates back to colonialism when occupiers replaced traditional polyculture farms with monocropping systems, known as cash crops for export. The effect of this transformed a subsistence activity into an economic venture (Escobar, 1995). Following the Second World War and during decolonization in the 1950s and 1960s, agricultural modernization became a component of U.S.-led international development to ward off communist influence in the Global South (Araghi, 2009). From the 1960s onwards, the encouragement of large-scale production using biotechnologies and gene editing underpinned the Green Revolution (GR) as land-grant universities exported technologies to the Global South (Borlaug, 2002; Montenegro de Wit & Iles, 2016). By the 1980s, the current corporate-led food system model dominated (Fairbairn, 2010; Friedmann & McMichael, 1989; McMichael, 2009, 2012).

In response to the myriad problems implicit in the current system, the social movements of agroecology and food sovereignty emerged as alternatives grounded in values of social justice, sustainability, and equity (Altieri & Nicholls, 2017). Despite increasing support globally, including its recent adoption by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) (FAO; 2019), agroecological research is under-resourced within the Global North, which some claim is because it challenges the corporate control of the food system (Pavageau et al.,

2020). Moreover, agroecology and industrialized agriculture tend to employ different onto-epistemological stances, making agroecology difficult to legitimize to policymakers, funders, and researchers alike (Montenegro de Wit & Iles, 2016).

I employ a critical lens in this research which means I foreground power as a central concern. I investigate power situated in several places. The first is corporate control of the globalized food system. One of the challenges to this system is its contribution to homogenizing agricultural knowledge, which is contributing to the loss of traditional and indigenous production practices (Bezner Kerr et al., 2016). Secondly, power is central to participation because it indicates whose knowledge is considered valuable and who controls decision-making (Arnstein, 1969). Connected to this are the epistemic tensions of the agroecology imaginary. The tension is between increasing production via better technology and industrialization, and normative claims related to knowledge inclusion, equity, and localized control (Montenegro de Wit & Iles, 2016). The third are land-grant universities (LGUs) that are implicated in power struggles as their very purpose is contested as a benevolent community support mechanism, an agent of modernization and corporate food system control, or as a liberator from oppression (Peters, 2006). More directly, Santos (2016) charges Northern universities as perpetuating a single conception of knowledge as grounded in Scientific and Western logic. Underscoring these concerns is the concept of discourse as a system of statements that construct meaning about the social world and subsequently inform action (Foucault, 1980). Policy texts constitute one locus of discursive power that can reproduce, maintain, modify, or resist power relations embedded in the social, cultural, political, and economic thought of the time (Fairclough, 2013). Given the material and epistemic sites of power of both policy and Northern universities, this research investigated how

the discourse of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) influences agroecological possibilities and the international food security praxis of land grants.

I have organized this work within the scholarship of food regimes, the dominant orientations to agricultural production and development. In addition to organizing agriculture, food regimes also reflect and influence the global political-economic zeitgeist from which they emerge (Fairbairn, 2010; McMichael, 2009). Scholars identify three distinct food regimes with the first dating back to the late nineteenth century during colonialism, and the second beginning in the 1950s amidst the Cold War (Friedmann & McMichael, 1989; McMichael, 2009). The third and current food regime is the corporate food regime dating to the 1980s (Fairbairn, 2010; McMichael, 2009). Each of these regimes is constituted, mobilized, and supported by social discourses or in the words of Fairbairn (2010) frames.

Some identify a fourth emergent food regime within the social movements of food sovereignty and agroecology (Fairbairn, 2010; McMichael, 2009). As an agenda of indigenous and locally-based self-determination and liberation, food sovereignty rejects the social discourses of modernism and neoliberalism that tend to disenfranchise the Global South through the promotion of a singular political-economic orientation (Grey & Patel, 2015). Dutta (2012) contends that only through the engagement with subaltern discourse can a new food system be imagined and transformed. Food sovereignty and agroecology are two such imaginaries. Increasingly, international, national, and local municipal groups are adopting or considering food sovereignty as a viable vision (Meek, 2017; Peña, 2017; Trauger, 2017; Vuilleumier, 2017). Agroecology is often identified as the best or only course of action to achieve food sovereignty (Altieri & Nicholls, 2017; Altieri & Toledo, 2011). This imaginary is in part galvanized by increasing global momentum towards a more sustainable food system, and should there be a

fourth regime grounded in sustainability, its formation will be decided by the actors who win the discursive war (Constance, 2018). Reflecting this, a food system transition to agroecology may be mediated by discourses that create opportunities for change or present challenges (Anderson et al., 2021). However, despite sustainability's association with social justice and reducing growth, the sustainability discourse is increasingly shifting towards a neoliberal private-sector leadership model (Ferns & Amaeshi, 2019).

The ubiquity of neoliberal ideology towards food and development is reflected in the policy texts of many international organizations, governments, and bilateral development agencies, including the United States Agency for International Development (Copeland, 2020; Jarosz, 2011). One premise of neoliberalism is a focus on individual responsibility and liberty to achieve prosperity (Harvey, 2007). Self-reliance is an open-ended concept with many variations (Galtung, 1980). However, there are two main discursive traditions scholars tend to draw upon (Hébert & Mincyte, 2014). The first identifies the current political-economic system as failing because of a lack of social support and seeks to create self-reliant communities through increased local autonomy and ecological sustainability. I refer to this as alternative self-reliance. (Duffield, 2007a; Galtung, 2019; Hébert & Mincyte, 2014). The second reflects neoliberal logic encompassing a focus on individual responsibility and basic needs assured through market processes. I refer to this as neoliberal self-reliance (Duffield, 2007a; Hébert & Mincyte, 2014). This research seeks to understand what USAID means by self-reliance within this policy corpus.

Background

The history of international development and United States universities dates back to the period between 1890 and 1914 when the U.S. government authorized laws expanding higher-education capacity for research and training in agriculture, military, and engineering (Thelin,

2004). Additionally, after the Second World War, the federal government invested in the internationalization of universities as national security and foreign policy endeavors (De Wit & Merkx, 2012). Concurrently, the United States government and FAO launched North-South agricultural technical assistance projects (Borlaug, 2002; De Wit & Merkx, 2012). The "Four Point Program" legislation and later its expansion as the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 created the United States Agency for International Development which subsequently funded long-term international agricultural research contracts with land-grants (De Wit & Merkx, 2012). These projects continue today in the form of Innovation Labs that are exclusively available to United States institutions of higher education (Feed the Future, 2019).

The 1950s brought forward internationalization, but it also shepherded changes in agricultural production towards synthetics and industrialized-production modes to achieve the level of food required of a growing population. The 1960s saw significant breakthroughs in agricultural technologies beginning what is known as the Green Revolution (Borlaug, 2002). By the 1970s, land-grant institutions shifted towards molecular-level agricultural research replacing nearly all research on biocontrols and non-synthetic interventions (Montenegro De Wit & Iles, 2016). For this history, activists and academics criticize LGUs for their complicity in supporting corporate-driven agriculture over smallholders (Buttel, 2005; Hightower, 1972). Such criticism continues today in the social movements of agroecology and food sovereignty (Holt-Giménez & Altieri, 2013; Montenegro de Wit & Iles, 2016; Vanloqueren & Baret, 2009; Wittman, 2011).

Problem Statement

Despite more than 50 years of consolidated and coordinated efforts by international organizations, bilateral agencies, universities, and civil society, hunger continues to rise in Africa, Latin America, and Western Asia, a phenomenon exacerbated by the COVID-19

pandemic and aligned economic downturn (FAO et al., 2019, 2021). Moreover, some current agricultural practices contribute to land degradation, the loss of indigenous knowledge, contaminated waters, diminished biodiversity, climate change, and inequality (Holt-Giménez et al., 2012; IPBES, 2018). Complex problems that cannot be solved by technical-rational and science alone are considered to be 'wicked' due to their wide-reaching societal connections (Rittel & Webber, 1973). In the face of wicked problems, a dialogue between science and other forms of knowledge is required to identify solutions befitting complexity (Ravetz, 1999; Santos, 2007). Yet, the current corporate-controlled food regime tends to weight production values and scientific advancements more heavily than the co-creation of solutions across various forms of knowledge (Anderson et al., 2021; Fraser, 2017).

As an alternative to the current system, agroecology is gaining traction internationally (Anderson et al., 2020; Bowles et al., 2020; Drexler, 2020; Meek & Anderson, 2020; Méndez et al., 2013; Montenegro de Wit & Iles, 2016; Nelson, 2020). Yet, its increasing adoption is not without challenges. For example, the United Nations has been criticized for promoting agroecology alongside continued corporate control, including the 2021 Food Systems Summit (*Academic Letter to FAO*, 2020; Claeys, 2021; Clapp et al., 2021). Within the United States, agroecology remains mostly marginalized among federal government agencies, corporations, and foundations (DeLonge et al., 2016; Montenegro de Wit & Iles, 2016; Pavageau et al., 2020). Moreover, research at land-grant universities tends to focus more on agricultural technology rather than transforming or challenging power (Holt-Giménez & Altieri, 2013; Pavageau et al., 2020; Vanloqueren & Baret, 2009). Even when agroecology is researched, it may be only technical and may not include various forms of knowledge (Holt-Giménez & Altieri, 2013; Montenegro de Wit & Iles, 2016). These concerns contribute towards the worry that

agroecology's practice and discourse are vulnerable to co-optation (Anderson et al., 2021; Gazzano & Gómez Perazzoli, 2017; Holt-Giménez & Altieri, 2013; Murguia Gonzalez et al., 2020; Trauger et al., 2017). Indeed, Constance (2018) argues the future of agriculture will be determined by powerful actors' discursive control.

A component of the agroecological vision is supporting the self-reliance of agrarian communities (Altieri et al., 2012; Altieri & Nicholls, 2017; Altieri & Toledo, 2011; Anderson et al., 2021; Patel, 2009). Self-reliance is a common international development policy objective and can reproduce neoliberal ideology over other forms of self-reliance (Duffield, 2007a). In 2018, The United States Agency for International Development launched a comprehensive framework around "The Journey to Self-Reliance" (Green, 2018).

Purpose of Study

USAID's Feed the Future (FtF) program funds international development research at U.S. universities through Innovation Labs. As of November 2021, the Feed the Future website identified 21 different Innovation Labs (ILs) at 13 different lead institutions (see appendix A). Of the 13 universities, all are land-grant institutions except for Tufts University (Feed the Future, n.d.). The purpose of the IL program is to fund research at universities in the United States as well as in partnership with target country institutions (Feed the Future, 2019). For this research, I sampled two LGUs, each leaders of an IL respectively. United States' universities traditionally have been major drivers for academic knowledge generation and dissemination reflecting their historical and continued role in the knowledge economy (Collins, 2012; Gavazzi et al., 2018). Moreover, they are also sites of significant material control as the two IL cases have ceiling funding amounts of $30 and $38 million, respectively (United States Agency for International Development, 2018, 2019b). With recognition for both the epistemic and material power held by

universities, I focus on how USAID policy reflects the broader social practices of social, political, and economic systems and how this influences agroecological possibilities and the praxis of land grants.

Research Questions

This research was guided by an overarching research question and three operational questions. An apriori table linking the theoretical framework to the research questions is located in Appendix B.

Overarching research question: in the context of USAID's "The Journey to Self-Reliance," how, if at all, do land-grant universities play a role in constructing the discourse of self-reliance in the domain of international food security development?

Operational questions:

1. How is self-reliance represented in the corpus of The Journey to Self-Reliance from 2018 to 2020?
2. How, if at all, does the discourse of self-reliance reflect agroecological possibilities for land-grant universities?
3. What are the material implications on land-grants' international food security development praxis?

Significance

This work has significant implications at three analytical scales, including land-grant praxis, USAID policy, and methodology. From a praxis perspective, this work illustrates the epistemic tensions and complexity in which land grant development practitioners and researchers work. Importantly, it illustrates the possibilities of critical praxis as a form of opening epistemic frames to new or alternative imaginaries. Moreover, I illustrate how sampled land-grant

universities' praxis may maintain the powerful status quo of neoliberalism while advancing participatory shifts within that epistemic boundary. These shifts I argue represent moments of possibility for land-grants to resist inequality at the social practice level by supporting the agroecology movement.

Regarding policy, this research explores how USAID's "The Journey to Self-Reliance" defines the concept of self-reliance. Notably, the definition perpetuates neoliberal ideology while espousing a highly participatory and localized leadership vision. This means that the self-reliance agenda of USAID blends the anti-welfare and market-led discourse of neoliberalism and a localized and participatory focus from the alternative self-reliance concept. This is significant because the reproduction of neoliberal ideology may prematurely foreclose alternative development narratives, especially those seeking to challenge neoliberalism such as agroecology and food sovereignty.

From a methodological standpoint, this work builds on the long tradition of critical theorists engaging in research as praxis and those who specifically use critical discourse analysis or focus groups as praxis. This work combined the presentation of CDA findings and focus groups in the spirit of critical praxis. By asking participants to respond to the analysis rather than observing their praxis in situ, this research is methodologically unique. Findings from this research reveal that the CDA prompt may have served in an awareness-building capacity as actors variously contended with new information. Moreover, their reflections illustrated a critical step towards critical praxis and boundary-stretching work related to imaginaries.

Reflexivity Statement

My interest in the broad arena of international issues stems from my experience as the daughter of a United States diplomat where I spent the majority of my childhood at missions

abroad. Despite being a child, I represented my country and her actions to my peers at school and on the streets to strangers. As a result, I developed a sense of pride in and belief in the promise of the United States and its democratic possibilities. I believe it is my patriotic duty to support my country in upholding the promise of democracy. I equally believe in the need for the U.S. to be in a relationship with the world and to help realize the potential of international development. Within the context of development, I believe in the democratic rights of citizens to determine their collective destinies rather than simply to accept a prescription that is not representative. I approach this research through this commitment to democratic ideals and the development process.

As an undergraduate, I studied Psychology because I was fascinated with people and their behavior. While my scholarship is not individualistic in focus, there are threads of that original interest as I seek to understand meaning-making by people. Indeed, Foucault (1972) himself understood the role between discourse and human agency as hermeneutical, as people's beliefs in discourses are mediated by their interpretive lens. Although he shied away from the Freudian psychoanalysis trends, hermeneutics is arguably tangentially related to the field of Psychology.

Fast forward many years to my professional experience working in the international development office at a land-grant institution managing primarily USAID-funded food security projects and proposal writing processes. It was this experience that curated my interest in food security, international development, power, and participation. As part of the proposal writing team, I observed the decision-making process by international development actors concerning which Requests for Applications (RFA) should be pursued, who should be involved in the writing, and how partnerships were developed with relevant actors within prospective partner countries. To this end, I prepared briefings on the countries informed by USAID policy and other

documentation from international organizations, such as the FAO. In one instance of applying for an innovation lab, I provided faculty a two-page document I created addressing six countries we proposed working within including key issues, statistics, and concepts of interest to the IL's topical domain. The brief document sought to help them understand and subsequently write towards the country-specific context. In this scenario, I studied discourse created by a range of actors, interpreted it, replicated it, combined various discourses (interdiscursivity), and disseminated it to others to equally consume, interpret, replicate, and combine in the form of a project proposal. Ergo my research interests are in the power of discourse and the imperative to understand meaning-making and the animation of discourse in praxis.

Concurrently to this position, I was pursuing a master's degree in Agricultural Extension and Education. My coursework in program evaluation and non-formal education opened my eyes to the notion of power in the development and evaluation cycle. It was at this time I began to question how proposal processes should be done rather than how they are done. I started to think about questions of ownership of data in evaluation and participation throughout the international development cycle. Shortly after completing my master's degree, I began a Ph.D. program in Agricultural, Leadership, and Community Education to ask questions about power, participation, and community development. I took courses focusing on community-based participatory research where I learned of the possibilities as well as the difficulties associated with participatory methods. My coursework on food security and food sovereignty, international politics, globalization, and international development organizations helped me understand the role of globalized neoliberalism in increasing economic inequality as well as the influence of the United States globally. I also gained an understanding of the prevailing modernity logic of rationalistic, linear, and technical development. A course focusing on ethics in sociological

research helped me understand how many common qualitative methodologies hold extractive histories. It was reading Tuck and Yang's (2014) work on refusal and the need to study those in positions of power that led me to study development institutions and universities. Furthermore, although the methodology is outside the scope of this research the work of Smith (2005) on institutional ethnography and that of Eyben (2011) and Mosse (2013) further strengthened my intent to study the professional domain I emerged from and sought to continue within.

I also traveled to the Dominican Republic with a group of undergraduate students for service learning and saw first-hand how a local non-profit could work in partnership with communities to advance their development priorities using census-driven methods. I observed high levels of poverty and questioned where development should begin, and watched government advertisements for development that championed improved infrastructure, while also observing a lack of said infrastructure in the rural areas we visited. I began to be interested in the case of Cuba as a possible site of learning about community development and food sovereignty. Subsequently, my Ph.D. advisor and I created a full semester course focusing on this topic including a week-long study abroad trip. During that trip, I heard from local non-profits doing community-based work and visited cooperatives that were advancing food sovereignty within their communities.

As a result of these experiences, I became interested in exploring ideas for how development practitioners can minimize power differentials that are inherent in the process. I believe that participatory practices can be incorporated into current practices while maintaining reasonable timelines and budgets. Specifically, I believe in the power of a dialogic relationship between Western development partners, targeted country, and civil society as a tactic towards increased participation, minimized power differentials, and increasingly culturally relevant

development (Wallerstein & Duran, 2010). I argue for this approach in a piece focusing on cognitive justice and agricultural development policies (Kelinsky-Jones, 2020). Examples of this idea, although not transnational, are the dialogic relationship between civil society and government in the development of food sovereignty laws in Ecuador or Bolivia's land protections (Kincheloe et al., 2017; Peña, 2017). Each of these experiences shaped my view that international development focused on our food system can be modified to foster a more democratic, locally-driven, and just human condition.

Conclusion

This chapter served as an overarching guide and introduction to my research. Most importantly, I tried to convey why my research matters and its methodological, policy, and praxis significance. In the next chapter, I outline the literature on the various social discourses of food regimes and international development. I then discuss the concepts of sustainable development and self-reliance as additional social discourses important to this research. As this work centers power by focusing on discourse, I then discuss the role of knowledge and participation in international development and the praxis of land-grant universities. The third chapter conceptualizes discourse as a theoretical frame using Fairclough's (1992, 2003) Critical Discourse Analysis. The fourth chapter operationalizes this research by outlining the research design and analysis of a corpus comprised of USAID text and focus groups with land-grant actors. The fifth chapter reviews results, starting with the CDA findings related to the representation of self-reliance. Subsequently, I combine CDA and focus group findings together to discuss agroecological possibilities, and end with focus group themes related to land grant praxis. The sixth and final chapter concludes by explaining the results, overarching implications, and future recommendations for praxis, policy, and future research.

CHAPTER 2: REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Introduction

This work is broadly concerned with the discourse and materiality of the global corporate-controlled food system and international development. I situate these two broad concepts by elucidating the dominance of neoliberal ideology and how it permeates the current food system, international development, and sustainability efforts. Subsequently, I discuss resistance to neoliberal ideology via the imaginaries of food sovereignty and agroecology. I focus on the entanglement of these domains within the context of land grant university praxis by paying attention to how universities are sites of epistemic power. I close this section with a discussion of research as praxis, to which my research aimed to contribute.

Food Regimes and International Development

This section attends to the political-economic organization of agriculture known as food regimes (Fairbairn, 2010; Friedmann & McMichael, 1989; McMichael, 2009). The first food regime coincided with colonialism where the Global North transitioned agriculture in the Global South away from local production for consumption towards monocrop production for export (Fairbairn, 2010; McMichael, 2009, 2012). The colonial encounter is credited with developing the Global North's dependence on the Global South's ecologies leading to the growth of global capitalism (Fairbairn, 2010; McMichael, 2009, 2012; Patnaik & Patnaik, 2017). Colonialism was supported by the usage of scientific discourse to promote ideas of modernization and eurocentrism that crafted the population of the Global South as "primitive", "barbaric", and "savage" and the Global North as knowledgeable, cultured, and exceptional (Hornborg, 2010; Scott-Jones, 2010; Trouillot, 2003). This discursive construction allowed for the subjugation of the Global South's epistemic, cultural, economic, political, and ecological sovereignties (Anghie,

1999; Blaut, 1994; Frank, 1998; Hornborg, 2010; Mies, 2014; Moore et al., 2003). Some scholars claim impediments to Southern sovereignty continue today in the form of good governance development doctrine, land grabs, and the corporate control of biotechnology, all issues discussed more intently later in this chapter (Anghie, 2004; Kloppenburg, 2010; McMichael, 2005; Pimbert, 2018; Rai, 2008).

The end of WWII ushered in a new food regime supported by waves of decolonization in the Global South, the dawn of modern international development, industrialized agriculture, and the rearrangement of global powers as the United States became a global political and economic power (Araghi, 2009). The United States President Truman's 1949 speech prioritizing the nation's commitment to ending poverty in the Global South is credited with creating the idea of modern international development, but instead of the colonial Eurocentric vision, the United States became the model (Rist, 2019). In so doing, Anghie (2004a) argues the power relations embedded in the labels of colonizer and colonized were retooled to become underdeveloped and developed.

Decolonization occurred during the rise of the United States and the Soviet Union as two competing global powers. As former colonies reclaimed their sovereignty, they faced national development needs, and there appeared to be two political-economic models: The United States model based on free market-led, industrialized processes and the Eastern model based on agrarian land reform due to rural discontent (Araghi, 2009). To thwart Soviet influence Araghi (2009) claims, the United States offered a development framework building on their success with industrialized agriculture and a land-reform prescription in "individualistic and explicitly anti-communist terms" (p. 124). Building upon this, McMichael (2009) argues the United States-led development undermined local and national agriculture through the expansion of agribusiness

and Green Revolution technologies. In addition to the introduction of industrialized agriculture, the second food regime enabled the export of cheap subsidized foods from the United States that further undermined local markets, displaced local and culturally-appropriate foods, and fostered dependency on United States' exports (Friedmann & McMichael, 1989; McMichael, 2005).

The creation of food aid is attributed in part to the launch of an international focus on hunger, where the same ideological tensions between the Soviet East and the United States and European West manifested. The Soviet-aligned "right to food" was pitted against the Western-aligned "elimination of hunger" (Fairbairn, 2010). At the international level, this debate led to a compromise in the term "food security" reflecting both the need for states to plan for and acquire sufficient food while promoting the role of imports (Duncan, 2015; Fairbairn, 2010). Fairbairn (2010) offers that from 1974 to the present, the term "food security" became mainstream.

Neoliberal Globalization and the Corporate Food Regime

Amidst the financial downturn of the 1970s, a political-economic doctrine called neoliberalism rose to prominence asserting less government intervention and regulation as an ideal because it enabled the market to satisfy societal services and needs. The success of neoliberalism is attributed to its discursive argument that individual and market freedoms are unfulfilled promises of development (Harvey, 2010). Its adoption removed the state as the grantor of self-determination and freedom and replaced it with the free market, yielding a new political-economic organization (Harvey, 2007). Some claim the shift to neoliberalism intended to restore the wealth and power of economic elites and maintain their powerful economic position (Arrighi & Zhang, 2011; Harvey, 2007, 2010). As is common, for domestic and foreign policy to reflect one another (Gourevitch, 1978), neoliberal globalization became the framework for U.S.-led international development and was advanced globally by international organizations

such at the behest of the World Bank (WB) and International Monetary Fund (IMF) (Arrighi & Zhang, 2011). Neoliberal globalization is often coupled because globalization became the method to advance neoliberal economic principles globally (Anghie, 2004).

While globalization makes it possible for more people to participate in the exchange of ideas, it can also create a singular voice of how the world should be organized around global free trade ideals (Latour, 2018). For this reason, globalized neoliberalism is considered hegemonic because of its ubiquity as mainstream logic of development (Harvey, 2006). Neoliberal globalization as a discursively positioned ideology permeates both the food regime and international development. In this section, I discuss neoliberal globalization and its imbrication with the corporate food regime.

Globalized neoliberalism appears in the corporate food system through the production of agricultural surplus with guaranteed exports to the Global South due to globalized free markets, the transition of agrarian peasants off their land through land enclosure policies, and a focus on corporate-driven agriculture relying on increasing biotechnologies and production (Holt-Giménez & Shattuck, 2011). The corporate food regime's focus on a market-based food system significantly shifted the focus from hunger as a national problem ameliorated by social programs to the free market as the guarantor of requisite sustenance. As a result, local production was evaluated against its value on the global market, leading to the replacement of many local foods by internationally-valued commodities since food staples such as grains could be imported at cheap prices (McMichael, 2007, 2010). For example, the World Trade Organization's 1995 agreement that countries must import up to 5% of consumed domestic foodstuffs further weakened local agriculture by weakening sovereign rights that nations might have over agricultural self-reliance or sufficiency (McMichael, 2005).

Under such global pressure, peasant farmers transitioned their lands to corporations who could produce food, corn, sugarcane, and soy among other crops at scales required by the global market (Holt-Giménez & Shattuck, 2010; McMichael, 2007). Urbanization is promoted with claims that large corporations can better produce food for export (Handy & Fehr, 2010). These corporate acquisitions of southern lands are viewed as modern-day land grabs representing an updated utilization of the modernization social discourse that enabled the colonial land seizures (Bello & Baviera, 2010; Dutta, 2012; McMichael, 2012). McMichael (2012) identifies the urgency with which land grabs are occurring as a corporate response to the growing discontent among the general public concerning a lack of sustainability. In response to this public discontent, McMichael elaborates, land-grabs are a mechanism to maintain power.

Another site of epistemic tension is the terminology attributed to food and agriculture development efforts. To many, the goal of food security reflects the corporate food regime's globalized neoliberal agenda (Duncan, 2015; Fairbairn, 2010; Holt-Giménez & Shattuck, 2011; Jarosz, 2011). For example, global definitions of food security have shifted from a focus on the role of the nation-state to an individual's purchasing power (Jarosz, 2011). This is reminiscent of the ideological tensions observed during the Cold War. Defining food security as an issue of access makes it an economic issue and subsequently nullifies possibilities of food as a right to be ensured by the state since it is one accessed via economic participation (Fouilleux et al., 2017; Patel, 2009). The framing of food security through market-based notions relegates the role of the nation-state to guaranteeing friendly economic policies such as free trade among nations rather than ensuring sufficient, healthy, and culturally-appropriate food (Fairbairn, 2010). This approach is further strengthened by the framing of good governance as maintaining free-market approaches among other standards (Moyo et al., 2019; Rai, 2008). In the next section on

international development, I attend to the political pressures associated with neoliberal globalization.

Neoliberalism & International Development.

Since the Cold War, development doctrine from the Global North has focused on the adoption of democracy, liberalized economies, and human rights. These concepts are discursively advanced through the use of norms that paint non-compliance in terms that call countries “monsters” or “threats” (Moyo et al., 2019; Zanotti, 2011). Those who do comply, Zanotti (2011) illustrates, are rewarded with development funds and inclusion in the global system of nations. Those who fail to comply, she cautions, are penalized through economic and military interventions. In addition to the normative claims, the West promised decolonizing nations economic development and prosperity for their adoption of a free-market approach (Harvey, 1989). Moreover, the offer of development aid from the United States tends to be predicated on the adoption of a liberalized economy making it a condition of support (Rist, 2019).

Development under neoliberal globalization can undermine sovereignty because nations are typically presented with no alternative. Promoted through international institutions by the United States, Japan, and Europe combined, adoption of neoliberalism became a requirement enforced through economic sanctions or military interventions, as necessary. WB and IMF structural adjustment programs led to austerity measures eliminating state-sponsored services and supports (Harvey, 2006). These programs, designed as precursors to development, gave nations little alternative but to liberalize their economies as conditions of financial aid (Rist, 2019). Structural adjustment policies also mandated that the Global South produce and export goods for the Global North (McMichael, 2009).

Development is often technocratic in nature due to the focus on industrialization, but under neoliberalism, priorities focused on results over all else leading to a standardized framework that disadvantages the inclusion and application of local knowledge, cultural norms, and practices (Clammer, 2012; Easterly, 2014; Ramalingam, 2013; Schaaf, 2013). Arrighi and Zhang (2011) argue that development's uniformity and conditionality undermine national sovereignty because of the limitations to self-determination and control over political-economic systems, agroecological conditions, and cultural norms One component of the food sovereignty movement is the right of countries and communities to self-determine their development and food systems trajectories (Pimbert, 2018).

In the 1990s, good governance became connected to institutions that reflect the values of "democratic, open, accountable and transparent, and which respects and fosters human rights and the rule of law" (Anghie, 2004a, p. 248). Poor governance certainly can have negative effects on a country due to corruption and exploitation, but it is also possible that some practices labeled as poor governance through a western lens may be cultural (Kiš, 2018). For this reason, good governance can be a threat to cultural norms and practices as the construction of good governance labels behaviors as good or bad (Rai, 2008).

Anghie (2004) argues countries perceived as "developing" also lacked good governance. Thus, they argue good governance became a way through which the global south could be controlled and another manifestation of the "civilizing mission" observed during colonialism (Anghie, 2004, p. 249). Furthermore, the adoption of the specific principles attributed to global governance of democracy, free-market capitalism, and rule of law are western constructs that are pushed onto the global South by the United States and international organizations. For example, Zimbabwe's resistance against resource extraction led to its categorizations "as a quintessential

model of ‘bad governance’ and a labeled an ‘unusual threat’ to U.S. interests” (Moyo et al., 2019, p. 226). Subsequently, Moyo and colleagues (2019) indicate the United States acted to try to correct Zimbabwe’s resistance through the support of internal resistance parties. The adoption of good governance, some argue is just another manifestation of the political-economic pressure to conform to neoliberal globalization (Anghie, 2004; Rai, 2008).

This section reviewed the three past and current food regimes and the discourses that support them. I ended the section with the current corporate food regime which is supported by neoliberal globalized logic which also pervades international development via vehicles such as good governance. The next section examines concepts of sustainability and self-reliance in international development, including their entanglement with neoliberal ideology.

Sustainable Development and Self-Reliance

In their history of sustainability, Caradonna (2014) illustrates how from the 1970s and 1980s onwards, sustainability emerged as an overarching economic, social, and environmental ideal for organizing the world. By the 1990s, they maintain, the term was mainstream and codified into governmental and non-governmental documents globally. The current term, however, is also slippery. (Caradonna, 2014). In this section, I discuss the sustainable development movement by focusing on its discursive use in the global food system, resistance to the food system, and international development.

The Sustainable Development Movement

Between the 1960s to the 1990s, sustainability and its corresponding movement emerged as the ecological limits of constant growth became apparent (Caradonna, 2014). According to Caradonna (2014), the sustainability movement became a panacea to incorporate three related agendas. The first agenda focused on social sustainability and the pursuit of social justice and

equity. The second, environmental sustainability, respecting the ecological limits of the world while avoiding borrowing against future viability. The third, economic sustainability where growth is moderated through the encouragement of localization that breaks up the power of large corporations (Caradonna, 2014). However, McMichael (2018) has noted that the slipperiness of sustainability has allowed for continued economic growth despite ecological damage rather than reducing growth to protect ecologies

Economic growth tends to be a dominant value in capitalist societies but without an identified end-point rendering growth a limitless possibility. To tackle this, the doughnut economics model of Raworth (2017) brings in additional values with a nested concept that balances sociopolitical, economic, and environmental goals. At the center of the doughnut, lies the social foundations required for humanity including water, food, housing, energy, and social equity. The next ring reflects an economy organized around a circular and regenerative model. The argument being a circular economy will protect the final layer of the ecological limit that when violated threatens humanity. Raworth (2017) proposes this model as a value set and guide to pursue sustainable development by relinquishing the singular goal of achieving economic growth over all other features of humanity. Raworth's (2017) idea of ecological limits to economic growth is one found in the degrowth movement of scholars such as Latour (2018) who position globalization and modernity in conflict with localization and ecological preservation.

There is increasing global momentum towards transitioning from the corporate food regime towards a food regime of sustainability, and Constance (2018) argues that its formation will be decided by those who win the discursive war. In line with this argument, sustainable discourses borrowed from food sovereignty are already incorporated into the corporate food regime's efforts to position itself as more sustainable and green as corporations look to solve

issues without changing the food system (Anderson et al., 2021; Constance, 2018; Holt-Giménez & Altieri, 2013). This mainstream adoption of more radical claims worries many food scholars because it weakens the movement's ability to press for real change (Gazzano & Gómez Perazzoli, 2017; Holt-Giménez & Altieri, 2013; Murguia Gonzalez et al., 2020; Trauger et al., 2017). As a result, within the field of agroecology, some object to using the movement towards anything but the political change of the food regime (Bellamy & Ioris, 2017).

Within international development, sustainability became sustainable development when it became clear that the modernization mission would bump against the world's ecological limits (Duffield, 2007a). Sustainable development emerged as a term to allow for development agendas to marry two competing yet requisite concepts. The first was the promotion of the Western belief that the world's poor damage the environment. The second was an acknowledgment that the development agenda values improving the lives of the world's poor (Rist, 2019). By hybridizing the terms, Rist (2019) argues, the development world was able simultaneously to push the ideas that we need to protect the environment while also improving the human condition. Sustainable development thus became securing the world's poor while also preserving the environment for the future. In addition to this connotation, sustainable development also refers to the ability to maintain development progress when external funding ends (Esteva, 2019).

Sustainable development was once a developmental model led by NGOs rooted in bottom-up transformation that rejected the modernizing mission of development. The incorporation of NGOs, who traditionally pursued community-driven sustainable development, led to its eventual cooptation within the mainstream neoliberal discourse (Duffield, 2007a). These NGOs were once separate from the mainstream development space, but following the Cold War they were incorporated into the development machine (Duffield, 2007a; Zanotti,

2011). The opening up of NGOs and the populations they served to the development world enabled new levels of data collection on people previously un-accessed. This led to the ability to measure, monitor, and intervene reflecting a new biopolitical mechanism (Zanotti, 2011).

As the national leaders of the world became increasingly aware of climate change and ecological damage, it became more necessary to address these issues. This led to the replacement of modernization as a development goal with sustainable development (Duffield, 2007a). Reid (2013) argues shifting to sustainable development shifted the goal away from changing the conditions that perpetuate economic inequality. Instead, it allowed for a blaming of the world's poor for not understanding environmental preservation. Subsequently, he suggests the focus on sustainable development regime became improving capacity towards sustainability rather than changing unsustainable practices of continued corotate growth. In this regard, Duffield (2007) contends capacity development towards sustainability reignites the colonial trusteeship of governing from afar by presenting the Global South as lacking the capacity to develop a better sustainable society. This capacity gap he claims enables the Global North to implement programs towards development by encouraging private-sector-led interventions that reproduce neoliberal ideology. These interventions are monitored for compliance, and discipline is assessed when compliance fails since communities are to blame when self-reliance is not achieved despite self-reliance being what Duffield (2007a) suggests is an unreachable goal.

The Discourse of Self-Reliance. As is evidenced by the 2018 release of "The Journey to Self-Reliance," self-reliance is now a term codified across USAID's efforts (Green, 2018). The term self-reliance dates back to the 19th century (Emerson, 1841). Its use in international development dates back to decolonization when self-reliance was a form of community-level resistance to modernization; it was not until the emergence of neoliberalism that it mutated into

an individual type (Duffield, 2007a). In this section, I describe both self-reliance as reflective of neoliberal ideology and self-reliance as an alternative community-level vision (Hébert & Mincyte, 2014).

The term self-reliance (in Western thought) is credited to Ralph Waldo Emerson (1841) in his essay of the same title. His illustration of self-reliance simultaneously embodies critical concepts contributing to both neoliberal and alternative self-reliance. The first is a highly individualized notion of hard work evidenced by avoiding dependence on others or social welfare and the second is the reverence and protection of nature. Emerson (1841) described the individualized notion as valued by contrasting a hardworking adaptable young man to city businessmen as the young man who “like a cat, falls on his feet, is worth a hundred of these city dolls” (p. 15). This early idea of self-reliance as independence would morph and gain prominence in the United States and the United Kingdom with Ronald Reagan and Margaret Thatcher's liberal economic priorities to reduce governmental programs by reducing dependency on state programs and helping people and communities to help themselves. Some argue this variety of self-reliance became a mechanism to deprive people of aid and contributed to their impoverishment (Halvorsen, 1998).

Self-reliance as an economic ideology against state welfare is strongly entrenched in mainstream values of the United States (Halvorsen, 1998; Kiš, 2018; Marsland, 1995). In his speech in 1960, President Kennedy championed the cause of making all nations self-reliant such that they no longer required aid from the United States (Gronemeyer, 2010). The concept of dependence as bad is so strong that social welfare has been referred to as cancerous, anti-capitalist, anti-democratic, and unsustainable (Marsland, 1995). Within the agenda of sustainable development, the Global South is expected to be or become self-reliant by ensuring their own

basic needs (Duffield, 2007b, 2007a). Neoliberal self-reliance asserts basic needs are provided by local capacities such as adaptation, learning or capacity building, and entrepreneurship rather than governmental support (Duffield, 2007a). In his analysis of self-reliance, Duffield (2007a) contends this application reflects racist expectations. His thesis asserts international development expectations for the Global South to be self-reliant rejects any possibility of community needs for social safety nets whereas, those in the North have welfare systems and insurance policies available to catch them during a crisis. Rather than guarantee basic needs through governmental support or insurance products, within a neoliberal paradigm, the private market becomes the primary mechanism for needs (Duffield, 2007a). In a pilot study on investigating the framing of participation in USAID's announcement of the Journey to Self-Reliance Kelinsky-Jones and Niewolny (2021) also highlight that the J2SR emphasized an increased role for the private sector including the possibility to hold governments accountable for supporting private interests.

The quality of being self-reliant is seen as part of and a method for resilience (Reisman, 2017; Spoel & Derkatch, 2020). Others view self-reliance and resilience as synonymous when they share neoliberal logic (Reid, 2013). Resilience reflects neoliberalism when it claims that individuals should be self-sustaining without governmental support even amidst disasters (Joseph, 2018; Joseph & McGregor, 2019; Reid, 2013). Similar to self-reliance's focus on individual and community responsibility, neoliberal resilience reflects a community's ability to bounce back, learn, and adapt (Joseph, 2018; McGreavy, 2016). Both self-reliance and resilience consign the Global South residents to accepting material conditions no matter how challenging by adapting, rather than seeking to change the cause of the issues (Duffield, 2007a; Joseph, 2018).

In contrast, alternative self-reliance pushes back against the failings of modern society and neoliberalism. This push-back seeks to create a community grounded in autonomy, self-sufficiency, and ecological protection (Hébert & Mincyte, 2014). This autonomy is equally reflected in the way self-reliance as a goal emerged out of decolonization as a method of asserting national control including over sovereign ecologies and rejecting dependence on the Global North (Galtung, 2019; McCarthy, 2019). Galtung (2019) and Hope (1983) published on self-reliance for the Global South. Their notion of self-reliance asserts ideals of national and local control, provisions of basic needs, education for entrepreneurialism, and a rejection of the international power distribution preventing the Global South from moving out of the peripheries and into the center. Galtung (2019) calls self-reliance political because those in power will seek to reject it as their global economic, political, and ecological control would weaken. In Kenya, known as Harambee, it is a bottom-up process of education and support wherein development projects emerge from the community reflecting a similar localized control (Mbithi & Rasmusson, 1977). In Myanmar, it is considered a character trait of "can do" and of employing creativity to survive (McCarthy, 2019). The focus on education and entrepreneurship to develop a community is a common thread of self-reliance.

Alternative self-reliance was also picked up by critics of the food system such as the permaculture tradition of harmonizing agricultural practices with local ecologies (Caradonna, 2014). In the United States, Black self-reliance is a longstanding strategy to strengthen internal community capital towards Black liberation while reducing external reliance for support, infrastructure, or food due to structural inequalities and racism (Bledsoe et al., 2019; Reese, 2018). Within the context of the unequal food landscapes in the United States, self-reliance, through such spaces as community gardening, is resistance (Reese, 2018). Reese and others

agree that community-centered food systems serve as centers of resistance towards food justice (Alkon & Agyeman, 2011; Broad, 2016; Gottlieb & Joshi, 2010).

To recap, the sustainability movement grew out of concern for limitless growth and its harmful effects on humanity (Caradonna, 2014). In response, alternative models for organizing society emerged around sustainable social, economic, and environmental features (Caradonna, 2014; Raworth, 2017). However, sustainable development was also co-opted by neoliberal logic as a way to hide damaging practices rather than moving away from continued growth (Caradonna, 2014; McMichael, 2018). Self-reliance as human capacity was absorbed into the sustainable development movement and equally reflect the discursive tension between environmental and neoliberal logic. In contrast, alternative self-reliance seeks to change the system towards greater equity, including governmental support, while uplifting community autonomy (Galtung, 2019; Hébert & Mincyte, 2014).

Food Sovereignty and Agroecology as Corporate Food Regime Resistance

Food sovereignty is viewed as an alternative to the corporate food regime's beliefs and practices, and as a possible new regime (Fairbairn, 2010; McMichael, 2009). As an agenda of indigenous and locally-based self-determination and liberation, it rejects the social discourses of modernization and neoliberal globalization that disenfranchise the Global South (Grey & Patel, 2015). Dutta (2012) contends that only through the engagement with subaltern discourse can we imagine a new food system. Food sovereignty is one such imaginary. Increasingly, international, national, and local civil society are adopting or considering food sovereignty as a viable option (Meek, 2017; Peña, 2017; Trauger, 2017; Vuilleumier, 2017). Food sovereignty is a rights-based agenda demanding the right for people to access and control resources that enable communities and individuals to grow, cultivate, and consume that which they choose using inputs that are

appropriate to their conditions and culture (Anderson et al., 2021; Wittman et al., 2010). With its focus on local adaptation and utilization, its definitions are observed as broad and varying (Patel, 2009); however, they commonly reject the technical, neoliberal, and modernization discourses comprised within the corporate food regime (Westengen, 2017).

One of the most frequently cited organizations on food sovereignty is La Via Campesina to which the term is credited (Wittman et al., 2010). La Via Campesina is a transnational organization comprised of peasant farmers who gathered in 1993 to discuss agricultural policies (La Via Campesina, n.d.). Since then, the discursive framing of the rights-based platform has evolved from a focus on nations to citizens' democratic rights to determine national self-reliance, to a broad platform representing the entire food system spectrum from those who grow food to those who consume it (Agarwal, 2014). Jarosz (2014) identifies three core areas over which people and communities demand rights: land, water, and seeds. To this, both Jarosz (2014) and Patel (2010) specify the common threads of democratic participation, local control over agriculture practice and policies, and the move away from corporate-controlled industrialization.

Land access, ownership, and control are sites of power contestation (Arrighi, 2010). To date, land continues to be key for capitalism as modern-day enclosures occur when countries commit to long-term lease arrangements with transnational corporations or other countries for agrofuel production (Bello & Baviera, 2010; Holt-Giménez & Shattuck, 2010). This also occurs when transnational companies or investment firms purchase large swaths of land sometimes through questionable legal arrangements (Chain Reaction Research, 2020). For these reasons, land redistribution that shifts concentrations of land away from wealthy corporate actors back to peasant farmers is viewed as foundational for food sovereignty (Borras & Franco, 2010). In addition to land, Kloppenburg (2010) holds that food sovereignty cannot exist without seed

sovereignty; furthermore, he contends sterile and patented seeds are a type of modern-day enclosure. Additionally, according to Srinivas (2015), farmers ought to be duly compensated for their contributions to the advancement of genetic material that is otherwise stolen through bioprospecting.

Democratic participation in the food system is seen as a challenge to neoliberalism by recalibrating decision-making power to determine food system importance (Alkon, 2014) because decisions about food are grounded in local democratic participation rather than the global market exchange (McMichael, 2010). Food sovereignty's focus on tailoring itself to local conditions and cultures means that food sovereignty is also about valuing indigenous and local knowledge not only western science (Bezner Kerr, 2010; Kloppenburg, 2010). In this way, food sovereignty is aligned with recent trends in international development that seek inclusion of indigenous knowledge (Clammer, 2012).

Food sovereignty is importantly about participation (Masioli & Nicholson, 2010). Thus, questions about how agricultural development policy defines and uses participation become vital to understanding food sovereignty. Furthermore, to whom sovereignty refers is also vital. Sovereignty can belong to the citizens who have the right to control decisions (Trauger, 2017), the nation's government (Patel, 2009), or the civil society (Peña, 2017). It can also mean nature or the environment as sovereign over all (Wittman, 2010). Peña (2017) identified the sovereign as a dialogue between the government and the civil society earmarked by both a top-down and bottom-up participatory mechanism wherein communities or citizens can influence policy. The cases of direct democracy in Switzerland or the dialectical role civil society plays between citizens and governments in Cuba or Ecuador are two ways that food sovereignty and

participation can be operationalized in national policy (Gürcan, 2014; Peña, 2017; Vuilleumier, 2017).

While direct democracy is a rarer proposition in international development, civil society engagement is very common and can serve as a proxy for direct engagement (Lang, 2012). Furthermore, since national policies can have global implications and the world is increasingly connected, civil society can hold promise to influence both national and global policies (Willetts, 2010). Globalization has the potential for increased participation and civil society engagement (Clammer, 2012; Duncan & Barling, 2012; Schaaf, 2013), and an increased role for civil society can support the demands of the people and challenge neoliberalism in pursuit of food sovereignty (Herring, 2015). Yet, organizations such as the World Trade Organization (WTO) deny civil society sufficient representation (McMichael, 2005). More recently, the 2021 United Nations Food Summit is criticized by academics and civil society for propagating a hierarchical structure with the private sector on top (Claeys, 2021; Clapp et al., 2021). Lang (2012) however, cautions not to overemphasize the role of civil society to the point of superseding government. Instead, they encourage a balanced approach since only nation-states have the power to guarantee rights.

This section reviewed food sovereignty as a rights-based platform seeking the transformation of the food system towards justice for all. Much of the work cited focuses on the application of specific claims for food sovereignty. I closed this section by identifying the critical role played by civil society in deliberations concerning changes in the food system, and how this possibility has yet to be seized fully at the international stage. The next section discusses agroecology as an allied social movement and discourse.

Agroecology as a Science, Practice, Movement, and Discourse

Agroecology is commonly considered the only way to achieve food sovereignty (Altieri & Nicholls, 2017; Altieri & Toledo, 2011). It is a scientific discipline employing agronomy, ecology, and the social sciences (Altieri & Nicholls, 2017). It is also a social movement and an applied practice of food production (Wezel et al., 2009). In their comprehensive review of the literature on agroecology, Bellamy and Ioris (2017) identify three distinct types of agroecology: scientific, practical, and political agroecology. Scientific agroecology focuses on the use of production-oriented research, and it tends to neglect the learnings from the social sciences. Practical agroecology employs the scientific approach towards smallholder multi-crops but incorporates the social science perspectives that value indigenous knowledge and smallholder experimentation. The third form, political or transformative agroecology insists on the political and economic transformation of the food system through participatory, autonomous, and community-based measures. Transformative agroecology aligns with the food sovereignty movement as a component of political ecology. Political ecology inherently challenges globalization (Latour, 2018). Similarly, agroecology challenges the hegemony of a globalized capitalistic food system (Anderson et al., 2021). Thus, agroecology like food sovereignty is inherently political.

Recently the FAO adopted a 10-element framework for agroecology and food system transformation (Figure 1). The framework uses three overarching categories: common practices, contexts, and enabling conditions. Common practices include poly-cropping, creating ecological synergies, resilience, recycling, and participatory co-creation and distribution of knowledge. The contextual features considered to be the conditions under which practices may vary include the values held by a specific community, and the cultural and food traditions. Finally, the enabling

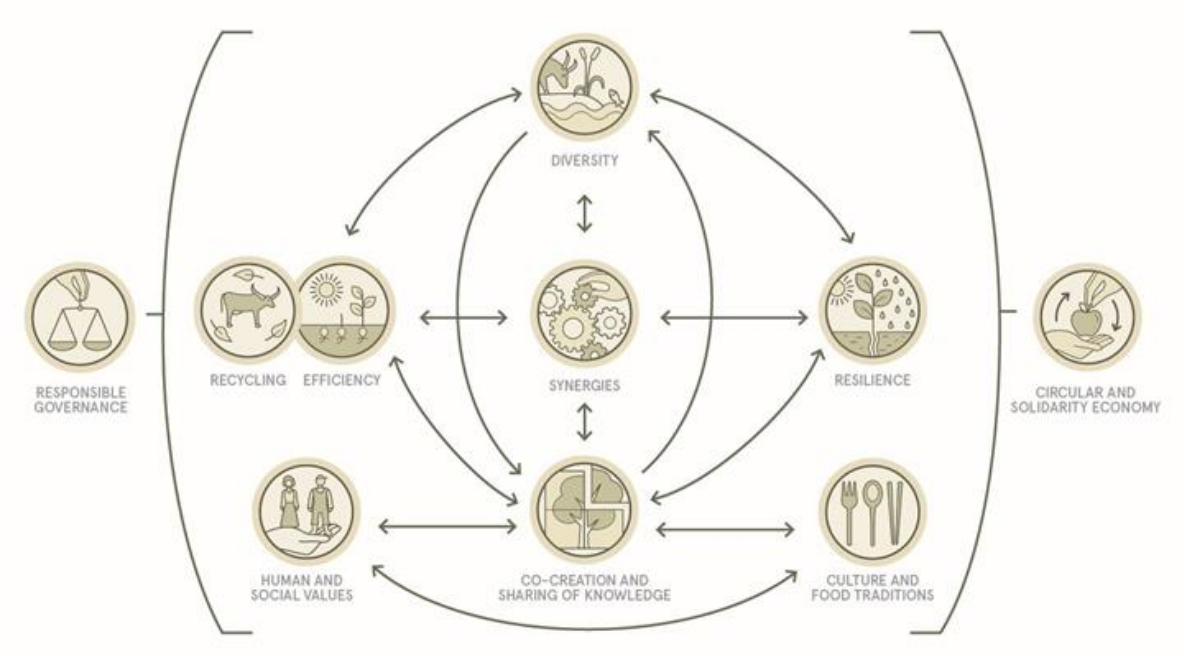
conditions include responsible governance and a circular economy (Food and Agriculture Organization, 2019). USAID has not adopted a framework of agroecology, and a google search for USAID and agroecology yields numerous results for sustainable agriculture with no mention of agroecology. There is however one exception, a report published by the International Institute for Environment and Development on sustainable development claims “agroecology and the related agroeco-systems analysis methodology were identified by several reviewers as approaches that would be acceptable and not likely to antagonize or put off agricultural scientists” (p. 8). This example reveals how, at least in 1985, USAID considered agroecology an agricultural and environmental science. A more recent piece by Carr (2012) in USAID’s Frontiers in Development journal, argues for a focus on how the behaviors of poor and rural farmers contribute to climate change where the author described agroecology in environmental terms to delineate “agroecological zones” (p. 96) to evaluate greenhouse gas emissions. Similarly, a United States Agency for International Development (2019a) report on climate risks for peace in Zimbabwe also refers to agroecological zones or regions.

The agroecological movement includes an environmental focus alongside other agendas such as the prioritization of food over producing soy and corn for the highly profitable ethanol-based fuel (Bellamy & Ioris, 2017; Machin-Sosa et al., 2010). Production systems favor lower inputs and incorporation of polycultures over the high-input monoculture production typical of the industrialized agri-business model (Altieri & Toledo, 2011). The movement also seeks to reshape the barriers to food access and natural resources and to progress the food system towards food justice by redistributing power within the agricultural system (Bellamy & Ioris, 2017). Agroecology rejects the mainstream neoliberal development regime and seeks to advance equity

within the food system, often seeing self-reliance as a key component of the adaptation and survival of farmers (Altieri et al., 2012; Altieri & Nicholls, 2017; Altieri & Toledo, 2011).

Figure 1

The 10 Elements of Agroecology: Guiding the Transition to Sustainable Food and Agricultural Systems



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As a practice of development, through extension, agroecology employs techniques grounded in indigenous knowledge, with participatory approaches that use a ground-up development theory to incorporate new scientific knowledge with traditional knowledge. This approach honors successful smallholder practices such as seed saving, crop rotation, biodiversity, and incorporates new technologies such as cover crops, green manure, or intercropping (Bellamy & Ioris, 2017; Coolsaet, 2016; Meek & Tarlau, 2017; Oliver, 2016). This practice is in contrast

to the traditional extension model wherein a problem is solved by a scientist or extension agent in isolation of the farmer (Meek & Tarlau, 2017).

Similarly, Gliessman (2016) offers an agroecology framework with tiered levels of food system transformation. The first two levels focus on the practices adopted by farmers to transition to agroecology. At a basal level, food systems need to transition towards increased efficiency while reducing harmful inputs. The secondary level involves replacing harmful practices with ecologically sound methods. The third level involves a new conception of the food system on the basis of the agroecological principles adopted in the first two levels. The fourth level is to close the distance between farmers and consumers by building relationships. The fifth is to expand and spread the first four levels to the globalized food system (Gliessman, 2016).

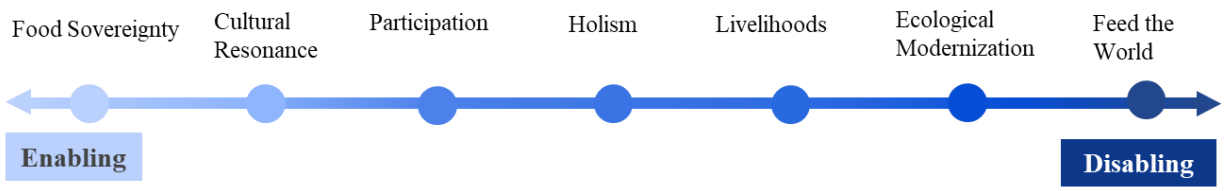
As a discourse, agroecology appears in different ways depending on who uses it and to what end. In their review of agroecology, Anderson and colleagues (2021) situate seven discourses from those that support political transformation and those that minimize transformation by supporting the existing food system (Figure 2). The left of the figure includes those discourses that most support a transformation whereas the right includes those that limit transformation. Those in the middle play a role but are moderated in their supporting abilities.

The discourses of the food sovereignty movement as discussed previously tend to reflect a rights-based platform focused on achieving justice. This platform looks to transform the hegemony of the neoliberal globalized food system because of the inequitable conditions it creates. These inequitable conditions are identified as the cause of food insecurity (Holt-Giménez et al., 2012). The discourse of rights includes access to safe and healthy ecologies such as land, water, air, and seeds (Jarosz, 2014; Patel, 2010). The discourse asserting rights is also contested ideologically as it tends to reflect either the Western value of an individual's right to

participate in the market or the right to food as guaranteed by state enterprise (Fairbairn, 2010). The focus on an individual's right to exercise choice in the economic market is an example of the co-opting of food sovereignty's rights-based discourse by using terms such as self-sufficiency that serve to disable agroecological possibilities. It can also contribute to viewing food sovereignty through the frame of national interests which can push corporate-driven interests over local people. The right of corporations to patent seeds is one such example (Anderson et al., 2021).

Figure 2

The Supporting and Limiting Discourses of Agroecology



Discourse of Agroecology from Disabling to Enabling. Adapted from Agroecology now! Transformations towards more just and sustainable food systems (p. 131), by C. Anderson, et al., 2021, 10.1007/978-3-030-61315-0. Copyright 2020 by Palgrave Macmillan, Cham. Reprinted under Creative Commons license: http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/

The participatory nature of agroecology reflects the knowledge intensity of its production practices and extends the rights-based platform to a democratic vision that citizens should hold decision-making power over and within the food system (Bellamy & Ioris, 2017; Timmermann & Félix, 2015). Such participation can enable changes in the food system such as in Cuba, Ecuador, Bolivia, and Brazil (Anderson et al., 2021; Gürcan, 2014; Peña, 2017; Vuilleumier, 2017). However, citizen participation does not automatically lead to power over decisions (Anderson et al., 2021). Participation can at best enable participatory governance through full

control and at worst be a guise for manipulating the process to rob communities of actual control (Arnstein, 2011; Pretty, 1995).

The third frame focuses on culture which includes other ways of knowing. This frame is connected to participation as true participation would enable a dialogue of diverse ways of knowing in line with cognitive justice (Coolsaet, 2016; Pimbert, 2017; Santos, 2007). Cognitive justice as dialogue is grounded in forming hybridized knowledge through heterarchy that enables Western science, indigenous, experiential, and other ways of knowing to build onto one another (Santos, 2018). While extension services are excellent vehicles through which to connect various forms of knowledge, they tend to be grounded in Western science and uncommonly incorporate a critical lens to education or praxis that challenges power inequities (Collins & Mueller, 2016; Meek & Tarlau, 2017). As such, the inclusion of other epistemologies through cognitive justice is critical in advancing agricultural justice (Anderson et al., 2021; Collins & Mueller, 2016).

The fourth frame is holism or what is known as food systems-thinking. This condition articulates the view that agriculture is comprised of and influences many sectors all of which need to contribute to solving the issues (IPES-Food & ETC Group, 2021). One recent challenge is the view that the private sector plays a pivotal role that subordinates other aspects of the food system under a market-driven approach (Anderson et al., 2021). A similar function occurred with the focus of sustainable development as it began as a new way of thinking about the world, but subsequently became a way for the private sector to contribute to ecological progress while maintaining its central position globally by manipulating discourse (Caradonna, 2014; Ferns & Amaeshi, 2019).

Livelihoods speak to the conditions that enable humans to survive and thrive. Within an agroecological frame, it includes a focus on social justice and equity positioned as key to

achieving an agroecological transformation (Anderson et al., 2021). Within agroecological movements, gender equality is centered as a core component (de Marco Larrauri et al., 2016; Machin-Sosa et al., 2010; Oliver, 2016). In so doing, a focus on all livelihoods through a lens of justice combats the prevailing inequalities of the current food system (Anderson et al., 2021; Holt-Giménez et al., 2012). By focusing on values such as equity or well-being, a livelihoods approach disentangles the common sense discourse that growth is always good regardless of its impacts (Anderson et al., 2021). Similarly, the doughnut economics model is one that views livelihoods at the core of an economic system while protecting the ecological ceiling that guarantees all forms of humanity on earth (Raworth, 2017). Anderson and colleagues (2021) suggest, however, that negative discourse on agriculture and the peasantry in a variety of locations disables such a focus by insisting that non-industrialized agriculture is backwards thereby securing the current corporate control materially and discursively over production.

The next frame of ecological modernization, like the sustainability movement, recognizes the damaged ecologies of our earth and seeks to shift practices to more environmentally sound practices. Anderson and others (2021) challenge this notion as it subsumes agroecology into only focusing on environmental degradation neglecting its sociocultural and economic agendas. Meanwhile, moving towards increasingly green practices they offer continues to be dominated by large corporations as enabled by governmental policies cutting out participation across the food system.

The final frame is “feed the world” but could also be labeled as “food security.” These focuses disable agroecology because they espouse productionist discourse and ideology that maintains the status quo by suggesting the increase in production and trade as key drivers to eliminate food insecurity rather than promoting community decision-making over trade

(Anderson et al., 2021). As mentioned previously, food insecurity is not an issue of production but one of inequality (Holt-Giménez et al., 2012). Furthermore, this discursive approach neglects that food is a human right and instead organizes food as an economic commodity to be accessed through purchases (Fairbairn, 2010; Patel, 2009). Such a vision also fails to adopt the localized vision of agroecology as self-deterministic and liberatory (Grey & Patel, 2015).

The continuum offered in the various frames that promote agroecological transitions is helpful because there has long been a dichotomy in the fields of agriculture and food to either pursue food security or food sovereignty. These frames certainly have competing views that represent the discursive and material tensions of agricultural development; however, the continuum helps clarify how frames that are not at each pole can nonetheless be productive. Furthermore, elements from the food security frame such as nutritional guidelines and the measuring of production are useful regardless of their food security affiliation (Clapp, 2014).

This section discussed food sovereignty and agroecology as two coordinated social movements that seek to transform local and subsequently global food systems. The agendas focus on challenging neoliberal globalization because scholars and civil society identify this dominant frame as undermining local sovereignty and contributing towards inequality. Keys to both of these platforms are the involvement of civil society as a critical convener, the dialogue between various forms of knowledge, and the view that the market sector should not be elevated above others, but rather seen as part of a multi-sectoral system.

Participation and Knowledge in International Development

Earlier in this chapter, I reviewed the social discourses that inform international development and food regimes. At its core, international development is an expression of power as the United States' development agenda tends to reflect its values (Escobar, 1995).

Participation in development can help bridge development agendas with community priorities, but participation can also be negative where community knowledge is manipulated or ignored (Cooke & Kothari, 2001). For example, land grants can struggle with epistemic inclusion and instead reify scientific knowledge rather than indigenous, traditional, spiritual, or alternative forms of knowing (Collins & Mueller, 2016). This section discusses the history and theories of participation in international and agricultural development. Additionally, I consider how participation can be co-opted or as Cooke and Kothari (2001) label it "tyrannical". Building on participation, I discuss the incorporation and valuing of multiple forms of knowledge known as epistemic inclusion and cognitive justice. Subsequently, I discuss land grant international development praxis before closing with research as praxis.

Before the 1970s, international development was largely a top-down and prescriptive model that did not include local citizen input and involvement. By the 1970s, development actors including the president of the World Bank, identified top-down development as failing the world's poor (Rahnema, 2019). Furthermore, other development actors have decried the model as promoting a problematic modernization agenda because of its view that modernity is advanced and others are not (Stiefel & Wolfe, 2011). Incorporating local participation became the solution toward equalizing power and mitigating inequality. Since then, participation has been widely viewed as necessary to international development (Arnstein, 1969, 2011; Baines-Johnson & BİLİCİ, 2018; Bass et al., 1995; Chambers, 1994, 1997; Krause, 2014; Pretty, 1995; Schaaf, 2013). Participation advocates claim it can equalize power among actors, contribute to empowerment, and ensure sustainable development. However, the ubiquity of the term leads to varying definitions and usages across institutions, actors, and development projects (Hildyard et al., 2001; Mosse, 2001; Pretty, 1995; Rahnema, 2019).

Both participation and power are heavily considered in the literature. Several typologies outline the different possible levels of community participation in development (Arnstein, 1969; Bass et al., 1995; Gaventa, 2006; Pretty, 1995). There are numerous approaches to participation praxis in international development projects, including but not limited to: participatory planning, monitoring, and evaluation; community-based participatory research (CBPR); action-oriented community diagnosis; participatory learning and action; participatory rural appraisal; and participatory action research (Chambers, 1994; Greenwood, 2018; Greenwood & Levin, 2006; Israel et al., 2012; Leal, 2011; Sandoval et al., 2012; Symes & Jasser, 2011). Similarly, there are also multiple concepts of the roles of power in development. Power as control and decision-making in the participatory process is commonly indicated by levels on a ladder or interactions among spaces, permissions, and actors (Arnstein, 1969; Gaventa, 2006; Pretty, 1995). A second conception identifies power as discursive (Escobar, 1995; Foucault, 1980; Kothari, 2001).

In his ladder of participation for sustainable agriculture projects, Pretty (1995) sorted types of participation by the degree to which participants exercise decision-making power. To him, the bottom of the ladder begins with manipulated participation at which involvement is simply a mirage because individuals are invited to participate but hold no power; the next rung, passive participation, entails engagement via notification of decisions once they are made; participation by consultation involves people by asking them for input without any guarantee of knowledge inclusion; participation for material incentives sees participants trading their time, space, or expertise in exchange for compensation; functional participation occurs when participant involvement helps save costs on a project but their inclusion is motivated by efficiency; interactive participation invites participants in as collaborators in the process by sharing in decision-making but the locus of control remains external; and finally, self-

mobilization is community ownership outside of external control. As this typology demonstrates, participation and power are irretrievably connected, vary greatly across agricultural development, and can be both nefarious or benevolent.

The slipperiness of participation's definition and application has sometimes led to its co-optation for political means such as evidenced by manipulated participation (Rahnema, 2019). To many, development participation is viewed as empowering (Chambers, 1997; Cleaver, 2001; Méndez et al., 2013; Pretty, 1995). This vision is informed by the vision of Paolo Freire's (2005) philosophy of emancipation as a radical and grassroots movement derived from mutual learning and action. However, Leal (2011) argues the adoption of participatory rhetoric within mainstream development occurred at times alongside the rise of neoliberalism indicating co-optation. They contend this co-optation occurred as participation became liberation from overbearing states, and the liberty of individual citizens to become politically and economically active and engaged. Similarly, Mosse (2011) argues empowerment was also co-opted because it became a legitimizing function for development projects to demonstrate success and maintain funding. Furthermore, participation took on additional neoliberal appeal as it can save costs and demonstrate that citizens are invested (Hildyard et al., 2001; Rahnema, 2019). The investment of local citizens in development is believed to contribute to the sustainability of the efforts (Bass et al., 1995; Cleaver, 2001; Mosse, 2001). It is also cited as a demonstration of self-reliance (McCarthy, 2019).

This co-optation of participation occurred because the term veils power (Stiefel & Wolfe, 2011). Another elision of power is through the reduction of diverse groups of people as a singular homogenous term such as "local" or "citizens" (Cleaver, 2001). Another is how development discursively constitutes groups and individuals in the Global South as peasants in

need of help (Escobar, 1995). These discursive constructions lead to two effects. First, the representation of a singular community eliminates any diversity within countries, regions, or villages. This can lead to the exacerbation of power imbalances within existing groups (Bacon et al., 2005). Furthermore, it conveys that those in the Global South are powerless and in need of intervention to obtain power (Rahnema, 2019).

Similarly, the image of the underdeveloped created through a long history of racism and Western Eurocentrism illustrates unequal power relations between development actors of the Global North and those with whom projects work in the Global South (Escobar, 1995). In this regard, genuine participation is strained because regardless of attempts to rebalance power through techniques of joint decision-making, power inequalities perpetuate as actors jostle within the political landscape of development for priority and agenda-setting (Ramalingam, 2013). Furthermore, a focus on the reduction of power between actors overlooks that power goes beyond people, and pervades through knowledge (Foucault, 1980; Kothari, 2001). Kothari (2001) and others encouraged observing power through the theoretical lens of Michel Foucault because his argument expands the vision of power to include the way power produces knowledge, how power influences people's ideas of what is real or natural, how power produces the ways people think of themselves and behave, and how power crosses all elements of social life (Foucault, 1980; Hutchinson & O'Malley, 2019; Zanotti, 2011). By examining the power differentials in development praxis through a discursive lens, which specific knowledge is reified can be challenged (Kothari, 2001). One example of this is the reification of Northern ideologies that represent Northern ways of knowing.

Cognitive Justice and the Democratization of Knowledge

Cognitive justice relies on the concept that multiple epistemologies exist and that cognitive injustice occurs through the suppression and muting of non-Northern knowledge (Santos, 2018). Recognition of a plurality of knowing is a critical first step towards cognitive justice (Fraser, 2017). Santos' (2018) conception of recognition relies on mutual, respectful, and horizontal relationships among knowledges rather than a hierarchical orientation. Without recognition of ecologies of knowledge from the Global North, there can be no cognitive justice because of the continued denial of the other (Coolsaet, 2016). The first step towards recognition is the acceptance and identification of how the colonial era created a line between the North and South for who holds knowledge. Once recognition occurs, the next step focuses on dialogue among knowledges (Santos, 2007b). Social movements such as food sovereignty and agroecology can be vehicles through which people demand recognition and respect for varied ways of knowing (Coolsaet, 2016). Resistance is essential for cognitive justice to occur, and as a result, social movements take on a particularly important role (Santos, 2018). To Santos (2007b), all knowledge bolsters particular practices and constructs particular identities. For this reason, there is no neutrality despite scientific claims of objectivity because science still reflects power. Santos (2018) argues neutrality is to be complicit in oppression. Cognitive justice is inherently linked to global social justice as there can be no global social justice until there is cognitive justice (Santos, 2007).

Calls for the democratization and decolonization of knowledge mirror cognitive justice in their focus. Both reject the uniformity of Western knowledge and insist on the recognition of multitude ways of knowing (Gaventa & Bivens, 2014; Santos, 2007, 2018). Thus development projects seeking to decolonize knowledge pursue co-creation of knowledge, participation, shared

governance, and decision-making (Collins, 2017; Collins & Mueller, 2016; Gaventa & Bivens, 2014). The social movements of food sovereignty and agroecology employ a decolonial lens as resistance to remnants of colonial subjugation of the Global South (Grey & Patel, 2015). The agroecology movement calls for the recognition that agriculturalists (e.g., peasants, indigenous peoples, farmers, etc.) generate knowledge regarding methods of food production outside of the Northern scientific epistemological tradition (Pimbert, 2018). Although, not all agroecologists values hold the inclusion of multiple knowledges as a value (Montenegro de Wit & Iles, 2016). Some agricultural knowledge labeled as Western scientific is also stolen knowledge from agriculturalists through a process known as bioprospecting, an historical practice perpetuated through modern times (Kloppenburg, 2010; Schneiberg, 2004). This tradition committed by scientists steals knowledge such as seed improvements from peasants and indigenous peoples without providing credit, commodifies it as protected private property, and sells it for profit (Kloppenburg, 2010). The hidden nature of this practice represents an additional epistemicide as it erases any involvement from non-scientific actors. For these reasons among others, the agroecology movement calls for communities to control agricultural technology by determining its purpose, its targeted audience, the way it is used, and the timing of its use. Furthermore, it rejects such enclosures of knowledge as corporate-controlled patents and privatization of knowledge (Pimbert, 2018).

The calls for community control relate directly to the grassroots and dialogic nature of the agroecology movement. As mentioned previously, among mainstream agriculture productionists there is limited validation of non-Northern positive scientific knowledge and their connected production methods (Coolsaet, 2016). One reason identified is the industrialist paradigm benefits powerful actors who control the agenda according to their economic prosperity (Lacey, 2007;

Pavageau et al., 2020). Such a tradition of control may be why some believe that the only way to achieve true participation is through changing the dominant socio-cultural and political-economic institutions (Leal, 2011). Others contend the only way to transform society is to transform the university (Greenwood, 2017).

Land-Grant Universities' International Development Praxis

I will now elaborate on participation and cognitive justice by applying these concepts to land-grant universities to discuss how scholars critique the university system. In their critique of the mainstreaming of decolonization, Tuck and Yang (2012) illustrate how calls to decolonize education transform and appropriate decoloniality into a metaphor. The metaphor, Tuck and Yang claim turns material demands for land and justice into calls for social justice or human rights which limits action and accountability. Universities can be complicit in this damage as they too often maintain the dominance of Northern science over the diversity of knowledge types (Collins & Mueller, 2016; Santos, 2016). Related to the decolonial metaphor, Tuck and Yang (2012) offer concern about the dichotomous nature with which universities do or do not address decolonization "at home" and "abroad.: Put differently, the focus is on decolonizing international efforts without acknowledging nor meaningfully attending to the history that land grants reside on indigenous land. This connects to the general tension observed by scholars regarding how land-grants may attend to both local benefit and global impact (Gavazzi et al., 2018).

This section begins with a brief history of the land-grant university system followed by the contested frames that describe its purposes and consequences. Following this overarching discussion, I review the LGU exponential change from post-World War II onwards. I chose this period as a launching point because the end of WWII was a time of change for universities, agriculture, and international development. The next section discusses the land grant with a

discussion and critique its global focus. The final section looks to bring the earlier discussion on decolonizing epistemologies into conversation with current international development practices at land-grants and U.S. universities.

A Brief History of the Land-Grant University. Land-grant universities were established first by the Morrill Act of 1862 and again in 1890, which created the historically black colleges and universities (HBCUs) (Sorber & Geiger, 2014; The National Archives Catalog, 1862). The 1890 act intended to provide education to African Americans who, due to segregation, were barred from many 1862 universities primarily, in southern states. In 1992 Hispanic-serving land grant universities were federally established, and in 1994, indigenous and native-controlled universities, as well as the University of the District of Columbia, were awarded land-grant status but not land (Sorber & Geiger, 2014). In 1887, the Hatch Act federally-funded agricultural experiment sites, in 1914 the Smith-Lever act funded Cooperative Extension, and the Evans-Allen Act of 1977 directed funding to the 1890s similar to the Hatch Act of 1887 (Association of Public & Land-Grant Universities, 2013). Despite this history, the narrative of the land grant purpose and mission is contested.

In its most simplistic form, LGU's purpose was to provide education and economic development to local communities which would lead to positive impacts at the state and national level (Gavazzi et al., 2018; Peters, 2006). Yet, as indicated land grants did not provide education evenly due to segregation practices. Simon (2009) claims LGUs extended education beyond the elite to whom it was previously exclusively available by offering practical and applied education to rural communities. This narrative Peters' (2006) has described as the "heroic meta-narrative" which he criticizes as presenting a simplified, romanticized, and uncritical image of LGUs as rescuing farmers by simply solving their problems. In their work of land-grant historiography,

Sorber and Geiger (2014) summarize many studies demonstrating despite intent, land grant education was mostly attended by members of the middle and upper socioeconomic classes.

The second narrative is the “tragic counter-narrative” that acknowledges the complicity of LGUs in contributing to modernization, the economic disenfranchisement of farmers, and the enrichment of corporations (Peters, 2006). Although originally focused in part on agriculture, land-grants aided in the shift from an agrarian society to an industrialized one (Gaventa & Bivens, 2014). This narrative connects to criticism of the LGU for enriching corporations over local farmers which I discuss later in this section (Buttel, 2005; Hightower, 1972).

The final narrative Peters (2006) labels the “prophetic counter-narrative” advancing the view that LGUs were intended to democratize knowledge towards fostering self-sufficiency and liberation via a systems approach to agricultural education that acknowledges the cultural, political, economic, and spiritual elements of the human condition. The prophetic narrative however has been criticized for failing to attend to the discrimination by LGUs towards African-Americans, women, and native or indigenous peoples (Association of Public & Land-Grant Universities, 2013; Sorber & Geiger, 2014). Moreover, it’s counter to the many who indicate LGUs do not typically advance critical education (Collins & Mueller, 2016; Meek & Tarlau, 2017).

Land-Grants, Agriculture, and International Development Post World War II. As mentioned earlier, following the Second World War, land-grant universities grew into the research-driven international machines they are today blurring the differences between their missions and other higher education institutions (Gavazzi et al., 2018; Sorber & Geiger, 2014). This massive growth was supported by new levels of federally-funded research, and in response to the increased importance of foreign and defense strategies, universities adopted

internationalization as demand for language and other global studies increased (Thelin, 2004). The Four Point Program in 1949, the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, and Title XII of 1975 cemented the university and more specifically the land grant's role in providing federally funded agricultural technical assistance to the Global South via long-term research and development grants (De Wit & Merkx, 2012). Indeed, to date, large USAID-funded research projects are only eligible to Title XII institutions (The United States Agency for International Development, 2020)

Leveraging the land grant extension experience for international agricultural development was a natural fit (Hudzik & Simon, 2012). A policy document by Vannevar Bush in 1945 codified the utility of universities as research arms of the federal government, and the Bayh-Doyle Act in 1980 awarded patent rights to universities. All told, these federal actions cemented the position of the university and the land-grant as drivers of the knowledge economy representing their epistemic power (Gavazzi et al., 2018).

From the 1960s onwards, land-grant universities deployed Green Revolution industrialized production technologies in the Global South with promises of development and increased production (Montenegro de Wit & Iles, 2016). Such technologies identified as the "dawn of a modern agriculture" are credited with rapidly increasing staple crop production using less land (Borlaug, 2002, p. 2). This production style continues today and in recent years these technologies have failed to meet their stated goals (Wise, 2020). The GR relied on artificial fertilizers, pesticides, and sterile seeds that created farmer dependency on transnational agribusiness for continued imports (Holt-Giménez et al., 2012). It claimed that Western scientific knowledge could solve outdated agriculture (Westengen, 2017). It also pivoted agricultural research missions at land-grants away from community-driven needs towards corporate biotechnology that would increase production. Whereas the discourse of the productionist

ideology identified farmers as beneficiaries, it later became apparent that corporations may have reaped more of the benefit. Moreover, the land grant university was critiqued as the architect of an agribusiness-oriented system that threatens sustainability and localized agriculture (Hightower, 1972) These critiques of the land-grants complicity known as “Hightowerism” as the 1972 piece contributed to the formations of the sustainable and localized agriculture movement (Buttel, 2005).

Given the early success of Green Revolution technologies in increasing production, land-grants exported GR practices and associated technologies to the Global South (Montenegro de Wit & Iles, 2016). Unfortunately, the heavy reliance on synthetic fertilizers, sterile hybrid seeds, and pesticides contributed to increased inequality, polluted waters, denuded soils of nutrients, and harmed overall nutrition by reducing agricultural and dietary diversity (Bezner Kerr, 2012). An additional consequence was the loss of indigenous and cultural knowledge as inputs such as seeds that once were saved, sold, or eaten had to be purchased on the global market (Bezner Kerr et al., 2016). Indigenous and traditional agricultural practices were deemed insufficient by development practitioners and scholars to meet the demands of growing populations, and modernizing agriculture became a pillar of Southern economic development (Westengen, 2017). For example, on a global scale, 50% of the world’s seeds are controlled by four transnational companies representing a concentration of wealth and technological knowledge (Hendrickson et al., 2020).

Turning more explicitly to technology as a site of politics, non-technically advanced agriculture was discursively presented as traditional and unable to adapt leading to its dismissal (McMichael, 2010). Moreover, the focus on increasing production through greater biotechnology adoption reduces the wickedness of the food insecurity problem by assuming that simply

increasing the supply of food will automatically lead to greater distribution rather than attending to the inequality of access. Such a focus fails to attend to the question of who benefits from the adoption and usage of biotechnologies (Allouche et al., 2015)? For example, even though peasant farmers' practices tend to be dismissed epistemologically as backward, as argued by McMichael above, they are nonetheless targeted by agribusiness who view them as lucrative market shares (Holt-Giménez & Altieri, 2013). Similarly, farmer innovation and knowledge have been exploited through bioprospecting wherein governments and scientists stole indigenous' and agriculturalists' knowledge, appropriating them as their own to turn into a commodity to sell at profit (Kloppenburg, 2010; Schneiberg, 2004).

Despite these concerns, proponents of the Green Revolution have called for a "New Green Revolution" in which biotechnology and industrialization are further increased by improved seeds, fertilizers, and pesticides (Holt-Giménez & Altieri, 2013). Clapp and Ruder (2020) document the recent precision agriculture (PA) trend that promises greater on-farm efficiency through the use of digital technologies that monitor conditions and match agricultural needs with requisite biotechnologies. They note PA's use of technologies can lead to increased sustainability as the advancements can increase production while using less land, water, and inputs. However, they elaborate that some agroecologists criticize PA for further concentration of corporate control and enrichment (Clapp & Ruder, 2020). The debate concerning PA reflects the continued politics over the future of agriculture as some agronomists argue for movement away from a focus on increasing production, and instead towards a multitude of values including those considered normative such as equity and justice (Fraser, 2017). This debate was also observed amidst the 2021 United Nations Food Systems Summit (UNFSS) where debates over corporate control and biotechnologies played out internationally (Montenegro de Wit & Iles,

2021). However, such a proposition for universities is threatened by the increasing reliance on corporate funding.

Cognitive capitalism, academic capitalism to Heller (2016), or university capitalism to Santos (2018) are all labels for increased reliance on corporate funding and the neoliberalization of U.S. universities. Conceived as independent thought leaders, U.S. universities and academic actors are supposed to be independent and able to contest society's greatest ailments, including injustice because academic freedom is protected from possible backlash (Santos, 2016). Over time, as public funding has decreased due to changes in governmental support, reliance on private funding including fees has increased. The reliance on private funding pushed research into a relationship with corporations that had ample wealth to sponsor research inquiries. As a result, university scholarly activities have pivoted from the once independent contestation of society's ailments towards the needs of for-profit corporations (Heller, 2016). Similarly, the outreach missions to rural communities of LGUs became financially self-sustaining relying on their ability to first meet market-driven needs to survive (Sorber & Geiger, 2014).

Another recent trend among land-grant universities is to expand their missions to incorporate a global view. The basic logic recognizes the globalized world and interconnections of the problems of the 21st century as that which plagues the local domestic conditions may equally plague communities abroad (Hudzik & Simon, 2012; Simon, 2009). This new LGU covenant is not without its challenges as tensions arise between attending to betterment at home and abroad (Gavazzi et al., 2018). In their work, Gavazzi and colleagues (2018) encourage land-grants to double down and refocus on their mission to benefit their states and the U.S. nation as public support for LGUs is waning, but they fall short of calling for systems-level change to combat rising inequality. To Santos (2018), silence on the root causes of the inequitable

globalized neoliberal food system can be interpreted as complicity. Complicity, they suggest, reinforces the neoliberal machine through abstention. Thus, the global land-grant may reify Northern epistemological and cultural monopolies in the form of neoliberalism regardless of Southern calls for knowledge co-creation (Santos, 2018). Nonetheless, the globalizing effect painted by Simon (2009) appears to be sticking, as internationalization of higher education is a common buzzword. At Virginia Tech, the global land grant idea is embedded as a core goal of the university's strategic planning (Virginia Tech, 2015). Virginia Tech is not alone, as many other land-grant peers are equally framing their institutions using this discourse (Dunkenberger, 2015).

Accepting for a moment the proposition of Gavazzi alongside the increasingly global orientation of LGUs, how are these two tenets reconciled? The answer from Hudzik and Simon (2012) is to pursue co-creation and co-benefit at both local and global levels. However, co-creation is more complicated amidst documentation of bioprospecting and epistemic exclusion (Collins & Mueller, 2016; Kloppenburg, 2010; Schneiberg, 2004). Furthermore, should land-grants fail to move local benefit to the periphery or left of center, they run the risk of perpetuating neocolonialism through epistemic injustice by centering U.S. needs, knowledge, and benefit. To Collins and Kalehua Mueller (2016), "food production and security, higher education, and epistemologies are interdependent realities" (p. 326). In their study of a land grant in Hawaii, they showed how indigenous knowledge was dismissed and undervalued by faculty. In another study, Collins (2017) described the risk of international development work persisting the tyranny of the technical expert who creates solutions in a vacuum to apply across contexts which to Collins represented neocolonial epistemic injustice.

Research as Praxis

There is a tradition in the critical research tradition to study one's professional practice as a way to effect change (Kincheloe et al., 2017). For these reasons, a common thread throughout my research is praxis. Drawing from the seminal work of Paolo Freire, praxis is defined as "reflection and action upon the world in order to transform it" (Freire, 2005, p. 51). While I do not use the theory directly, the intercultural praxis work of Sorrells (2014) is a helpful model as people are challenged to reflect on their identity, consider it within the historical transnational context, identify how world views are socially constructed in accordance to power, discuss these considerations, reflect, and finally to take action towards effecting social justice change. Her framework of intercultural praxis helps explain how a focus group as a form of critical pedagogy and research could be a generative process for the actors and researchers involved.

As such, I view my research as facilitating the participants in my study to consider themselves, the broader world, and their individual and collective responsibility to address inequality (Kincheloe et al., 2017). To many, praxis is an act of courage and an ethical and moral obligation for researchers (Kincheloe et al., 2017; Lather, 1991). Building from the previous sections on the politics of knowledge, the work of praxis for university actors requires the acknowledgment that not all knowledge arises from universities and more specifically Western universities by examining how knowledge and power are historically reified as emerging from academia (Kincheloe et al., 2017).

Methodologically speaking, critical discourse analysis contributes towards praxis. It is used by researchers to understand their emancipatory work (Paugha & Robinson, 2011). It is also a pedagogical tool to connect text with the lived experiences of those consuming it such as students (Weiner, 2003). Focus groups are also a site of praxis opportunities as they can

highlight voices not commonly visible. In so doing they may increase awareness of other viewpoints, experiences, and knowledge towards producing social and political change by highlighting the constituting power of discourse on people's ideas, behaviors, and lives (Kamberelis & Dimitriadis, 2014). As Giroux (2000) calls us to do, focus groups can shine a light on otherwise invisible power structures.

One of the key tenets of critical praxis is reflexivity. Furthermore, reflexivity is identified as a method towards decolonizing university knowledge and their beliefs held by the individuals within (Berger, 2015; Gaventa & Bivens, 2014; Kemmis & McTaggart, 2000; Nash & Wintrob, 1972), as a method towards increasing intercultural skills (Sorrells, 2014), and as a way to incite collective social action (Freire, 2005). Reflexivity can help prevent the continuation of damaging extractive practices that advance academics' careers but do little for the local and global communities from whom knowledge was extracted (Fontana & Frey, 2008; Tuck & Yang, 2014; Wilk, 2011). In their collaborative research, Gaventa and Bivens (2014) noted the success of their reflexive workshop in generating pluralistic epistemologies. Equally so, agroecological education when incorporating reflection can move students towards envisioning social justice change (Meek & Tarlau, 2017; Minga, 2017). In this regard, reflexivity plays an important role in the democratization of knowledge at the university.

Conclusion

This chapter reviewed the importance of discourse to constructing the materiality of our global food system, the resistance to neoliberalism, and international development. Building on the importance of power and participation, I explained how Northern universities as sites of knowledge creation can be complicit in epistemic injustice. I provided a hopeful vision for how agriculture and cognitive justice can co-exist in the social movements of food sovereignty and

agroecology. I closed this section by reviewing how I aspire for my research to contribute towards research as critical praxis. In the next chapter, I look to situate this analysis conceptually by providing an overview of Critical Discourse Analysis, including its central concepts.

CHAPTER 3: CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Situating My Research: Key Concepts

The purpose of this chapter is to situate my research within the larger theoretical traditions of critical theory. My research employs Fairclough's (1992, 2003, 2012) Critical Discourse Analysis to address the overarching question of: in the context of USAID's "The Journey to Self-Reliance," how, if at all, do land-grant universities play a role in constructing the discourse of self-reliance in the domain of international food security development? I begin this chapter by reviewing key concepts on which CDA befalls related to discourse and power, including the construction of objects and ideology and power, including agency and resistance. Subsequently, I briefly review the historical provenance of CDA. I close the chapter by discussing Fairclough's three levels of discourse, textual, discursive practice, and social practice.

Discourse and Power

Foucault's work is foundational for those seeking to analyze discourse as power, and indeed Fairclough draws upon his concepts in his theory. To Foucault (1972), discourse is the system of statements that interact, inform, and govern one another. Discourse serves as the site of meaning-making for the social world. This is not to say that objects, people, events, or other materiality in the social world do not exist without discourse, but rather that discourse serves as the constituting force to provide meaning for the world (Hall, 2004). In this regard, discourse provides a common language from which something can be spoken of and subsequently considered in specific descriptive terms (Hall, 2001). It is the act of representing "to describe or depict it, to call it up in the mind by description or portrayal or imagination" (Hall, 1997, p. 14).

The constitution of an object subsequently enables it to be studied or acted upon (Fairclough, 1992). For example, the notion of the Global South as a place of backward culture

and underdevelopment is a discursive construction built from the Northern lens as an expression of power to be intervened upon (Escobar, 1984; Mohanty, 1984). The Global South as a diverse body of land, people, communities, societies, cultures, and beliefs exist regardless of these discursive frames, but when it is spoken of, written on, photographed, and represented as the backward other, it becomes that object in the minds of those who encounter those evocations. Barrett (1991) contends that the construction of objects also works by illustrating what something is not. In this regard, by constructing the Global South the North subsequently becomes its antithesis as "the developed." These discursive meanings presuppose power relations between an aid worker and a local community member before the two even meet (Escobar, 1995). These constructions are likely why Fairclough (2003) illustrates the importance of discursive representation to the emergence of alternative imaginaries or "possible worlds" (p. 207).

Such a construction equally occurs along epistemological lines (Santos, 2007). From an international development praxis point of view, this ordering indicates who makes decisions and what direction knowledge flows. Ramalingam (2013) offers a story of a refugee directly contacting two United Nations officials by text message to request additional aid. The surprise the author recounts of the UN officials indicates the typical direction of communication was interrupted by a human (object) behaving not as they were expected. The construction of what is valued and animated by discursive formations is a cumulative product of historical and current forces that are always wrestling for manifestation and representation (Hall, 1996; Luke, 1995). This contestation of representation speaks directly to the power of knowledge.

The relationship between knowledge and power for Foucault (1980) is so interwoven that he coined the term "power/knowledge". Foucault's usage of the power/knowledge combination

reinforces his central belief that scientific knowledge must be analyzed in terms of what power supports the standing of scientific knowledge (Alcoff, 2013). He referred to this as the "regime of truth" (Foucault, 1980, p. 131). Institutions such as the academic subdisciplines of international development or agriculture serve as mobilizing non-discursive apparatuses of discourse (Maclure, 2003). To Maclure (2003), the process of legitimizing knowledge and turning statements into common sense excludes knowledge, behaviors, and ideas deemed different from the institution through claims of illegitimacy. To Hall (1992), power also moves through discourse, and as a result, discourse and knowledge can never be neutral but reflect relations of power. Not all people will render discourse legitimate or true. When it is perceived as true, an actor places discourse into action (Hall, 1992, 2004). To Fairclough (1992), this action can be to accept discourse, creatively modify it, or resist. This focus on the interpretation of discourse is why Fairclough (2003) encourages pairing CDA with interviews or focus groups.

Ideology and Power

I begin this discussion with Marx because his views on ideology have proven to be foundational. Of Marx, Barrett (1991) suggests that the interpretations of Marxist views on ideology vary because his work, like many others, morphed over time. His concepts are thus mutable based on interpretations and even translations. With this in mind, instead of attending to the varied interpretations across the literature as Barrett has done, I maintain continuity by drawing from the same critical theorists otherwise mentioned throughout this chapter. I focus here on two interpretations of Marxist ideology as described by Barrett (1991).

The first interpretation is of ideology as a collection of beliefs and values shared by members of a common socioeconomic class. This relies on the superstructure metaphor of Marx where the elite controls the modes of production including the resources, and the proletariat sells

their labor to produce goods that are sold for profits that return to the elites. This cycle self-supports itself as the actors involved identify as workers, and participate to maintain the system by selling their labor (Barrett, 1991). This system, however, does not account for actors who disrupt or resist the system by seeking to change it (Hall, 1986).

The second is the view of ideology as epistemological because it represents beliefs that are not entirely true or are mutated to preserve the power relations in society (Barrett, 1991). In such a way, ideology is viewed as a representation of the social world as amplified or moved through discourse (Luke, 1995). This notion is epistemological because not only is ideology an incomplete knowledge given its possibilities of false claims, but it can also be disrupted with education and more knowledge to demonstrate its failings (Barrett, 1991). Recognizing the epistemological possibilities to disrupt ideology via conscientization, the definition of ideology as an incomplete epistemology lends itself well to this work's focus on discourse and praxis.

Fairclough builds upon Foucault's ideas of ideology with his theory. Foucault rejected the idea that ideology was class-based and instead viewed it as a series of true and false statements pitted against one another. In studying ideology he sought to understand the power/knowledge mechanisms including science that supported such truth claims (Hall, 1992). To him, ideology influenced science and science influenced ideology as both are discursive (Foucault, 1972). Thus, to attend to ideology (even indirectly) one would attend to discourse as it was ultimately a mechanism for its existence.

Fairclough draws on Gramsci (2007) who in his prison notebooks conceptualized ideology as a struggle for political power and representation. It is also a struggle for consent as those in positions of power attempt to use ideology to condition other actors to consent by believing what is espoused. Education is one example he provides of this attempt at ideological

conditioning. To Barrett (1991), consent involves actors operating within prescribed societal notions rather than seeking to change them. Hall (1986) describes ideology as "*all* [sic] organized forms of social thinking" (p. 30). Such shared thought he elaborates influences people's everyday lives by shaping how they act and behave. Subsequently, ideology can support and maintain dominance through its replication in discourse. In this view, discourse becomes the mechanism by which ideology is maintained, modified, and replicated. Consent occurs when actors believe an ideology and subsequently act upon it. Furthermore, Hall (1986) offers, ideology is not only maintained within discourse and its everyday animation through mundane action, but is also constructed out of the everyday experience as the way social and economic relations are discussed in habitual practices becomes ideological.

Fairclough (1992) conceptualizes this interactive process of ideology, hegemony, and discourse. To Fairclough, ideology is a way of representing the social world in relation to power. Thus, in line with Gramsci's view, ideology is a struggle for power. Ideology becomes hegemonic when the beliefs ingrained in the ideology become common sense or unquestionably true. This occurs through discourse, both everyday habitual usages and more intentional uses. This point leads to a need to discuss the role of agency and structure because if ideology finds its power in its ability to become believed by people, and if it becomes hegemonic when people believe it as uniform, what role does individual choice play in the process? Furthermore, how do we attend to the resistance of unequal power especially as it pertains to social movements and change?

To Fairclough (1992) agency is a dialogic interaction wherein human behavior is influenced by how individuals interpret texts and broader discourses. He builds upon Archer (2000) who argues that the sense of self emerges in dialogue with our social surroundings,

including language and social structures. It is not that actors are a direct product of the statement, but they are also not immune to their discursive effects (Fairclough, 2003). Moreover, agency connects to two ideas of enactment and inculcation. Enactment speaks to the way discourse becomes embedded in action, for example, through political-economic organizations (Fairclough, 2003). Inculcation offers how people through a dialogue with discourse may see themselves or not, and in response create alternatives for themselves and even for their social worlds. For example, in response to discourse actors may replicate it, resist, or creatively modify it but according to their own agentic choice (Fairclough, 2003). With this in mind, the strategies of actors to maintain or challenge power can be observed within the texts they produce and their everyday praxis (Fairclough, 2012).

Critical Discourse Analysis for Education and Policy

In the 1970s, Foucault opened education and policy studies to the importance of discourse (Luke, 1997). Foucault's contribution was significant because rather than focusing on what discourse said he nudged research to investigate the power that enabled discourse to convince of its truth (Foucault, 1972). Luke (1997) opened research to analyzing all objects and materials as discursively positioned in education policy. The field of Critical Discourse Analysis sought to combine both the linguistic and discursive traditions (Luke, 1997; Threadgold, 2003). This combination affords Critical Discourse Analysis the ability to look at every day, mundane discourse to identify its connections to larger social facets such as ideology (Fairclough, 1992).

For research seeking to understand both the larger sociological forces and the micro yet equally important everyday praxis, CDA blends these varied levels (Fairclough, 2013). For example, Fairclough's (1993) work illustrates how universities' discourse such as job postings can reflect broader social ideologies such as neoliberalism. In his analysis of the Australian

prime minister's speech apologizing for the country's horrific actions towards indigenous people, Luke (1995) reveals not only how everyday language and public policy are intertwined but also how the discourse fails to apologize and perpetuates historical injustice by centering the Australians as heroic and indigenous peoples as passive. In so doing he claims; the discourse maintains specific power relations. Vavrus and Seghers (2010) contend that partnership, as represented in policy texts, reveals a specific notion that is ideological, and subsequently through interviews documented how that representation excludes voices and agendas of the poor for whom poverty reduction is intended. Ayers (2005) documents shifts in the mission of a community college towards reproducing neoliberal ideology through the construction of learners as future workers and how the curriculum shifted to be market-oriented. In their dissertation analyzing fair housing policies, Sizemore (2019) illustrates how policy actors can resist hegemonic discourses that undermine equity in housing policy. Taylor (2004) considers how CDA can be used to highlight discursive shifts to advance social change through policy activism. In the context of Colombian environmental education policy, Mejía-Cáceres and colleagues (2021) highlight a disconnect between environmental research and subsequent policy that reflects global ideological pressures.

Fairclough's Three Levels of Discourse

Fairclough (1992) builds on three of Foucault's core theoretical tenets. The first is that objects comprised of people, events, artifacts, and other materiality within the social world derive meaning from their discursive representation. Secondly, that discourse is inherently a system of social interaction wherein language, actors, and the broader social structure interact, compete, and inform one another otherwise known as 'order of discourse.' Third, he incorporates Foucault's view of power, struggle, and social change as discursively situated (Fairclough,

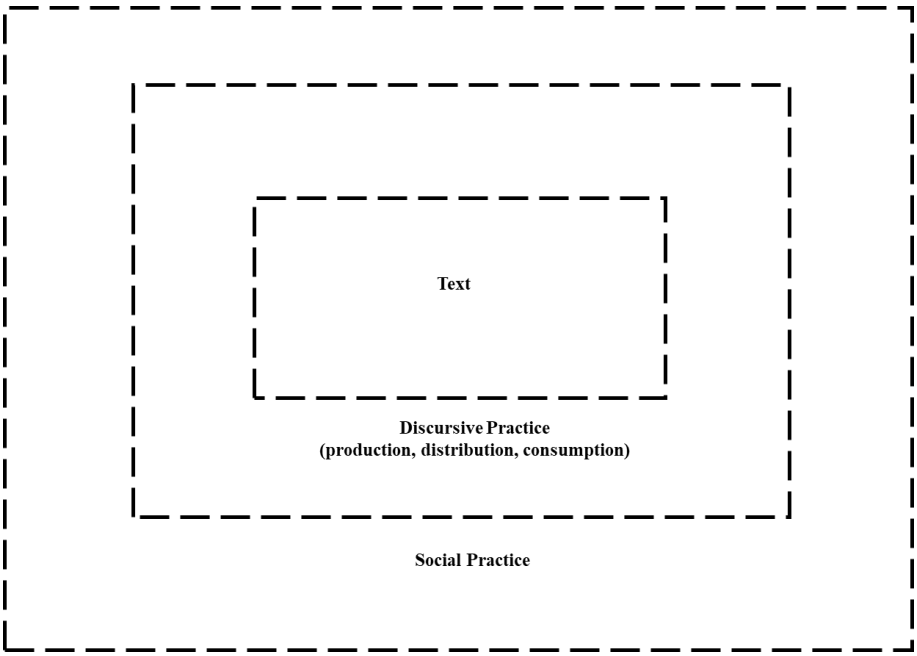
1992). The primacy of both power and representation means that discourse is a site of struggle (Luke, 1995).

Fairclough conceptualizes his theory of discourse as three interrelated levels (Figure 3), and while each level is delineated he cautions that the separations are mutable representing the interactive functions between them. At the base of the theory is the text itself which includes the word choice, grammatical functions, syntax, and general organization of the text itself (Fairclough, 1992). In later works, he takes to calling texts ‘events’ (Fairclough, 2003).

The textual layer incorporates a linguistic and descriptive focus reflecting the importance of grammar, word choice, and word locations that serve as manifestations of everyday praxis (Fairclough, 1992). Evaluation represents implicit assumptions of what is valued or desired (Fairclough, 2003), epistemic modality verbiage communicates representations of the social world or future, what Fairclough calls “authoritative categorical assertions” (2011, p. 11). Deontic modality communicates who possesses said authority and their ability to command or suggest action. Modality and evaluation work in tandem to convey desirability, possibility, and what is required to be done (Fairclough, 2003). Such linguistic features can contribute to the normalization of certain ideas or to insulate unequal power relations from contestation (Fairclough, 1992). To attend to the textual layer, I asked the following analytical questions: what vocabularies are used when referencing self-reliance? What values or assumptions are subsumed in the corresponding statements? What modalities are reflected in the corresponding statements?

Figure 3

Fairclough's Three-Dimensional Conception of Discourse



Three-dimensional conception of discourse. Reprinted from Discourse and Social Change (p. 73), by N. Fairclough, 1992, https://doi.org/10.2307/2074659. Copyright 1992 by Polity Press. Adapted with permission.

The second layer is called discursive practice and it mediates between the textual layer and social practice layer. The discursive practice focuses on explanation by investigating how discourse is produced, consumed, interpreted, modified, and replicated. One of the ways textual and discursive practice work together is by identifying embedded ideologies. In addition to investigating the implicit value assumptions via the textual features of evaluation and modality, discursive practice also examines interdiscursivity, what other discourses are drawn upon or repeated. Taken together, a researcher can identify the underlying ideological investments made within the text by addressing how values and commitments together convey ideological meaning (Fairclough, 1992). To explore discursive practice, I asked: what particular discourses are drawn

upon? What ideologies inform these representations? How does the self-reliance discourse reflect agroecological possibilities?

The final layer of the theory of discourse is social practice encompassing how people are part of larger power struggles such as how ideology is reproduced and changed as sites of political and social contestations for power. Social practice analysis seeks to explain the dialogic interaction between policy texts and broader social constructs. Of note is discursive practice is part of social practice reflecting how the interpretation of texts is informed by not only the discourse itself but the larger contextual boundaries within which actors act. For this reason, social practice can reflect acceptance, creative modification, or resistance to policy texts as actors variously respond to the discourse and more importantly to the larger societal constructs within which discourse occurs (Fairclough, 1992). To attend to social practice analytically, I asked: how do discursive practices and social practices reflect one another? How does the discourse of self-reliance in tandem with land-grant praxis maintain or resist structures of power?

Discourse as representation conveys what we know about the world and is thus a representation of knowledge power and control (Fairclough, 2003). These representations of events or people can vary across texts depending on the particular discourse such as governmental, social science, or a community-driven newsletter (Fairclough, 2011). Facets of representation include how actors are generalized or specified. For example, the representation of a group of people as a monolithic culture or the representation of individual ethnic tribes. It can also include naming people individually or referring to them by specific cultural features. Representations can be internalized (Fairclough, 2003). Other modes of representation include the use of modality which indicates the power relationship between the text and the actors represented in the text. Modality refers to two types both with varying degrees of strength:

epistemic modality indicates truth or predictive statements and deontic modality indicates requirements or expectations. A final mode of representation includes evaluation which is the use of desirable or undesirable terms that indicates values articulated in the text (Fairclough, 2003). Of vital importance to the consideration of representation is how contextual frames such as the West/North looking out to other areas of the world indicate a particular representation based on that power position (Hall, 1992).

Genres communicate modes of acting, behaving, and relating to others (Fairclough, 2003). Specific societal domains tend to have genres attributed to them such as a governmental policy document which tends to use formality and can inform social behavior by indicating expectations of the people referenced within the policy (Fairclough, 2011, 2012). The genre affords an investigation into the particular social relations embedded as the format can indicate the power relations between actors creating and consuming the particular text (Fairclough, 1992). Genres can also be connected via text chains in which a text is informed by other texts from different contexts such as an academic paper building towards a policy. In this manner, texts can be hybridized via multiple genres combined. Genres are connected to interdiscursivity, how texts can refer or sample from other texts, knowledge, and voices. This particular facet is analyzed for what is excluded or include to indicate what the text communicates is relevant, salient, or important. It can also indicate the appropriation of a term from one genre to another transforming its usage (Fairclough, 2003).

Finally, styles illustrate identification or ways of being such as one's view of their identity including ethics and morality (Fairclough, 2003, 2012). Fairclough connects identification to Bourdieu's notion of habitus or the ways in which a person has internalized or naturalized ways of being (Schirato & Roberts, 2018). Like discourse, the habitus represents a

dialogue between actor and structure (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992). While Fairclough indicates identification can be analyzed within the text, he also encourages more generally that CDA incorporate other data collection methods such as interviews or focus groups to capture meaning-making and interpretation (Fairclough, 2003). To this end, this research employs focus groups alongside CDA, and I detail both methodologies in the next chapter.

Conclusion

This chapter reviewed the key concepts of discourse, power, ideology, and agency alongside the broad theoretical tradition of critical studies. I reviewed how Critical Discourse Analysis attends to localized discourse as both linguistic and sociologically bound. Subsequently, I provided an overview of the three layers of CDA namely, textual, discursive practice, and social practice. The next chapter outlines how I conducted my research. I begin by explaining why I made the research design choices I did per my philosophical paradigm. Thereafter, I describe my analytical framework that connected my conceptual framework to my research questions. I then review the corpus and focus group transcripts, including how I collected and analyzed the data.

CHAPTER 4: METHODOLOGY

Introduction

This chapter provides a road map for how I arrived at my methodological decisions as well as the discrete steps I took to produce the findings in Chapter 5. I begin with my philosophical paradigm or my worldview as it serves as a guidepost to why I took certain actions. Following that, I illustrate how my methodology addressed my research questions and my conceptual framework. This was supported by my a priori and theoretical framework found in Table 7 within Appendix B. I then outline my research design which includes my units of analysis: the corpus and the cases. I outline how I constructed my corpus, why I chose the cases in question, and how I sampled and recruited participants from those two land grant cases. The final section of the chapter documents my data analysis beginning with Critical Discourse Analysis, Corpus Linguistics as a supporting analytical methodology, and ending with qualitative focus group coding.

Ontology and Epistemology

The methodology of this study was shaped by my ontological and epistemological paradigm. Paradigms are formed by axioms or core tenets on which all premises are set (Babbie, 2007). These axioms subsequently inform what an individual perceives exists (ontology), what can be known or is considered knowledge (epistemology), and what methods are appropriate and valid (methodology; Guba & Lincoln, 1994; Taylor & Bogdan, 1998). There are many paradigms with specific nuances. Paradigms once thought to be mutually exclusive, can be blended as long as the axioms align (Guba & Lincoln, 2008).

Generally, my views align with the post-positive paradigms as outlined by Guba and Lincoln (2008) of critical, constructivist, and participatory theories. Within each of these

paradigms, the lines between epistemology and ontology are increasingly blurred reflecting how the two interplay (Guba & Lincoln, 2008). More specifically, my views align with critical theory, an approach that seeks to employ research for praxis and social change (Lather, 1991; Whitehead, 2007). In their review of critical theory, Kincheloe and colleagues (2017) outlined the following shared axioms: thought is a social construction derived in part by power relations embedded within the socio-economic and political systems. These systems function discursively to craft thoughts and views of the world including one's identity. Research either explicitly seeks to uproot systems of oppression or is complicit in its maintenance. As such, research as a tool towards social justice is an unwavering value.

The goal of social justice leads to the axiom of research as action, meaning research can never be value-free because the intention is to contest power and hegemony (Guba & Lincoln, 2008). In fact, despite claims otherwise, no research regardless of paradigm can ever be neutral (Lather, 1986). This stance reflects my belief that researchers should investigate powerful actors, organizations, and institutions to shift the site of inquiry away from populations who are constantly studied as a form of extraction (Tuck & Yang, 2014). For critical scholars, the role of the researcher is inherently embedded as an activist or advocate. It is here that I diverge from the critical tradition towards constructivism as I believe my role is not to transform the participants or the systems directly, but to facilitate by highlighting issues of power (Guba & Lincoln, 2008).

This approach reflects my tendency to combine elements of both critical and constructivist theories for both ontology and epistemology. I believe that multiple realities can co-exist as manifested by individual and collective experiences. However, I also believe that one's ontology is predicated on power differentials both of historical and contemporary significance (Guba & Lincoln, 2008). Multiple realities exist only because of differential power

relations across varied elements of race, class, gender, nationality, and positionality (Taylor & Bogdan, 1998). This is why two very different realities such as: experiencing racism as a black man and a white man feeling victimized by racial justice can co-exist. These two realities are predicated on the variances of power according to their positionality. One is oppressed by power, and the other seeks to maintain a position of power. My epistemological beliefs are similar to my ontology. Epistemology reflects how knowledge is created through interaction and the mutual construction of shared meanings (Guba & Lincoln, 2008). For discursive work, constructivism employs the premise that social practices are manifestations of actors making meaning of discourse through their modification or replication of discourse (Fairclough, 1992). This reflects how for critical work, the product is a mixture between the researcher and the participants (Guba & Lincoln, 2008).

CDA as Methodological and Analytical Framework

Table 1 follows Fairclough's (1992) three-level framework of discourse, and outlines how my operational research questions align with these three levels.

Table 1

CDA as Analytical Framework

Research Questions	Textual Analysis	Discursive Practice	Social Practice
1. How is self-reliance represented in the corpus of The Journey to Self-Reliance from 2018 to 2020?			
2. How, if at all, does the discourse of self-reliance reflect agroecological possibilities for land-grant universities?			
3. What are the material implications on international food security development praxis?			

Research Design

The next section details my units of analysis following my analytical framework. I start by describing my units of analysis, a corpus of policy texts, and focus group transcripts. After that, I detail how I analyzed the corpus I chose using CDA and how I analyzes the focus group transcripts.

The Corpus

The corpus is a selection of textual materials on a certain research topic. With CDA, because of the depth of the qualitative analysis, the researcher can conduct a robust analysis without covering every single word or document on the subject (Fairclough, 1996, 2003). The selected corpus here represents a synchronic corpus, a selection of language from a common time point rather than a diachronic, a selection taking a historical or multi-temporal view (Baker, 2010; Mautner, 2016). As the J2SR framework is the latest overarching framework for USAID, it is appropriate to take a contemporary and temporally-singular view. I selected texts from USAID's J2SR website (2019b) by systematically reviewing each section to make my textual selection. I also selected the two Requests for Applications (RFAs) associated with the innovation labs from the two land-grant focus group cases. Each text of the corpus is listed in Table 2. I analyzed a chain of texts across the entire program cycle from project design, solicitation, implementation, learning, to the close of the program cycle when self-reliance is reached.

On USAID's The Journey to Self-Reliance website, there are nine paragraphs each with linked content. The first paragraph provides an overview of the J2SR framework and links to the J2SR policy framework page and the full policy on ending the need for foreign assistance, the

U.S' national security strategy, and the Department of State and USAID joint strategic plan. From this paragraph, I chose the policy framework "Ending the Need for Foreign Assistance" as it is the policy on The Journey to Self-Reliance, and the other two documents were broader than this research focus. The next paragraph addresses the country roadmaps, an interactive web-based dashboard of quantitative measures on each country. The dashboard is not a textual artifact so I excluded it from the study. The next paragraph addresses the program cycle and includes links to the USAID Learning Lab program cycle, country development strategies for all countries within which USAID works, and a fact sheet addressing how the J2SR can be incorporated into the project design. I chose the fact sheet because it addressed project design, and is specifically focused on the J2SR whereas the other two resources are broader in scope. The next paragraph links to the page on the Self-Reliance Learning Agenda (SRLA), which focuses specifically on learning, monitoring, and evaluation (LM&E). On the SRLA page, a fact sheet including frequently asked questions is prominently listed and I selected this because it represented a new genre.

The next three paragraphs address financing self-reliance, the private sector engagement, and redefining relationships with governments. Both the financing paragraph and the redefining paragraph are linked to one fact sheet, respectively, so I included both of these. The private sector engagement paragraph links to a page with many resources including an executive summary of the private sector engagement policy, the full private sector engagement policy, a press release, frequently asked questions, a PDF explaining why USAID is engaging with the private sector, and a page explaining the Better Utilization of Investments Leading to Development (BUILD) act of 2018. Although the full private sector engagement policy is

featured prominently on the page, I chose to include the executive summary because it is an additional genre and it helped manage the scope of the corpus.

Table 2

Texts Included in the Corpus

Document Title	Genre	Date of text	# of words in the text	# of Pages	Source
How the Journey to Self-Reliance is Changing the way USAID works	Blog Post	March 23, 2020	720	6	USAID's J2SR blog linked on J2SR page
Integrating the Journey to Self-Reliance into Project Design	Fact Sheet	April 2019	613	2	USAID's J2SR Page
Strategic Transitions	Fact Sheet	Feb 2020	501	2	USAID's J2SR Page
Transforming our Programs: Redefining our Relationship with Partner Governments	Fact Sheet	Feb 2020	502	2	USAID's J2SR Page
Self-Reliance Learning Agenda Evidence to Support to Journey to Self-Reliance	Fact Sheet & FAQ	September 14, 2020	1,709	7	USAID's J2SR Page
USAID Policy Framework: Ending the Need for Foreign Assistance	Policy	April 10, 2019	25,406	64	USAID's J2SR Page
Private Sector Engagement Policy Executive Summary	Executive Summary	December 12, 2018	1,920	4	USAID's J2SR Page
Request for Application: Feed the Future Innovation Lab for Food Security Policy Research, Capacity, and Influence	Request for Application	September 19, 2018	26,007	78	Google
Request for Application: Feed the Future Innovation Lab for Markets, Risk, and Resilience	Request for Application	April 10, 2019	21,780	58	Google

The remaining two paragraphs on the J2SR webpage address strategic transitions with one link and USAID partnerships. The only document for strategic transitions is a fact sheet, which I included since it represents the goal of the policy framework. The partnership text links to a related yet distinct program called the New Partnerships Initiative (NPI). I deemed this outside the scope of this project because it is a separate initiative with a dedicated website and a large number of associate resources (United States Agency for International Development, 2020). At the bottom of the page, USAID links to its blog page entitled "how the Journey to Self-Reliance is changing the way USAID works." I included this as it represents an additional genre not yet sampled. The final textual artifacts are the requests for applications (RFA) for the Innovation Labs with whom I conducted focus groups. I found these documents by searching for the RFAs using Google.

I held two exploratory conversations with the Associate Director of the MRR IL at UC Davis and the Director of the PRCI Innovation Lab at Michigan State University (MSU) as I developed this research. In so doing, I explained my research ideas and anticipated methodology. I also asked two formative questions. The first was which USAID texts they drew upon for their Innovation Lab proposals and the second was which actors in their organization were thought leaders who read and interpret the USAID texts. From this conversation, the co-director at MSU indicated they drew heavily from the RFA but could not recall other texts. They also indicated how actors beyond the IL org chart contributed to the proposal and likely read other USAID texts beyond the RFA. From this conversation, it became clear I needed to expand my focus group to the entire MSU food security group rather than the IL alone. I subsequently held a conversation with the co-director of the Food Security Group at MSU (the other co-director is the PRCI IL director).

The Associate Director of the MRR IL indicated they drew from the RFA and other texts regarding education and markets. I inquired after the specific texts from the Associate Director at UCDavis but never received a response. They indicated the management entity staff regularly read the USAID texts, but that many of the affiliated researchers failed to incorporate USAID's J2SR framework into their research proposals and reports. It thus became the responsibility of the management entity team to support the researchers in translating their inquiry into the J2SR narrative. Even though many of the researchers may not draw heavily from USAID's texts, I was told by the Associate Director that the younger investigators have sought to understand and use the J2SR framework. Furthermore, with the praxis focus, it is important to include international development practitioners regardless of their depth of knowledge about J2SR as the focus group itself is a form of capacity building.

In summary, the texts I selected reach across the framework's key components by including a textual artifact across the project cycle. Furthermore, by including the full policy on ending foreign assistance as well as two full-length RFAs, I ensured depth in the analysis. When faced with a decision concerning multiple documents as in the case of the private sector, I chose the executive summary rather than the full policy to add an additional genre to the corpus. Finally, I chose the two RFAs because they are the documents that members of the two innovation labs read, interpreted, and wrote towards to win the USAID grants.

The Cases

This research sought to understand the agroecological possibilities and material implications of USAID's self-reliance discourse for international food security development praxis at land-grant universities. To address these questions, using dimensional sampling I selected the two cases of Michigan State University and the University of California, Davis (both

1862s institutions). This is similar to how Collins (2012) identified two universities in his investigation of international development capacity building by land-grants. Dimensional sampling enables a researcher to identify only a few cases based on pre-existing criteria and a theoretical framework that is of importance to the research (Arnold, 1970).

The criterion of most interest to this inquiry was first and foremost, land-grant universities. The second was land-grant universities that lead USAID-funded Innovation Labs of which there are 13 universities, 12 of whom are land-grants (see Table 6 in Appendix A). The third criterion was that the ILs must have been competitively awarded following the Journey to Self-Reliance released in 2018 to identify universities that responded to an RFA issued by USAID. Seven ILs fit this criterion, MSU's Food Security Policy Research, Capacity, and Influence (PRCI), the University of California Davis' Markets, Risk, and Resilience (MRR), Washington State University's (WSU) Animal Health, Purdue University's Food Safety, Cornell University's Crop Improvement, Mississippi State University's Fish, and MSU's Legume Systems Research.

The final criterion was that the subject matter focus of the ILs needed to focus broadly on agriculture and the entire food system given my focus on agroecology. WSU's project is housed in its School for Animal Health, and the focus of the project is to mitigate livestock disease (Washington State University, 2020). This eliminated WSU's Animal Health Innovation Lab as it was not focused on the food system. Purdue's food safety lab seeks to reduce foodborne illness, contribute to economic development, and build public-private partnerships (Purdue University, 2020). Cornell's Crop Improvement IL works on genetic crop improvements (Cornell University, 2020). Mississippi State University's IL focuses specifically on aquaculture and fisheries (Mississippi State University, 2020). Michigan State University's Legume Systems

Research focuses on cowpea and common bean as staple crops. Given the specificity of the Food Safety IL, the Crop Improvement IL, the Fish IL, and the Legume Systems Research IL I excluded all four. Thus, the PRCI at MSU and the MRR at UCDavis were the selected cases.

The University of California, Davis is the sixth-best agricultural university in the world, and second in the United States (U.S. News & World Report, 2020). Their Markets, Risk, and Resilience IL is built on similar USAID-funded research dating back to 1996 (University of California Davis, 2020). Their project is structured with what is known as a management entity which is visualized in Figure 5 in Appendix F. This means that there is a core staff at UCDavis to provide administrative support, but the majority of the project funds are allocated via sub-awards to researchers at other universities or research institutions. UCDavis has accountability to USAID for these projects as they serve as the lead for the project. Given this, while the population from which to sample does not work directly for UCDavis, the projects on which they work are overseen by UCDavis. Thus, since UCDavis is ultimately accountable to USAID, and these actors are funded by a UCDavis subaward, I conceptualize the other researchers as under their umbrella.

Michigan State University is the seventh-best agricultural university in the United States and ranked 22nd globally (U.S. News & World Report, 2020). Their Food Security Group (FSG) is a group of faculty and graduate students from the Department of Agricultural, Food, and Resource Economics and other academic departments (visualized in Figure 4 in Appendix F). Their mission statement is that “good food and nutrition policy, informed by solid empirical evidence that is generated jointly with local partners, can transform economics and lives in low-income countries” (Michigan State University, n.d.).

A project of the FSG, PRCI works to build the capacity of targeted localities towards a "sustainable, inclusive, and healthy agrifood system" (Michigan State University, 2020). In 2019, the new PRCI lab was awarded for five years to expand on the previous lab. The new lab focuses on building capacity to influence country-level policymaking that improves food security in both rural and urban settings (Michigan State University, 2020). This makes it an interesting case from which to study the effects of USAID policy. The PRCI project is organized using a consortium model in which MSU, Cornell University, The International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI), the Regional Network of Agricultural Policy Research Institutes (ReNAPRI), and the Institute for Statistical, Social, and Economic Research – Ghana (ISSER) advance the research of the IL rather than compete for sub-awards as part of the IL program. I sampled The Food Security Group population from MSU which includes the PRCI staff. I chose to study the entire Food Security Group rather than just the innovation lab because as previously mentioned, in an exploratory conversation with the director of the project, he indicated other members of the FSG were involved in the proposal writing. My recruitment email was also sent to those who focus on agriculture under MSU's Alliance for African Partnership because this group of faculty focuses on international development.

Focus Groups. Fairclough (2003) urges a combination of CDA and interviews or focus groups to capture individuals' interpretations of discourse. Focus groups are facilitated discussions among participants and the facilitator based on an established topic set by the researcher, and as a result, the interactions between participants enable a richer account of the phenomenon as individuals respond to one another through agreement, disagreement, or elaboration (Wilkinson, 1998). Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, I conducted all focus groups remotely using Zoom, a video meeting platform. The focus groups occurred synchronously

enabling the group to have conversations together. The recommended size for video focus groups is for how many people can appear on one screen (Lobe, 2017). Zoom gallery view allows for 25 participants to appear at once, but the ideal size of a productive focus group is a maximum of eight participants (Krueger & Casey, 2014). Thus, I capped focus groups at eight participants maximum.

For the focus groups, I used an open-ended and semi-structured question guide (see appendix C), which allowed for more conversation among the participants (Longhurst, 2003). I began the focus groups by asking participants for their overall views of the self-reliance framework. Following, I presented a brief presentation on the CDA findings. After the presentation, I asked the participants for their views of the analysis as well as the implications of the self-reliance framework for agroecology and their work. By placing the CDA in conversation with the participants, I aimed for it to serve as a reflective prompt towards critical praxis. The combination of CDA and focus groups also served a triangulating function. Triangulation can occur as focus group transcripts are put alongside other data collection methods such as document analysis or as a two-step process of triangulation in which participants respond to findings from an earlier or previous data collection method such as interviews (Caillaud & Flick, 2017).

Sampling and Recruitment. I employed purposive sampling as the participants were invited to participate by nature of their affiliations with MSU or UCDavis. Purposive sampling is helpful when investigating exemplary cases as they offer rich amounts of information to be studied (Patton, 2002). From MSU, the director of the Food Security Group (FSG) and the Global Center for Food Systems Innovation (GCFSI) and the co-director of the Alliance for African Partnership (AAP) both contacted their listservs with the focus group invitation. The

AAP co-director edited their listserv to include only those working on issues of international development and food security. I subsequently sent two reminder emails to all individuals listed on the FSG and PRCI websites. The population of the FSG, PRCI, GCFSI is 50 individuals. I could not remind those affiliated with the AAP group because their information was not publicly available. The MRR IL at UC Davis lists four independent groups on its website: management team (n = 5), advisory board (n = 5), principal investigators (n = 126), and researchers (n = 25). I excluded those for whom no email was publicly available or those working at USAID. I then sent the list to the Associate Director who removed some individuals who were not meaningfully involved in the last 10-years, or who had died. In total, I invited 104 individuals to participate.

Participants. The recruitment efforts yielded a total of 14 participants. Eight employed by MSU and six affiliated with the UC Davis MRR project. From those affiliated with UC Davis, three are employed by a land-grant university, one at a private U.S. university, one from a university in Ghana, and one from a university in Kenya. Across the entire sample, nine participants identified themselves as economists with varying degrees of involvement in project work ranging from project directorship to leading a sub-award. One participant was a deputy director for international development projects, but indicated they would transition shortly to faculty of Community Sustainability; another is the Dean of a public policy program. Three participants identified themselves as project management professionals without academic appointments. Participants' perceived exposure levels ranged from low to high, with some individuals indicating little exposure to the J2SR policy before the focus group. Three individuals left the focus group 30-minutes early, and I sent the remaining questions to them by email. One person responded by email and another participated in a 30-minute Zoom follow-up.

Data Analysis

This section details the protocol for analyzing self-reliance in USAID texts and its impacts on Innovation Labs. I employed analytical questions that correspond to each research question as they helped link my theoretical framework, methodology, and analysis. Appendix A illustrates this alignment. The analysis began with Critical Discourse Analysis, peppering in Corpus Linguistics when appropriate. Corpus linguistics is an approach to analyzing large amounts of text quantitatively by determining patterns of word use (Paterson & Gregory, 2019). It is not a methodology to be used alone as Fairclough (2003) encouraged it to be combined with Critical Discourse Analysis which is the second step for corpus analysis.

The CDA focused on the vocabulary used to describe self-reliance, modality to determine the strength of verbs as an extension of discursive power, and evaluation by way of positive or negative terms or phrases intended to convey concepts as common sense. I analyzed the focus group transcripts inductively and in two cycles. For the first, I used in vivo coding and the second I used values and evaluative coding. In vivo coding is helpful as it centers on the words of the participants. Values coding helps to parse out participants' beliefs and actions whereas evaluative coding help determine what is or is not working (Saldaña, 2013).

Critical Discourse Analysis – The Corpus

Based on the statements coded for my keywords, I further coded the sentences for Fairclough's framework of evaluation which enables the researcher to determine embedded values or assumptions. This can be done by analyzing the use of positive or negative terms (Fairclough, 2003). For the next level of analysis, I determined the modality of the discourse, which is made manifest in two ways. The first is deontic modality which asserts that which needs or should happen. The second is epistemic modality which consists of truth or predictive

statements about what will happen (Fairclough, 2003). Fairclough's modality work is informed by the linguistics of Halliday from whom I incorporated their schema for modal language into my codebook (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2014). All of these features can be found in the codebook and a priori table (see Appendix E and B respectively).

The analyses described thus far focus predominantly on textual analysis, but the beauty of Fairclough's three-level model of discourse is that it demonstrates a permeability between the boundaries of the three levels. This is to say the features and analysis of the textual layer influence and speak to the discursive practice layer (Fairclough, 1992). The discursive practice layer focuses on features such as interdiscursivity, including which discourses are drawn upon by the texts. It is here that I looked at the vocabulary used, the way it was expressed modally, and the underlying assumptions and values expressed through evaluation to determine which discourses are present in representing self-reliance and which discourses are notably absent. As Luke (1995) asserted, representation in discourse is a site of power contestation. Thus, what is present and what is omitted represents possible claims to power through ideological reproduction. In chapter two, I reviewed the discursive traditions and counter-pressures on our globalized food system. These contestations become indicators of power, control, and ideology. With regards to self-reliance and sustainable development, I investigate the discursive tensions. Critically, I sought to determine whether these were framed in the neoliberal tradition of individualized responsibility which argues that life is best ensured through free-market approaches void of governmental social nets and regulation, or language representing a community-oriented model claiming governmental support must be increased as self-reliance is an unachievable myth (Duffield, 2007a; Hébert & Mincyte, 2014; Joseph, 2018).

Once I identified the vocabularies related to self-reliance using CDA, I turned to corpus linguistics for data triangulation. Corpus linguistics (CL) enables quantitative analysis of a large body of text by identifying the frequencies of individual words, the collocation of two words next to one another, the distribution of words across various texts, and concordance indicating the words collocated in a string on either side of a search word (Paterson & Gregory, 2019). Corpus linguistics is also useful for warding off critiques that CDA "cherry picks" results (Mautner, 2016). The CL analysis used #lancsbox, a free software developed by Lancaster University researchers that allows for the identification of word frequencies, for frequencies to be compared to reference dictionaries to identify keywords, to identify collocations with varying thresholds of statistics, distance, and type of words, and ngrams which indicate the frequencies of commonly associated words to certain degrees (such as feed the future with three ngrams, or private sector with two ngrams (Brezina et al., 2015, 2020).

To run corpus linguistics, the texts must be in a computer-readable format such as a .txt file. In their native state, each textual artifact within the corpus is in PDF form therefore I converted each file to a text file. Following conversion, I reviewed each document to ensure that the conversion proceeded accurately and I corrected any errors by referring to the native PDFs. I omitted all images, graphics, and any other non-textual feature at this stage. Subsequently, I used the words function in #lancsbox to find word frequencies and corpus interdiscursivity for the keywords across the entire corpus (Brezina et al., 2020). I exported the data to excel and filtered it according to keyword variances (for example local, locally, and locally-based). I used the ngrams feature to attend to the frequencies associated with the private sector and sustainability. Through the use of the wildcard function, I could attend to all variances of words using their roots such as "sustain*."

Coding – Focus Group Transcripts

I transcribed the recordings of the focus groups using the software otter.ai (Otter.ai, 2020). I gave all participants pseudonyms to protect anonymity. I then imported transcripts into atlas.ti for qualitative analysis. I coded in multiple cycles going line by line. I began with evaluative coding and in vivo coding at the same time. As patterns emerged, I created memos for each possible theme detailing what I observed and linking the various statements. When memoing revealed specific themes, I created corresponding codes. I went through the transcripts line-by-line. In so doing, I identified codes based on participants' responses. When I reached the end of the transcripts, I returned to the beginning to reanalyze the statements using any new codes. I continued this process until I identified no new codes, and I had analyzed all statements against the existing codes (Saldaña, 2013).

My coding choices sit at the crossroads of my constructivist and critical ontologies. Firstly, realities vary according to each individual's lived experience. For these reasons, I used in vivo coding which uses the words of the participants to craft the individual codes rather than solely from theory or my views (Saldaña, 2013). That being said, Saldana (2013) cautions against only using in vivo coding as it can hinder the ability to connect to larger theoretical constructions. To this, I incorporated a bit of flexibility and hybridity to use primarily in vivo but to not be too rigid as to restrict possible theoretical extensions. In vivo coding, I used evaluation coding to determine the perceptions of the policies on the participants in terms of positives, negatives, or a mixture. Saldana (2013) offered that participant commentary can be a fruitful place for evaluation coding. One example for evaluation coding is to use a plus sign or minus sign to indicate what is or is not working.

Trustworthiness

To maintain quality in this research, I employed Lincoln and Guba's (1985) guide to trustworthiness including credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. For credibility, I employed data triangulation by combining corpus linguistics and CDA. Additionally, by asking the focus group participants to respond to the CDA methodology which included many direct quotations from the corpus, I ensured an additional layer of data triangulation. For transferability, I used thick description by including long and raw quotations from the data. I also explicitly outlined my methodological steps so another researcher could replicate them. I maintained dependability through the use of overlapping methods evidenced by the combination of CDA and corpus linguistics, and CDA and focus groups. Moreover, I reviewed the findings of this research on a regular basis with my chair and my committee. Finally, I established confirmability with constant memoing in atlas.ti as I established themes, and through the record keeping in a notebook to document when codes were established to ensure I returned to statements coded prior to those new codes to evaluate them against the new additions.

Limitations

This research was limited by the fact that it focused on two cases represented as international food security development endeavors at two land-grant universities. In this regard, the inquiry purpose was not to generalize to all land-grant universities. Instead, I hoped to elucidate opportunities for future investigations as a goal by illustrating future research directions that may sample more universities or include other populations. A second limitation is the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. The global pandemic prevented my travel to the universities from

which I collected data. This limited the time of engagement I as a researcher could have with participants since I could only collect data via Zoom rather than in person.

Another limitation of this study is the span of the synchronic policy texts. For instance, the PRCI RFA was released first and other policy texts were subsequently released, so it is conceivable that participants have not read everything I analyzed. One of the methods to control for this is through the presentation of key findings from the Critical Discourse Analysis. Another limitation is that the methodology only asked participants to respond to the analysis as compared to observing their praxis. In an ideal world, I would have been able to conduct institutional ethnographic work by spending a significant amount of time observing their praxis in the field. With the COVID-19 pandemic and the scope of a doctoral dissertation, this was just not possible.

Critical Discourse Analysis is not without its critics. For example, one limitation is the steep learning curve for those who do not come from a linguistics background (Lin, 2014). One of the ways I tackled this was to conduct two pilot studies using CDA, one for a class project and a second for a fellowship from which I published one article. Another critique is that CDA lacks practical application. According to Jacobs (2006) awareness of the method's ability to illustrate the influence statements hold on the social world is increasingly helping to connect it to practice. CDA has been challenged for the possibility of cherry-picking results (Mautner, 2016). To ward against this particular possibility, I employed corpus linguistics alongside focus groups to triangulate research and ground it in practical implications.

Lastly, a limitation was a lower than expected sample in the focus groups. With this in mind, the goal of this research was to focus on localized discourse and praxis rather than to generalize to an entire population. While I would have liked the sample size to be larger, the data yielded from them was sufficient to draw conclusion.

Conclusion

This chapter reviewed how I conducted my research, and why I made the decisions I did. I provided how my paradigm aligns with both constructivist and critical traditions, and I offered how the critical views layer on top of constructivist as in my analysis. These elements are woven throughout my methodology such as the decision to use in vivo codes to ensure participant voices are heard. I reviewed my analytical framework and how my research questions and theoretical framework weave together. The research design offered the specific texts in my corpus and cases for focus groups outlining why I chose each respectively. I also discussed how I analyzed the corpus beginning with the exploratory corpus linguistics and continuing with Critical Discourse Analysis. The multiple steps for my focus group coding indicated a sequential and iterative process designed to achieve coding salience. Finally, I reviewed the limitations of the study. In the next chapter, I discuss the findings from this research organized by my three operational research questions that defined my inquiry.

CHAPTER 5: FINDINGS

In this chapter, I present results organized according to my three operational research questions to address the overarching question: in the context of USAID's "The Journey to Self-Reliance," how, if at all, do land-grant universities play a role in constructing the discourse of self-reliance in the domain of international food security development? The first research question asked: how is self-reliance represented in the corpus of the Journey to Self-Reliance between 2018-2020? To address this, I describe the textual construction of self-reliance including the constructs and partners attributed to self-reliance. Subsequently, I demonstrate how the textual features of evaluation and positive support the crafting of self-reliance as a "truism" that may insulate its definition from contestation. Moreover, the discursive practice of self-reliance reflects a neoliberal focus comprised of an anti-welfare sentiment focused on ending aid and market-led development view. I then discuss the participatory paradigm present in the corpus, offering how the simultaneous focus on locally-led and private sector-led development represents competing tensions.

The second research question asked, how if it all does the discourse of self-reliance reflect agroecological possibilities for land-grant universities? This question speaks to the discursive practice, and I derived findings from both CDA and the focus groups with land-grant actors. I present both CDA and focus group findings together for agroecological possibilities, and organized findings according to the various frames by Anderson et al., (2021). Opportunities for agroecology include the focus on local leadership and knowledge, social inclusivity, holism, and support for smallholder farmers. Challenges include inclusivity as connecting marginalized actors to technology and inputs, a primary focus on market-based development and economic growth, sustainability as a tool of economic growth, technology as a key for climate mitigation,

and a focus on increased productivity. I include a final theme derived from the focus groups only indicating participants' perception that agroecology encompasses a lot in its agenda. Moreover, participants questioned whether agroecology in its purest sense is realistic or whether it is necessary to advance agroecology alongside biotechnology and synthetic inputs? This represents a key finding that agroecology is rife with epistemic tensions and complexity that may constitute a contest of competing imaginaries between the dominant productionist frame and agroecology's alternative.

The third research question asked what are the material implications on land-grants' international food security development praxis? This question addressed the discursive and social practice levels, and themes arose from the focus groups exclusively. The first theme was that the J2SR is a complex, broad, mutable, and political vision. The second theme was that the J2SR has, in part, shifted participation and research agenda setting to some principal investigators (PIs) in the Global South.

Research Question 1: Textual and Discursive Practice of Self-Reliance

As a tool for analyzing policy, CDA helps illustrate how discursive representations can capture the tenor of a social, cultural, political, and economic time. By illustrating how ideas, objects, and people are represented, and in some cases omitted, CDA can illuminate how policy texts, ideas, understanding, and action are imbricated (Fairclough, 2013). This first major section tackles the first research question, which asked how self-reliance was represented in the corpus of the J2SR between 2018-2020. Analytically, this question sought to address: 1) what vocabularies are used when referencing self-reliance, 2) what values or assumptions are subsumed in the corresponding statements; what modalities were most frequently reflected, and 3) and how are actors variously positioned? I start by providing the vocabularies used when

referencing self-reliance to illustrate the constructs and partner actors attributed to self-reliance (Table 3). Subsequently, I discuss how evaluation and modality indicate embedded ideologies, specifically, neoliberalism and a participatory paradigm. In so doing, I seek to illustrate the tensions reflected in the corpus. Using Pretty's (1995) typology alongside Fairclough's (2003) tools, I conceptualized both private sector and local actors as differentially powerful.

Constructs of Self-Reliance

This section examines the particular vocabularies used by USAID to present self-reliance. I begin by analyzing how self-reliance and independence are synonymously presented. I then contextualize self-reliance as locally and private sector-led, sustainable, and inclusive. I display each of these vocabularies in Table 3 alongside their frequency and their interdiscursivity (the # of the texts in which they appear). As mentioned in the methodology, I first coded statements related to self-reliance constructs and partners. Subsequently, for those codes, I identified frequencies using the #Lancsbox's words function, n-grams (for compound words like private sector), and I calculated interdiscursivity using the KWIC function (Brezina et al., 2015, 2020). I included self-reliance as a keyword to provide a comparison point.

In the blog post on "how the journey to self-reliance is changing the way USAID works," USAID articulates its purpose as "ending the need for foreign assistance in a given country – that is, making the country more self-reliant" (p. 2). In the opening message of the full length-policy framework, the Former USAID administrator links self-reliance and independence in the observation that, "everyone, everywhere, aspires to be independent – to be self-reliant" (p. 5). Later in the same policy, USAID's vision states:

> USAID defines self-reliance as **the capacity to plan, finance, and implement solutions to local development challenges, as well as the commitment to see these through**

> **effectively, inclusively, and with accountability** *[sic]*. This definition grounds an approach to foreign assistance that reflects both the evidence we have gathered and the values that underpin our work. As countries gain greater self-reliance, they are able to chart their own development paths and navigate any obstacles along the way (p. 9)

This example links capacity, commitment, and a country's own management and leadership over their development.

Table 3 Representation of Self-Reliance Vocabulary, Frequency, and Corpus Interdiscursivity.

Representation of Self-Reliance Vocabulary, Frequency, and Corpus Interdiscursivity.

Vocabulary	Frequency	Interdiscursivity
Academic, academia, and research institutions[1]	6	3/9
Accountable and accountability	43	8/9
Capacity, capacity-building, capacity-strengthening, and capacity strengthening	297	8/9
Civil Society	40	6/9
Commitment	109	7/9
Democratic, democratically, democracy, and democracies	45	1/9[2]
Effective, effectively, effectiveness, and more-effective	151	7/9
Government, Governments	152	8/9
Inclusive, inclusively, and inclusivity	71	7/9
Local[3], local/regional, locally, local-levels, locally-based, and locally-driven	184	7/9
Private sector(s), private capital, private enterprise(s), private firms, private institutions, private investment, private solutions, and private-sector	143	8/9
Self-reliance, self-reliant, independent, and independence	254[4]	9/9[5]
Sustainable, sustained, sustainability, sustainably, sustain, sustaining, and more-sustainable	137	5/9

[1] University or university appeared 68 times across 3 texts. All references to university in the policy framework were footnote citations, and mentions in the RFAs address U.S. universities applying to the ILs. Both RFAs identified research institutions as partners with whom U.S. universities should work.
[2] The word "democratic" appears in 2/9 texts, but in reference to "the Democratic Republic of Congo" so I excluded it because it was not a reference to the type of governance, and instead a proper noun.
[3] One incidence of local was typed as "localgovernment" without the proper space.
[4] 3 of these frequencies were attributed to independence or independent.
[5] I only observed the linkage of the term independence with self-reliance in the "Ending Foreign Assistance" Policy.

Intertextuality and interdiscursivity are discursive commitments to something said elsewhere, whether through exact language or by references (Fairclough, 2003). The genres of blogs and policy frameworks are references for self-reliance that can cue future references albeit with different audiences. Blog posts by nature are intended for a wider and quicker read, hitting key points quickly. A full-length policy is something one would need to seek out intentionally, and its length makes it more of an intentional investment. Both the blog post and the policy replicate the exact language referenced above related to defining self-reliance as capacity and commitment with the associated conditions related to financing, effectiveness, inclusivity, and accountability.

Continuing with interdiscursivity, both RFAs include one mention each of self-reliance indicating in each how they contribute towards this vision. For the PRCI IL, the reference links to USAID's J2SR website, and textually the contribution to J2SR is described as "helping the capacity of local policy makers and policy influencers to be more evidence-driven" (p. 6). For the MRR RFA, there is no link, only a reference to say that the project will make "contributions toward strengthening the capacity and commitment of countries on their journeys to self-reliance" (p. 22). In this vein, the readers of both RFAs are invited to dive deeper into the other texts by nature of their references. Moreover, the interdiscursivity positions the ideas embedded in the RFAs within the discursive boundary of "The Journey to Self-Reliance" because the activities of the IL contribute towards USAID's goal.

Commitment and capacity to become self-reliant are also conceptualized as sustainable in the policy framework:

> Commitment and capacity across government, civil society, the economy, and the population have helped countries solve three fundamental problems: how to increase

> productivity and sustainably expand goods and services; how to distribute these goods and services widely and raise people's standard of living; and how to make decisions collectively about using shared resources fairly and legitimately while protecting people's freedom (p. 28)

In this example, we see the focus on sustainable production alongside the earlier sentiment of inclusion where not only is sustainability required, but these resources also need to be inclusively and democratically distributed. Across the corpus, sustainability takes three forms, environmental, project-based, and economic. For example, the policy framework combines all three forms in this excerpt:

> Given the complexity of today's challenges, we must work each day to deliver enduring development outcomes —from healthier families to safer communities, from sustainably managed environments and food systems to markets that generate better employment, and, ultimately, to countrywide self-reliance (p. 21).

As I mentioned above, sustainable can take many forms depending on the words that are collocated. I ran a collocation analysis in #Lancsbox to identify frequencies of words built off of the root of sustain (Brezina et al., 2020). I used a setting of two words span, and the wild card setting to capture all derivations of sustain, sustainable, sustainably, etc. For Table 4, I set the frequency threshold to three to reduce noise, but I include the full table in Appendix I as a reference. I chose a span of two nodes to account for terms such as the above, "sustainably managed environments." Table 4 visualizes the frequencies of these terms, excluding all function words such as "and", "of", "the", "from"," and "in".

Table 4

*Collocates of Sustain**

Collocated Word (Span of 2)	Frequency
growth	16
results	14
economic	12
development	9
USAID	5
agriculture-led	4
country's	4
high quality	4
poverty	4
countries	3
escapes	3
gains	3
goals	3
management	3
natural resources	3
outcomes	3
pathways	3
resilient	3

The above table illustrates that related to sustainability, growth, results[6], and economics are very common with development closely behind. All others, such as those attributed to agriculture-led or natural resources are at a maximum observed at one quarter the rate.

An additional condition USAID prescribes to self-reliance is the idea of inclusivity across social, political, and economic metrics. I visualized the collocates of inclusive* in Table 5 using the same methodology as that for sustainability. The policy framework paints inclusivity in broad strokes, "countries that have increased self-reliance have shown a commitment to inclusive

[6] Sustainable results are a focus in the Self-Reliance Learning Agenda fact sheet's FAQ. In the table of questions, "sustaining results" is a category under which USAID asks the following questions, "In fostering self-reliance, how can we use influence, knowledge, and convening power to complement projectized support? How can local, sub-national, national, and regional voices, priorities, and contributions be integrated into how USAID fosters self-reliance? How can we engage local and other relevant systems such that they become more self-reliant and sustain results? How can we best measure USAID's specific contribution to countries' progress on the Journey to Self-Reliance at the local, sub-national, national, and regional levels?" (p. 4).

solutions that lead to inclusive development" (p. 9). Then, the policy specifies inclusivity as social, "self-reliant systems are also inclusive. Open to a wide array of individuals and groups, especially women, youth, and marginalized or vulnerable populations, these systems benefit when all individuals participate in them" (p. 26). Finally, in the private sector executive summary, USAID connects inclusivity to economic growth, "USAID can help create a stronger enabling environment that fosters transparent, inclusive economic growth" (p. 3)[7].

Table 5
*Collocates of Inclusiv**

Collocated Word (Span of 2)	Frequency
development	17
growth	14
approaches	8
peace	8
economic	7
effectively	6
solutions	6
accountable	5
commitment	5
effective	5
Washington	5
rural	4
sustainable	4
agricultural	3
security	3

[7] Other examples of inclusive development include this mention in the private sector engagement executive summary, "the private sector's ability to deliver what host-country governments seek to achieve—such as improved service-delivery, investment, tax revenues, jobs, and life-saving interventions—gives businesses and investors a strong, knowledgeable voice to inform policy that supports transparent, inclusive economic growth" (p. 3)
In the MRR RFA, inclusive markets are articulated as a priority, "the four principal areas of inquiry will be 1) Making Markets Work for All" (p. 48). Another example from the policy framework includes, "strategic USAID investments can support country partners more effectively in overcoming barriers to sustainable economic growth, inclusive development" (p. 21).

As the above table illustrates, in terms of inclusivity the most common collocates are development and growth whereas those connected to sustainability and agriculture are far less common indicating a focus on both development and economic growth.

Partners of Self-Reliance

In terms of partners, the policy framework highlights private sector partnerships. For example, "to sustain results, USAID will: Reimagine our partnerships. Diversify our partners. Actively engage the private sector. Diversify our partnership models and expand the nature of partnership" (p. 11). Later the policy elaborates by bringing in government and civil society "to realize its vision – to take seriously a pledge to work with the government, civil society, and the private sector in countries to move toward a day when they can meet their own development objectives without foreign assistance…" (p. 52). Of note, is that academia is not included in the above, and Fairclough (2003) reminds us that the exclusion of certain ideas or actors can indicate who or what is valued.

A prevailing theme in the idea of self-reliance is the importance of locally-led development, as the fact sheet on redefining USAID's relationship with partner governments indicates, "the Agency's self-reliance theory of change posits that partner country commitment and capacity to manage their own development are mutually reinforcing elements of overall self-reliance" (p. 1). The focus on locally-led and locally-resourced development is repeated throughout the corpus bringing forward the goal articulated in the strategic transitions fact sheet, for countries to reach "an advanced level of self-reliance" and become "a long-term economic, diplomatic, and security partner" (p. 1). In the policy framework, this reflects moving from "recipient partners to, one day, fellow donors" (p. 8).

The final element of self-reliance is its conceptualization with the private sector and market-based approaches. Of note, USAID created an entire policy framework for engaging with the private sector of which this research analyzed the executive summary. The only other partner to receive the attention of its own document are partner governments in a two-page document seeking to redefine governmental relations which focuses on government capacity and commitment. Other partners such as civil society, local communities, or academia do not receive targeted guidance for their engagement within the J2SR. Fairclough (2003) suggested that inclusion and exclusion within discourse reflect the power of the author to construct a social picture of what is more or less relevant. In the case of the J2SR, the policy framework presents the private sector as essential. For instance, "there is no area of USAID's work in which the private sector does not play an essential role" (p. 40)[8]. Additionally, the private sector executive summary indicates, "this policy signals an intentional shift to pursue market-based approaches and investment as a means to accelerate countries' progress on the Journey to Self-Reliance" (p.

[8] In total, there are 86 mentions of the private sector across the corpus. Controlling for the private sector executive summary (to prevent the document's ability to skew), yields a total of 61 results. Neither of these frequencies included private sector synonyms visualized in Table 3. Additional examples on the corpus' focus on the private sector include, "the private sector's ability to deliver what host-country governments seek to achieve—such as improved service-delivery, investment, tax revenues, jobs, and life-saving interventions—gives businesses and investors a strong, knowledgeable voice to inform policy that supports transparent, inclusive economic growth" (private sector engagement executive summary, p. 3). USAID sometimes refers to the private sector with other partners, "USAID's role in this new partnership matures from a largely technical and financial partner, to a convener that mobilizes U.S. Government agencies, the private sector, and civil society to sustain the country's advanced level of self-reliance and promote its long-term prosperity" (strategic transitions fact sheet, p. 2). Other times, they are referenced alone as the blog indicates, "private sector engagement deepens our collaboration with private-sector partners across all areas of our work, and helps ensure long-term, sustainable outcomes (p. 4). In the MRR RFA, "agricultural SMEs are critical conduits that can transform agriculture from a survival strategy into a viable, enterprising livelihood. Channeling private sector capital to small and growing agricultural businesses provides an opportunity to expand operational capacities and to dramatically increase food production and security" (p. 14), and again "the technical approach should describe approaches to work collaboratively with local actors, explicitly including the private sector" (p. 43-44). In the PRCI RFA, improving research agendas via partnerships was operationalized as "deliberately identifying and engaging with key stakeholders – such as such as parliamentarians and other policy makers, senior and mid-level policy analysts in governments, journalists, advocacy groups, civil society, and private sector associations, among others--who influence the policy debate" (p. 13). One final example, was in the Self-Reliance Learning Agenda Fact Sheet which asks in the FAQ section, "how can private sector engagement (PSE) support countries in advancing on the Journey to Self-Reliance?" (p. 4).

2). The integrating self-reliance into project design fact sheet illustrates how USAID views the private sector and the incorporation of market mechanisms as key to self-reliance:

> What is unique about the self-reliance vision is that it changes the nature of our partnerships by identifying the strategic partners best positioned to advance self-reliance and share accountability for results. The J2SR lens also gives a heightened emphasis to in-country resourcing, with enterprise-driven growth as a key driver. Finally, it places local systems at the heart of achieving sustainable, resilient results (p. 1)

This example links the concept of working with strategic partners towards self-reliance with enterprise-driven growth meaning that those actors possessing strategy are also likely to favor market driven development. Similarly, the private sector executive summary underlines the importance of working with the private sector and market-based approaches, "many philanthropic and development-focused organizations have been front-runners in embracing market-based approaches and integrating the distinctive capabilities of the public and the private sectors to achieve greater development impact" (p. 3). The policy framework also offers that for some, this may be new, "historically, development actors have sometimes shied away from working with business. But domestic and international firms can prove powerful development partners where we have common cause, uphold shared values, and can jointly pursue development objectives as equals" (p. 41). This expectation trickles down to the ILs as the MRR RFA stipulates, "the successful applicant will clearly describe approaches to work collaboratively with the private sector in the concept note" (p. 10).

Embedded Ideologies

Throughout this section, I illustrate how evaluation and modality work together to represent self-reliance as what Fairclough (2011) labels a truism in which language contains little

or no uncertainty concerning what is or what will occur. I traverse between Fairclough's textual and discursive dimensions here to offer a portrayal of how self-reliance reflects a complex array of ideological tensions. Overall, I suggest the framing of self-reliance reflects a neoliberal focus comprised of anti-welfare and market-led development. Simultaneously, it also reflects the participatory paradigm, which I review second. I start by offering the evaluation and modality mechanisms that underscore assumptive values in the corpus and then turn to how the discursive practice of self-reliance reproduces neoliberal ideology. Subsequently in the participatory paradigm section, using Pretty's (1995) typology of participation alongside Fairclough's tools, I illustrate how USAID values participation of both local actors and the private sector, but that the private sector receives greater emphasis. In so doing, I attend to the ways discourse reflects the social, political, and economic organization of a particular time (Fairclough, 2013). Namely, the dominant logic of neoliberalism alongside the participatory onus within international development.

As a starting point, the policy framework aligns the journey to self-reliance with words such as freedom, peace, prosperity, human dignity, a bright future, effective, compassionate, innovative, and strategic:

> USAID's vision for a more free, more peaceful, and more prosperous world is built around the compelling yet simple notion that the purpose of our assistance must ultimately be ending the need for it to exist. Our assistance model emphasizes programs, initiatives, and investments that support human dignity and build on the innate desire of every community and country to shape their own bright future (p. 8).[9]

[9] The policy framework repeats this particular phrasing connecting human dignity with shaping a bright future twice.

> While Americans are generous and always ready to stand with others in their times of need, we believe our assistance is most effective—and most compassionate—when it strengthens the ability of our country partners to provide for themselves and their citizens (p. 8 & 17).
>
> As we move boldly in this new direction [towards self-reliance], we must be innovative and strategic about where and how we work, ensuring that we are focused on advancing countrywide progress toward self-reliance, making investments that have the most impact, and sustaining results for meaningful change (p. 5).

The above examples convey a spirit of hope, excitement, and improvement for the future as a result of the J2SR vision. The tone of the policy framework employs a more descriptive and values-rich lexicon than other texts such as the RFAs that tend to be more instructive. This is not surprising since the policy framework outlines what the Journey to Self-Reliance is, why, and how it should be advanced. In each of the above statements, the high epistemic modality represented by terms such as “is” and “are” alongside high deontic modality indicated by words like “must” convey little uncertainty about the future under the self-reliance agenda. The representation of self-reliance as contributing to dignity, and how “Americans as generous and ready to stand with others” alongside self-reliance as a form of compassion holds implicit value assumptions wherein any other form of self-reliance is not compassionate, dignified, nor worthy of support. The “authoritative categorical assertions” (Fairclough, 2011, p. 11) serve to normalize self-reliance as a commonly held ideal, except that self-reliance reflects ideological investments. Ideology, by nature, is not truth, but contested truth and the construction of self-reliance as a truism insulates self-reliance and its discursive representations from contestation. I turn now to the neoliberal investment within the corpus.

Neoliberal Ideology

Above I offered the importance of private enterprise as a development partner to USAID, and in this section, I elaborate to show how policy discourse reproduces neoliberal ideology as a dominant logic. The orientation of public programs, services, goods, and basic needs around the market is the hallmark of neoliberal logic (Harvey, 2007). In the next section I detail the market-first and private sector-led orientation alongside an anti-welfare rhetoric that attacks community-level transformation by turning self-reliance into an individual capacity issue. I subsequently discuss how neoliberal ideology equally influences the construct of sustainability.

In the earlier excerpts about the private sector, I examined the private sector as an essential partner for self-reliance. Across the corpus, USAID describes the private sector using active words that convey excitement and little uncertainty such as the fact sheet on project design that promotes, "enterprise-driven development [as] a key catalyst of self-reliance and sustainable growth" (p. 1) or the policy framework illustrating "we will leverage the central role enterprise plays as an engine of development" (p. 40). This exemplifies the representation of enterprise and private-sector led development in active language, indicating a level of high agency within the corpus.

The reforming partner governments fact sheet represents local governments in passivated language where USAID is the one acting upon them, "the Agency must take a critical look at how we engage with government counterparts and how we hold them—and ourselves—accountable for results" (p. 1). This sentiment is also represented in the project design fact sheet where USAID indicates they should, "empower countries to resource their own development in an efficient, accountable, and transparent way" (p. 1) and with mentions in the blog post of the effort to "incentivize commitment from partner governments while building their capacity

through increased use of tools – when appropriate – such as policy reform, cost-sharing, and use of government systems" (p. 1). A final example is in the policy framework, "local solutions are not always government solutions. Particularly where commitment is lagging among government partners, we should look to civil society, the private sector, or sub-national authorities" (p. 9). I observed the sentiment of "lagging commitment" repeated in the policy framework document to say that if it occurs USAID "should consider whether [their] resources will be effective or could be put to better use" (p. 38). In each of these cases, countries are deemed lacking and subsequently requiring an intervention whereas the private sector is identified as already possessing the capabilities to advance the vision.

The focus on the private sector is also reinforced by the five questions the private sector executive summary says should be asked each time a development challenge is addressed:

> Can the private sector solve the problem by itself? Could there be a market-based approach to addressing this challenge? What are the roles and interests of the private sector in addressing this challenge? Are there factors constraining the private sector from involvement and investment? Is there a role for USAID to help alleviate or eliminate these constraints? (p. 2).

These questions offer a glimpse into how the primary orientation for development concerns the private sector rather than other actors such as local governments or civil society. In addition to USAID questioning whether the private sector can solve development issues alone, the corpus also identifies removing any obstacles for private sector involvement as the PRCI RFA indicates a priority of building an "<u>enabling environment for the private sector</u> *[sic]*, including laws, regulations, administrative processes, fiscal policy, finance and credit systems, and anti-corruption measures, among many others, which shape the opportunities for private sector

investment. (p. 18). A focus on removing policy obstacles to private sector participation could marginalize other actors' participation as they may not be among identified policy priorities. Moreover, the focus on improving governmentality to enable greater private-sector growth is representative of the neoliberal good governance project to foster open markets (Moyo et al., 2019; Rai, 2008).

The second indication of neoliberal logic is the framing of independence and self-reliance as anti-welfare within the corpus. The policy framework illustrates, "we offer a hand up, rather than a hand-out….U.S. foreign assistance should never be a hand-out. We should use proven assistance tools to help reform-minded partners reach the point where they can tap into private-enterprise solutions." (p. 8)[10]. The blog post echoes the value of not needing assistance:

> If USAID is not constantly thinking about ending the need for foreign assistance in a given country — that is, making the country more self-reliant — it is not maximizing taxpayer resources here in the United States, and worse, it is exacerbating the problem of donor dependency (p. 2).

The above example clearly links a failure to become self-reliant as a negative that USAID wants to avoid. A critical component to self-reliance and ending the need for foreign assistance is to "strengthen commitment and capacity at all levels of society" (Integrating the Journey to Self-Reliance into Project Design Fact Sheet, p. 1). Building on this, the policy framework argues, "countries that have increased self-reliance have built human and institutional capacity across the economy, civil society, the government, and the population" (p. 9). Neoliberal self-reliance can

[10] The reference to "hand up" appears four additional times in the policy framework text. Moreover, it is a major header within the document appearing in the table of contents as "we offer a hand up, rather than a hand-out" (p. 2) and again in the document (p. 17). On page 17 specifically, in addition to the header, USAID repeats "foreign assistance should never be a hand-out" twice. In a second instance, the mention was bolded at the top of a paragraph and second called out in a blue box to its left.

be promoted via anti-welfare rhetoric by focusing on improving the capacity of individuals rather than focusing on changing or improving systems. This shifts the focus away from communities and possibilities for transformation towards individual-level blame for the failure to become self-reliant.

The anti-welfare sentiment is also focused on governments and appears in the corpus' with discussions on cost-sharing[11]. Moreover, the corpus indicates that without such a financial commitment from countries, aid may be threatened as elucidated here:

> Our government partners should always have a vested interest in the success of USAID programs. Where there is a demonstrated commitment to problem-solving and co-financing, government-to-government agreements are central to achieving shared results. Where commitment is lagging, we should consider whether our resources will be effective or could be put to better use (p. 38).

Moreover, the transforming partner governments fact sheet links commitment to cost-sharing with "incentivizing Government Commitment: Ideally, our agreements should include a development plan with shared goals for the partnership, cost-sharing agreements for all projects and programs" (p. 2).

In this next segment, I discuss the discursive practice of sustainability and its connections to neoliberal ideology. USAID connected environmental sustainability to economics with the mention that that "sustainable economic growth often follows a commitment to effective economic policy and responsible stewardship of a country's natural resources" (p. 28).

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[11] I identified cost-sharing 17 times in the corpus. Some examples include: from the policy framework, "USAID defines self-reliance as the capacity to plan, finance, and implement solutions to local development challenges" (p. 9). This phrase is also repeated on page 2 of the blog post. Also, in the policy framework, "our government partners should always have a vested interest in the success of USAID programs. The PRCI RFA indicating, "mobilizing their own domestic resources" (p. 6). A final example on the strategic transitions fact sheet said, "strategic transitions realign USAID programming and activities in countries that are able to largely finance and manage their own development needs" (p. 1).

Reflecting the economic connections, the fact sheet on integrating J2SR into project design argues that "enterprise-development is a key catalyst of self-reliance and sustainable growth" (p. 1).

Of note is that for USAID, "sustainable economic growth often follows a commitment to effective economic policy and responsible stewardship of a country's natural resources" (USAID Policy Framework Ending the Need for Foreign Assistance, p. 28). As illustrated in Table 4, the construction of sustainability as an economic tool is most prevalent in the literature. The above example illustrates how natural resources, which the corpus only mentions three times, can be presented as an economic idea. This may render environmental sustainability as a vehicle to achieve economic vitality rather than a mode of preserving natural resources for their inherent value or for combatting climate change reflecting neoliberal logic. The private sector may also be viewed as the vehicle through which sustainability is achieved[12], which equally reflects a neoliberal logic, for example, "the private sector's vast financial resources and expertise in market-based solutions have the potential for achieving scale and sustainability in tackling systemic societal challenges" (Private Sector Engagement Policy Executive Summary, p. 1). One consideration to note is that the private sector and the associated resources likely vary between countries rather than existing in a vastness across all contexts.

To summarize, this section provided an overview concerning how J2SR invests in a neoliberal logic through the support of the private sector and enterprise-driven development, anti-welfare rhetoric, and the way neoliberal logic appears in the conception of sustainability. In

[12] In the PSE Executive Summary alone, a four-page document, the document indicates the private sector can achieve greater sustainability seven times. The corpus connects the private sector and sustainability 16 times. For example, the executive summary indicates how "in embracing enterprise-driven development, USAID recognizes the value of engaging the private sector in development and humanitarian assistance to help shape solutions that achieve sustained impact and can carry forward long after USAID's support has ended" (p. 1).

the next section, I unpack the discursive practices related to participation by both local and private sector actors. I begin by discussing the participatory paradigm attributed to local actors, followed by the private sector, and I close by illustrating the risk that local participation could be used for private sector interventions over community self-determination.

Participatory Paradigm and Tensions

Locally-Led Development. As mentioned, USAID's focus on self-reliance includes a strong emphasis on locally-led and locally-managed development. I analyzed local participation through Pretty's (1995) theory of participation and argue that the level of local participation is limited. As discussed earlier, USAID already defined self-reliance across its policy texts, and as a result, participation could never reach the highest rung of self-mobilization because its idea is bounded by USAID's definition and ownership:

> To this end, USAID offers a proven and compelling assistance model, grounded in a new, more strategic approach. The Journey to Self-Reliance emphasizes enabling locally led—and, increasingly, locally-financed – problem solving for enterprise-driven growth; inclusive societies; and transparent, accountable governance. This model of assistance promotes balanced trade, open markets, and democratic norms (USAID Policy Framework Ending the Need for Foreign Assistance, p. 16)

The participatory paradigm may reflect functional participation where participation exists to meet pre-determined objectives such as enterprise-driven. The focus on local resourcing may also reinforce functional participation as it would imply cost reductions for USAID. The Integrating the J2SR Fact Sheet argues that USAID should:

> **Empower countries to resource their own development in an efficient, accountable and transparent way** *[sic]*. Our projects should help increase the capacity of countries to

> generate greater public revenue and harness domestic and international private investment that can fund development needs across all sectors (p. 1).

Moreover, the Redefining Relationships with Partner Governments expands on capacity and commitment this way:

> The Agency's self-reliance theory of change posits that partner country commitment and capacity to manage their own development are mutually reinforcing elements of overall self-reliance. In this way, Redefining our Development Relationships (RDR) is closely linked to all components of the Journey to Self-Reliance. **Commitment** *[sic]*: USAID must strengthen and incentivize government commitment, particularly policy, governance, and resources. **Capacity** *[sic]*: Missions must strengthen government systems and use government-owned development models, where appropriate, to put the country in the lead (p. 1).

There are moments of interactive participation as the corpus discusses including local knowledge, local agendas, and collaborative project design. For example, "how can local, sub-national, national, and regional voices, priorities, and contributions be integrated into how USAID fosters self-reliance?" (Self-Reliance Learning Agenda Evidence to Support to Journey to Self-Reliance, p. 4), "in fragile countries, the need for local problem-solving is especially critical." (The USAID Policy Framework Ending the Need for Foreign Assistance, p. 30), and the PRCI RFA offers:

> Where local partners have already identified strategic research areas--with a clearly articulated opportunity for this research to influence a given policy process and policy implementation--then the technical approach should include methods of support to these

> partners' ability to implement their agenda to the best of their ability, including by helping strengthen any underlying organizational weakness (p. 17).

Similarly, the Integrating J2SR into Project Design fact sheet articulates,

> **Strengthen commitment and capacity at all levels of society** *[sic]*. Our projects should seek ways to strengthen government capacity and utilize partner country systems, where possible, to empower governments to own and manage their own development. At the same time, we should engage local actors as co-designers, co-implementers, and co-owners of their country's development outcomes, while strengthening their capacity and holding them and ourselves accountable for achieving and sustaining results (p. 1).

The Journey to Self-Reliance uses highly participatory language and focuses especially on local participation as a mode of developing self-reliance with the two types observed being functional and interactive participation. In addition to the participation of local actors, the private sector engagement executive summary describes the private sector in participatory language:

> ***Private Sector Leadership and Participation.*** USAID defines the private sector as: For-profit, commercial entities and their affiliated foundations; financial institutions, investors and intermediaries; business associations and cooperatives; micro, small, medium and large enterprises that operate in the formal and informal sectors; American, local, regional, and multi-national scale businesses; and for-profit approaches that generate sustainable income (e.g., a venture fund run by a non-governmental organization (NGO) or a social enterprise) (p. 1)

This definition is broad representing many different types of organizations, but the one commonality is that it must be a for-profit enterprise. Like local actors, the private sector's participation is predicated on the Agency's definition of self-reliance. Both groups are indeed

important, whereas local participation is emphasized and described; market enterprise is identified as “an engine of development” (USAID Policy Framework Ending the Need for Foreign Assistance, p. 40). Moreover, “USAID’s first-ever Private Sector Engagement Policy, released in December 2018, articulates how USAID is harnessing the power of enterprise-driven development to help fuel progress toward self-reliance” (USAID Policy Framework Ending the Need for Foreign Assistance, p. 40).

The policy framework represents the private sector using interactive participatory language such as, “to form more-effective partnerships, we will also need to strengthen capabilities to co-create, collaborate, and facilitate, especially with the private sector” (USAID Policy Framework Ending the Need for Foreign Assistance, p. 48). Subsequently, this collaboration trickles down into expectations for other development partners. Within the policy framework, for example, USAID emphasizes the need for other partners to work with the private sector:

> Private firms provide employment and improve productivity, two indispensable elements of long-term development and self-reliance. Historically, development actors have sometimes shied away from working with business. But domestic and international firms can prove powerful development partners where we have common cause, uphold shared values, and can jointly pursue development objectives as equals (p. 41).

One important note for the above example is the caveats listed at the end identifying the necessity for commonly shared cause and values. In addition to the values of integrating market approaches, the corpus articulates values related to local solutions, inclusivity, and sustainability which may reveal some indication of what commonalities are required for domestic and international firms as development partners.

In another instance in the MRR RFA, local actors and the private sector are conflated "the technical approach should clearly describe approaches to work collaboratively with local actors, explicitly including the private sector" (p. 43-44). This could diminish the possibilities for local community organizations and civil society should "local actors" incorporate the local private sector too. This, I argue, represents participatory tensions between local actors and the private sector at multiple levels. The first tension is how local actors and the private sector are both (at times) described in interactive language. This tension manifests when the views of different parties differ and a need arises to determine how such disputes would be arbitrated.

I identify a second tension for how local actor participation may become a tool for private sector engagement as the PSE executive summary indicates, "USAID has relationships with national and local governments, businesses, faith-based organizations, local community leaders, and civil society that are useful to the private sector in making locally informed plans for market-entry, collaboration, and co-investment" (p. 3). The policy framework includes a similar sentiment, "moving forward, USAID will forge new and creative partnerships by engaging with the private sector more than ever before, and harnessing the knowledge of local organizations with experience in their communities" (p. 5).

As mentioned, the policy also emphasizes local actors, but not to the level of the private sector as evidenced by USAID's emphasis on the private sector's leadership throughout the corpus. The data also illustrates how local participation could be used to inform private sector engagement rather than to meaningfully inform and assist in the design of designing community development efforts. The next section discusses how the discursive practices of self-reliance relate to agroecological possibilities.

Research Question 2: Discourse & Agroecological Opportunities

Here I examine how the corpus presents agroecological opportunities alongside the findings from the focus groups. I synthesize and organize findings thematically according to the discursive frames that variously make agroecological transitions within food systems possible (Anderson et al., 2021). Within this research question, I sought to understand: 1) what particular discourses are drawn upon, 2) what ideologies inform these representations, and 3) how does the self-reliance discourse reflect agroecological possibilities?

An overarching finding of my research is both the corpus and the responses from focus group participants reveal possibilities for scientific agroecology, but not for transformative agroecology. Moreover, a cross-cutting focus group theme was how agroecology reflects epistemic tensions for the land grant actors sampled. These tensions arose with regards to agroecology's expansive vision as participants were surprised at its breadth, and subsequently viewed it as difficult to implement. Within this overarching finding, two focus group themes emerged. The first focus group theme is how land grant actors identified the J2SR's participatory focus, including increasing partner capacities towards managing their own development, as a good for development generally and for their development praxis. Specifically, some participants identified the J2SR as a catalyst of their efforts to increase research control by partners in the Global South. However, although local participation was a named value, participants did not articulate established partnerships with the civil society nor a focus on increasing the participation of civil society within Innovation Lab projects. This indicates a possible disconnect between their naming of local participation as a value and the praxis of pursuing multi-sectoral partnerships as a method to center local participation.

The second focus group theme is how participants identified the environmental and sustainability focuses of agroecology as possible under the J2SR umbrella. However, they emphasized the need for agroecology to be flexible towards the usage of external inputs, especially pertaining to meeting production needs. I illustrate how the view from participants that agroecology must not foreclose biotechnologies reflects a site of contested and competing imaginaries between the values and practices associated with the dominant productionist frames, and agroecology that seeks to shift away from this frame. This debate is, however, much larger than land grant universities as the commentary and boycotts over the 2021 United Nations Food Systems Summit exemplified due to the United Nation's increased commitment to corporate partnerships and biotechnological solutions (Ackermann et al., 2021; McMichael, 2021; Montenegro de Wit & Iles, 2021). My research illustrates a localized case in which this epistemic contest is reproduced.

This section on research question two discusses the above two focus group themes in relationship with the CDA findings. I return to these themes in my discussion of research question three to illustrate the impacts on land grant praxis based on the focus group analysis alone. Here I address agroecological opportunities beginning at the most supportive discursive frame for transformative agroecology, and ending at the most challenging, "feed the world" as identified by Anderson and colleagues (2021). Of food sovereignty, I observed no discursive possibilities represented by rights-based language. I examined the possibilities within the frame of participation, including USAID's focus on localized control over development. I caution that participatory possibilities would be stymied if local knowledge becomes a tool to inform private sector and market-based interventions. I then turn to the themes of holism and livelihoods as both self-reliance and agroecology call for a systems-based framework. I elaborate on livelihoods to

suggest USAID's framing and the discussion among focus groups participants reflects the notion that livelihoods are market-based, and subsequently that this is a challenge for agroecology. The fifth frame I discuss is ecological modernization and how the environmental and sustainability focuses of agroecology may be more common for land grants. Finally, I close with a discussion of the feed the world frame in which, although some support for smallholders exists, productionist and corporate-led logic observed among both the corpus and sampled land grants actively undermine such possibilities.

Two Mentions of Agroecology in the Corpus

As a starting point, the corpus of 79,000 words and 223 pages mentions agroecological approaches twice. Both incidences of agroecology occur within the MRR RFA and both tend to view agroecology as an ecological approach rather than a mechanism by which to nudge myriad systems towards equity:

> Under this new award, the MRR Innovation Lab will be expected to continue the focus on risk management by….4) designing and testing the scale up of insurance products to broader areas (i.e., beyond the original areas for which micro data was available for product design or in areas of recurrent humanitarian crisis), for example, by utilizing agro-ecological mapping and crop modeling. MRR is encouraged to undertake further exploration of meso- and macro- level insurance products and other types of proactive risk management (such as forecast-based finance) for financial providers, local and national governments, and market system actors (MRR RFA, p. 12).

In this first example, agroecology is indicated as a tool to help inform insurance products rendering it an ecological data collection methodology to understand the possibilities of an economic methodology rather than a socio-cultural and political food systems approach. The

other instance USAID identifies as agroforestry. I include a significant amount of context for this example from the MRR RFA to help elucidate the ideas that are co-situated alongside agroecological approaches:

> There is increasing recognition that rural individuals, households, and communities live and work in a context of complex, interacting systems. Examples of these systems include the political, social, health and healthcare, economic/market, ecological, and broader environmental systems. Fragile contexts and conflicts can also be understood as systems. MRR should provide applied, policy-relevant research on (how to measure) the attributes of resilient systems; how fragile, weak, and strong systems should be distinguished; as well as how these systems interact with individuals, households, and communities to bolster or undermine resilience. This includes innovation around behaviors and actions that individuals, households, communities, and governments may take to manage their own risks while simultaneously increasing the resilience of the systems in which they (and their citizens) live and work. Research and innovation could address, for example, the ways in which informal governance institutions, such as traditional leadership or civil society, solve problems in society. It could also address the effectiveness and legitimacy of how local governments provide essential public goods and services. USAID would also benefit from research and innovations on the resilience impacts of agroforestry approaches. USAID strives to implement a market systems approach throughout much of the GFSS programming. As such, USAID would benefit from a series of (perhaps 9 to 12) retrospective case studies exploring how local agricultural market systems have reacted to (and recovered from) a variety of shocks

> (such as drought, cyclone, export bans, conflict, etc.) in different regional contexts, along with policy recommendations (p. 15).

In this example, USAID identifies the need for a systems approach to the MRR research agenda, which is also a necessary lens for agroecology. The inclusion of agroforestry is also a specific example of agroecology that is purely ecological, reflecting the theme of epistemic tensions and how agroecology may be understood as simply an environmental or ecological approach thus limiting its transformative potential.

Transformative Agroecology Challenged under J2SR

An overarching finding is that The Journey to Self-Reliance simultaneously reflects opportunities and challenges for agroecology. While the corpus mentions agroecology, those two mentions reflect ecological logic, which limits transformative agroecology. Moreover, with regards to the food sovereignty frame, I observed no rights-based language or notions of systemic food system change, which indicates no opportunities for this frame[13]. Instead, I observed what Anderson and colleagues' (2021) label as limiting language, for example in the policy framework, "relatively few countries have achieved the self-sufficiency to no longer need foreign assistance" (p. 18). As I indicated in the literature review, the 2007-2008 food crisis was a major impetus for the food sovereignty movement to justify the imperative of change, but to USAID instead "price volatility" is accepted as an inevitable that needs to be managed because it "undermines investment and technology adoption, while higher prices erode household food

[13] The corpus mentions systemic change four times across three documents. The policy framework suggests the need to, "strengthen local institutions and promote systemic change. We will use our assistance to catalyze wider, lasting change. To broaden the reach of our program results with finite resources, we will design projects, not to deliver a set of outputs, but to effect broader, positive change. To do so, we should apply a "systems lens" to our country strategies and project designs." (p. 42). The PRCI RFA articulates, "systemic change at the country level, particularly how governments improve the conditions for greater private sector investments." (p. 7). Finally, the private sector executive summary indicates "the private sector's vast financial resources and expertise in market-based solutions have the potential for achieving scale and sustainability in tackling systemic societal challenges" (p. 3).

security" (MRR RFA, p. 8). Such management does not seek systemic change nor push against the neoliberal ideology as food sovereignty does, but instead looks to maintain the neoliberal conditions as is the case in the example from the MRR RFA:

> The 2007-2008 food price crisis was a significant catalyst for establishing Feed the Future. Volatile prices provide a disincentive for investment among risk averse smallholders. USAID encourages research that explores institutional innovations and other creative solutions that offer some protection from price risk, and/or enhance price stability using market-friendly mechanism (p. 12-13).

For the focus groups as well, a few participants commented on the food sovereignty movement. For example, both Dwayne and Violet opine that food sovereignty and the feed the world frame are congruent rather than in opposition as Anderson and colleagues (2021) continuum illustrates:

> I have always seen food sovereignty as a more kind of, maybe this sounds patronizing, but economically informed concept, frankly, than food self-sufficiency. And as progress away from the idea of food self-sufficiency, where countries would simply produce all of the food they need, that food sovereignty means simply that they can make their own decisions about how to meet their food needs. And that explicitly could, and likely would include active trade, right, both importing and exporting. So again, I did not see those as being on opposite ends of the spectrum (Dwayne).

Violet offered that food sovereignty and feeding the world can both co-exist:

> I would like to go back to one of your first slides where you see the spectrum with food sovereignty on one end and feeding the world on the other end. But to me, I do not see them as necessarily exclusive from one to another so you can still be food sovereign and feed the world?... So, to me when I am thinking about food sovereignty, it is often to step

> away from imports or to be less import-dependent. So, it seems that their definition is way broader than that. So, it is not just reducing imports, but not getting involved in exports…. I do not know; the graph does not make complete sense to me. But I guess their definition of food sovereignty is way broader than what we are used to. Because like, if you think about food sovereignty for many countries, that is why they are increasing rice production and rice productivity so they can reduce their dependency on imports, especially following the food crisis, but it seems that in their graph in their figure, they go even beyond imports.

In a parallel commentary, Matthew discussed La Via Campesina and identified the food sovereignty vision as unrealistic and naive:

> And I've often found the rhetoric of Via Campesina sort of almost naive, in the sense that they're sort of saying, "oh, well, just, you know, promote this", but, you know, unless you make land a non-marketable commodity, which, you know, you can certainly try to do that. Right, I'm not sure that's actually a very smart thing. (Matthew)

The food sovereignty vision is a direct challenge to the neoliberal and globalized food system. However, the above commentaries reveal how participants variably understood food sovereignty as coined by La Via Campesina and even when a participant understood the agenda he dismissed it as naive. This elucidates how the potential for food sovereignty is challenged within land grant praxis.

Local Participation Holds Contested Meanings and Purposes.

This finding builds on the earlier discussion on the local participation and local leadership emphasis described in research question one. I contend that the focus on supporting "'partners' ability to implement their agenda" (PRCI RFA, p. 17), the identified need for local

problem solving and solutions, and the inclusion of various stakeholders within the development of self-reliance but also in project design could promote agroecological possibilities through the discursive frames of participation and cultural resonance. For example, the participatory frame, when supporting of agroecology, focuses on democratic governance, the participation of a wide range of stakeholders, and power distribution (Anderson et al., 2021). As such, should local agendas, voices, priorities, and solutions be attended to, as the policy intimates, it is conceivable that agroecological approaches could be identified among those priorities by local communities. Similarly, cultural resonance positions various forms of knowledge and place-based agriculture as values. While there was no mention of various forms of knowledge within the corpus, and indeed much techno-corporate language, with increased local problem-solving it is conceivable that this could lead to solutions derived from multiple or indigenous forms of knowledge.

A second opportunity for participation is the policy's prioritization of social inclusion. For example, in the policy framework, "self-reliant systems are also inclusive. Open to a wide array of individuals and groups, especially women, youth, and marginalized or vulnerable populations, these systems benefit when all individuals participate in them" (p. 26). Moreover:

> **Inclusive development takes a commitment to inclusivity and countering social exclusion, promoting cohesion, and investing in the future**. Countries in which entire populations are excluded from the benefits of growth, however rapid, cannot be considered self-reliant. Excluding some groups socially, politically, or economically feeds grievances, and can lead to violence. Societies with greater social cohesion, interpersonal safety, and intergroup trust, on the other hand, tend to be more peaceful, productive, and resilient. Moreover, sustained economic transformations rely on a large base of capable workers and entrepreneurs, both women and men. This requires investing

> widely in human capital, protecting human rights, and ensuring people have equitable access to economic opportunities, infrastructure, natural resources, civic participation, and other public goods and services. In particular, investments in education are essential (USAID Policy Framework Ending the Need for Foreign Assistance, p. 30).

In the above example, USAID seeks to promote inclusion through a systems lens which is promising to the inclusion of a wide range of stakeholders. For example, a reflection from Mary, an economist researcher in Ghana offered:

> I do appreciate the effort to give my work a voice, it is kind of, you know, to self-determine the agenda within some boundaries…maybe then the work that's going on still remains the same, but at least my voice as a researcher in this part of the world can be heard in terms of determining the kind of matters and issues that we like to look into.

As Mary mentioned, the J2SR may make it more possible for the research agenda to be determined by individuals within the targeted countries, but as she mentioned, "within some boundaries", which resonates with the discussion of participation within the boundaries laid by the self-reliance definition. More directly, the embedded neoliberal ideology as a guiding epistemic framework means that potential for true agenda setting, including an agroecological agenda, is unlikely.

While social inclusion is often referenced, there are elements where inclusion becomes a tool for private sector access and economic growth such as in the above example from the policy framework where exclusion leads to economic costs rather than other effects. Continuing with how inclusivity can be framed within economic logic, the MRR RFA elucidates:

> Many rural households and vulnerable, marginalized populations are poorly integrated into larger agricultural markets–including input and output markets, factor (land, water,

> and labor) markets, and financial markets–limiting livelihood options. In these situations, land and labor remain marginally productive, and there is little investment in value-adding enterprises that could build demand for agricultural products and provide employment. Access to appropriate improved inputs–such as pollination services, improved seed varieties, fertilizers, animal health services, and feed supplies–is limited, but so are the incentives to adopt these and other technologies even when they are available (p. 10-11).

In this example, inclusivity is conceptualized as connecting marginalized populations to input markets, viewed as disabling to agroecology because the participation of marginalized populations becomes a tool for private sector wealth growing versus genuine involvement of marginalized populations in agricultural development (Anderson et al., 2021). Finally, in some cases, the corpus identifies the private sector contributing to inclusion. For example, "the private sector's extensive networks and operations provide distribution channels to reach, and communicate with, underserved populations and individuals." (Private Sector Engagement Policy Executive Summary, p. 3). A consideration that goes unaddressed in the corpus is how not all countries have equal access to markets and how private sector capacities with relation to their networks also vary. Resources are not homogenous across countries which Clarissa's commentary underscored:

> I still think there are a lot of assumptions made by USAID in this framework, and I think similar to what some other folks have said, sort of assumes that certain things are in place. I think it assumes that certain things are in place, like good roads, an education system, like there is a bare minimum that needs to be in place for this framework to really

> function well. And I am not sure that that is the case and a lot of the places where USAID works. So, I think that sort of ignores some of the complexities on the ground.

Clarissa's commentary reveals fragility in USAID's logic that the private sector's leadership can ensure inclusive development across targeted countries because the requisite resources assumed to be in place may not be uniformly available. Thus, presenting the private sector as laden with resource possibility, without acknowledging "the complexities on the ground" may be unrealistic.

Another theme related to participation from the focus groups was regarding the imposition of values from land grant actors onto communities with whom they work. For example, Theo reflected:

> So, my guess is that maybe injecting our own values into what self-reliance how it plays out on a local level…I think it is a question that we need to ask ourselves, is it justified to do that or not? And you know, whether or not local populations would sort of say, we really embrace the values within this agroecological approach. I think most probably would. But I think that is a debate that really should be going on there to let them work that out. Rather than kind of that's sort of one set of issues that I am thinking about right now.

Theo's reflection is of particular importance because it illustrates the tensions regarding agroecological possibilities and the promotion of our values regarding agroecology as it pertains to self-determination and participation. Moreover, he like Clarissa's commentary illustrates the difficulties in promoting the self-reliance agenda when critical infrastructure, such as societal systems that are inclusive, are not in place. This reflects a disconnect possibly between the values articulated in the corpus and the land grant actors who do the work.

Continuing with the theme related to imposing values, in one of the focus groups with the MRR team, there was a discussion between myself, Timothy, and Matthew related to the imposition of agroecology and values that connects to Theo's commentary. It began when Timothy raised a question regarding why farmers may not practice agroecological approaches or why they may not raise questions regarding its possibilities:

> I go to Ghana, Northern Ghana and I go to a village, I sit down with a group of farmers. These are farmers that are collected to larger national, they are collected to larger markets, but many of them are at least semi subsistence, they grow for their own consumption. And they sell generally in local markets. So, these are farmers that are pretty disconnected from the larger agricultural world, at least, that we would be familiar with here in the United States. So, these are pretty isolated people, at least by what we would understand. I sit down with this group of farmers asked myself, do they practice agroecology? And if not, why not? What keeps them from doing it? What is it about what they do that is different from what you know, we call agroecology. And if it is different than what is that they need in order to practice agroecology? Like why aren't they doing it? And what do they need to do it? I think I might have, like, I can you speak to that at all?

My response tried to illustrate how agroecology could be introduced but not imposed:

> so if you sit down with these smallholder farmers, and [agroecology] is something that they are not really thinking about, or requesting, then personally/professional, that inner nexus, I am not going to say you should be doing this, because it's like, rule one [agroecology] is [a local, community-driven, participatory approach]….If this is not something they are thinking about, then you need to raise it kind of in an extension

> fashion, right? So, hold a workshop on how this can be possible, which I do not think is wrong, but I am not going to impose it [as a must] because it is not my right…. It is more of like, we know that this is a value for many, not all, in light of that, where can we pursue opportunities when this is appropriate, demanded requested, prioritized. Does that make sense?

In response, Timothy continued with the theme of imposition, and clarifies whether agroecology should emerge organically or not:

> But we want to be sensitive to this idea of not wanting to impose, and so potentially extension service type approaches, potentially could get into the world of imposition, is not super clear. But we would have to maybe be concerned about it going into the world of imposition. But all that aside, mostly, because this is primarily a local thing. It is really something that we would expect to arise organically from communities. And therefore, it is less about going and doing something to create it. And it is more about avoiding things that damage it, or, or creating context in which that local thing can come about naturally.

Building on this, I noted how it is important to introduce agroecology as an option and illustrated how biotechnologies have long been imposed as an agenda:

> just because people are not currently thinking about it...we have to be aware of the historical conditions that have created where we are now, right? And so, if we think about the Green Revolution in the 60s and 70s, and the development machine that promoted that [agenda] in the global south, often through land grants, and USAID funded projects…. But it is conceivable that that might have shaped the way people think about their own agricultural production, etc. And as a result, because of the funding, and the

> extension that has come out of the mainstream ag world, that agroecological approaches are not as forefront of people's minds.

Subsequently, Timothy continues to contend with the need to introduce agroecology into land grant work:

> It seems like under that, like with that influence, that might create a justification for some sort of positive intervention to try to spur it on. You say, okay, people have forgotten or they have been influenced by 70 years of policy. And so now we have to do something to try to revive something that we think may have used to have been there.

To this, Matthew chimes in to echo how biotechnologies have been imposed and promoted throughout:

> I was just reading I am doing a study on drought tolerant maize varieties. Okay, so this is like big, big science. Right, creates a new seed variety. Did anybody and in Timothy's villages in northern Ghana, as they were sort of sitting around in the evening, did anybody ever said, gee, I wish we had drought tolerant seed varieties. I mean, they might have said, wouldn't that be great if our stuff grew? I was reading a little bit about maize, which has actually a relatively short history, and the whole continent of Africa and I do not fully understand it…So it is a relatively recent history. And yet, it is now the predominant source of calories produced on the continent. So, what do we think about that even, that's sort of an imposition. It is something that was adapted, I suspect, because it makes sense to people…. there’s sort of this tension between expert knowledge and the sort of scientific enterprise. And, you know, sort of running too far like, do we roll back the clock? You know, do we ever introduce things that people on the ground did not think about or do we as those who have benefited from the education and the ability to

> participate in the scientific enterprise? I mean, we do not go in and force people to grow drought tolerant maize, but you are putting out options that they can contemplate, and if they find them useful, they will do so. You know, people will criticize, oh, if they start drought tolerant seeds, and some of them are hybrids, and you put people on a treadmill of, of dependence….But, you know, again, as an economist, if they actually find it worthwhile to do that, and have to repurchase seeds every year, because it gives them more maize and a more stable source of maize, then I am not going to sit above them and say, oh, you know, that was that was a really bad thing to make that option available to you.

This dialogue between Timothy, Matthew, and myself reveals the complexities related to introducing concepts and technologies through development work and the way in which these actors are wrestling with their own positionality in relation to knowledge and participation. It is also an incidence wherein the adoption of biotechnologies is considered by participants. Something unaddressed within this conversation is whether the dependency risk is illustrated to farmers when the options are currently or were historically introduced. Such a proposition could be inferred from Matthew's logic regarding their own agency to choose to adopt seeds or not, but scholarship on seed sovereignty suggests the introduction of hybrid seeds was not historically addressed with communities as part of their adoption decisions. Moreover, this dialogue reveals the need for continued conversations on the historical and contemporary effects related to the introduction and possible imposition of technologies among land grant actors.

A Systems Approach and Food Systems Transformation.

For agroecologists, agriculture is a food system affecting social, cultural, environmental, economic, and political facets of human society. In light of the inequities of the corporate food

regime, agroecology looks to shift each of these societal facets towards equity and justice. While the J2SR acknowledges the need to work within systems, the corpus mentions food system(s) only five times. It does however include mentions of working with systems that affect society as the MRR RFA illustrates:

> There is increasing recognition that rural individuals, households, and communities live and work in a context of complex, interacting systems. Examples of these systems include the political, social, health and healthcare, economic/market, ecological, and broader environmental systems. Fragile contexts and conflicts can also be understood as systems (p. 14).

The policy framework echoes a system focus concerning project designs:

> We should apply a "systems lens" to our country strategies and project designs. Programs should always consider the larger context in which they operate. Each program should first understand the constellation of actors and institutions relevant to achieving meaningful and lasting results, their interrelations, and the incentives that guide them. A systems lens is also an inclusive one, meaning we must engage under-represented voices in strategic planning and designing our projects, such as women, youth, and other marginalized groups (p. 42).

The above illustrates USAID's view of working with various systems towards achieving self-reliance goals. Similarly, within the focus groups Keith's commentary reflected the need to advance a systems approach as a tool for agroecological approaches:

> And so I think that there are opportunities for agroecological approaches within the journey to self-reliance. But I think they need to be very highly tailored to the environment, both ecological and political, you know, and market where you can find a

> place that can support enough production from a regenerative basis, but then also has access to market and alignment of political, you know, institutions and structures that it's going to allow it to happen. You can't just have the rigidity of agricultural production, with the tonnage is not sufficient. It's going to have to be that plus some form of market support, plus some sort of policy, political support to make it happen

There was also the identified need that without changing the subsystems of the whole, self-reliance and agroecology might both be limited in their abilities such as the commentary of Theo respectively:

> To me, that's consistent with the idea that you don't have overall sustainability unless the implicit subsystems, including economic, social, and environmental are all protected, and are all healthy. So if you prioritize the goals of one of those systems to the detriment of another in the long run, you're not going to have sustainability (Elliott).

In another focus group, Theo reflected on the importance of not further entrenching inequality in societal systems:

> So, part of self-reliance, I think [is] the key tenet [of] improving capacities for people to govern and make their own decisions. And there is a tension in this because if we really were to focus on self-reliance as helping countries become sort of [to] have the capacity to thrive and address their self-identified problems with their self-identified solutions. If that's sort of the key to self-reliance, then, I think our values in some way are secondary. I do not know if I fully believe that or not, but I, on one level, think that it has merit. But then the other you know, the other thing is, do we want to just promote self-reliance that is within a system that we may think is inequitable. So, if you were to promote self-

> reliance in Zimbabwe right now, would it just lead to further entrenchment of the status quo in Zimbabwe? I do not know (Theo).

Both Theo and Elliott illustrated the importance of promoting system-level change, including moving towards inclusivity as requisite to any kind of successful development venture. Elliott specifically connects this idea to sustainability. Both inclusivity and environmental sustainability are key concerns of the agroecological agenda, but not without systemic change which is nonetheless limited within the J2SR framework. Thus, calls such as those above for inclusive and sustainable systems would likely fall short of the transformative agroecological vision.

Economic Viability Undergirds Livelihoods.

As discussed earlier in this chapter, USAID promoted and prioritized private-sector and market-led development as a "key catalyst" for self-reliance. As it pertains to agroecological possibilities, prioritizing the market challenges possibilities to the themes of "holism" and "livelihoods" when both are conceptualized only as economic and not social, culture, or otherwise (Anderson et al., 2021). More specifically, in prioritizing the economic system as "critically important" to "ending poverty and hunger, raising rural incomes, and achieving more sustainable development" (MRR RFA, p. 7) other subsystems within holism are limited because they may play a background role to economics. Both holism and livelihoods are limited by a market-first logic according to Anderson and colleagues (2021). This example introduces livelihoods and USAID's economic underpinning:

> Even growing countries could encounter a "middle-income trap," as their competitive edge in low-wage labor is dulled by progress itself. Countries can fall into this trap if they do not invest in commensurate economic, social, and political transformation, or fail to

> manage sustainably the natural resources on which they depend (USAID Policy Framework Ending the Need for Foreign Assistance, p. 18)

The progress of a country as dulled by low-wage labor fails to acknowledge how cheap labor as a component of the globalized system of labor is detrimental to people's livelihoods in terms of other values not derived from the economy (Anderson et al., 2021). Moreover, what values do exist around livelihoods such as inequality are connected economic goals, "in extreme cases, inequality can dampen a country's growth." (USAID Policy Framework Ending the Need for Foreign Assistance, p. 19)[14]. In addition to the critique that inequality matters because of economics, it is equally important that USAID acknowledges that inequality has additional consequences beyond economics to fully support good livelihoods.

One of the ways livelihoods as expansively defined can be supportive of agroecology is when smallholder farming is valued as a way of life because of its potential to create local food systems that reflect community values (Anderson et al., 2021). This is also one of the promising conditions under the feed the world frame and is something I discuss at the end of this section.

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[14] I observed 49 references to livelihoods, which includes the promotion of a market-first logic as indicated by the Anderson and colleagues (2021) continuum. On livelihoods explicitly (using that keyword), the policy framework illustrates livelihoods as improving, "in many countries, ending the need for foreign assistance is possible. Overall, people's lives and livelihoods are getting better" (p. 18). This excerpt goes on to connect livelihoods to other criteria indicating, "poverty is falling at the fastest rate in history…people are healthier than ever before…more children are in school, and workers have greater access to opportunity…for most people in most countries, the world is far safer than in the past…more people today – more than 4 billion – live in democracies" (p. 18-19). Livelihoods are also connected to instability with the policy framework arguing, "mobilizing effective responses can mitigate the impact of crises, which saves lives and livelihoods, supports stability, and forestalls a deeper spiral" (p. 9). These are rarer times when livelihood is lent to a more robust construct. Other times, it is most often connected to economic growth and a market-first approach as illustrated within the MRR RFA where agriculture, economic growth, and sustainability are all tied together with a focus on livelihoods through raising incomes and combatting poverty: "promoting agricultural-led economic growth in rural areas, where the majority of the world's poor live, is critically important to effectively meet the Sustainable Development Goals of ending poverty and hunger, raising rural incomes, and achieving more sustainable development. Even when presented with economic opportunity, many individuals and households in rural areas do not have the capacity to engage–they face barriers to market entry or they lack the resources necessary to take advantage of these opportunities. In many contexts, conflict and insecurity are central drivers of food insecurity, tied to low growth, high levels of poverty, and dependence on marginal natural resources" (p. 7).

However, pertaining to livelihoods, I include Matthew's commentary here because he offered a defense of smallholder farmers:

> And so, for me, this is the shift towards an inclusive agricultural growth strategy, sort of making the smallholder farmer sector more economically competitive, is like a precondition to the rest of this, right? I mean, so railing at the UN or the FAO saying, "oh, you're not doing agroecology", when you are actually interrupting meetings that are about trying to fortify the smallholder farmer sector. And sort of, yes, it is taking as given that that land is a valuable resource. And if you if you have a sector of smallholders, that are sitting there who actually economically are not competitive, they are very liable to be wiped out. I mean, this is a huge issue. As I am sure you know, in Sub-Saharan Africa right now, some governments are proactively promoting large-scale land concentration, which usually is a very polite word for a very ugly process of displacing large sectors of smallholder farmers. So, the way I have always thought about it is promoting the livelihood [and] the market access of farmers is a precondition to their survival.

Matthew's commentary indicates the value of stallholder farmers as an important component of the food system, but also that the belief that smallholder economic viability via market access is a "precondition to their survival." The MRR RFA echoes this sentiment, "agricultural SMEs are critical conduits that can transform agriculture from a survival strategy into a viable, enterprising livelihood" (p. 14). In another instance, the policy framework identifies an exemplar project that employed "smallholder farmer irrigation schemes to increase production and productivity of high-value crops like this one: bananas" (p. 6). This reveals a logic that other facets of livelihoods may be second to securing economic livelihoods via agricultural development likely

reflecting the reproduction of and in some cases, acceptance of social conditions within a neoliberal organization.

Agroecology as an Environmental Agenda to Protect Economic Growth.

According to Anderson and colleagues (2021), when agroecology's environmental agenda, including climate adaptation, is conceptualized as increased use of biotechnology, and is adopted without any of the other values within an agroecological system, it is viewed as a co-optation. This particular frame known as ecological modernization is also closely tied to the concept of scientific agroecology[15]. While only Matthew and Timothy spoke to the knowledge politics of biotechnology, other participants did suggest agroecology cannot exist without reliance on external inputs or technological advancements. Keith combines agroecology and a both-and model with sustainability types:

> …I think, agroecology is mainstream, and I think one of the reasons it has become mainstream is because the proponents of agroecology are the leaders in the field. [They] are pushing for a both-and model, or it's agroecology and something else, it's not just one thing. And as they've moved away from it being the silver bullet, it's become something much more. That's a much more of a useful tool. It does not have to be 100% organic to be sustainable. There [are] different flavors of sustainability.

Theo expanded on this to indicate the perceptions of scientists with whom he works in the Global South:

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[15] I observed ecological modernization 37 times in the corpus, specifically to climate change, the policy framework illustrates numerous threats indicating the need for "investments in resilience (e.g. protecting vital natural resources, sustainably managing their use, promoting mitigation of and adaptation to climate-related challenges….]to] help societies withstand rising pressures on the resources on which they depend" (p. 134). In another moment within the MRR RFA conceptualizes tools as required because "traditional coping mechanisms will be less and less adequate" (p. 8). The PRCI RFA connects climate risk and input technologies as the research agenda is expected to "take into consideration the expected impacts of climate resilience on agriculture, resilience, and nutrition across the Feed the Future target countries. These impacts can be wide-ranging, including, for instance, the likelihood that some agricultural inputs will be more or less appropriate" (p. 19).

> You know, the agronomists and crop scientists that I work with, they almost all have kind of come to this position that we need, sustainable agroecology, [and] to them [this] means a combination of using inorganic fertilizer, improved hybrid seeds, and used organic inputs and, you know, recycling of in situ, organic inputs. So it strikes me as it's a combination of both, conventional, you know, "modern farming practices" plus this attention to, organic inputs, regenerative agriculture, conservation, farming, trying to kind of coming late to the game, but realizing that we, we do need to have a regenerative approach.

Although from a separate focus group, Matthew's commentary brings back in the idea of livelihoods while weighing the possibilities of dependency on technologies owned by transnational companies:

> …I think it does actually open opportunities towards what I think is consistent with an agroecological approach. To the extent it's providing tools and techniques that solidify the livelihoods of people, even if it does mean integrating them more into the market, even in the worst-case scenario, making them a dependent of the evil Monsanto Empire

Finally, Dwayne reflected on agroecology's broad definition and whether it is truly realistic or intelligent:

> And then on the concept of agroecology. I am not an expert in it, I am interested in it, but it seems to be conceived at one end of the continuum as an extreme lack of reliance on external inputs. And I wonder if that is how everybody conceives agroecology? I guess I have thought of it as reduced and more intelligent use of, you know, fossil fuel-based external inputs, right? But then it did not need to entirely exclude them. And I guess our biases tend to be that it is not realistic, in the short or medium run, and maybe the long

> run, I do not know, to think that countries could produce the amount of food that they need, and families could produce the amount of food that they need without any reliance on external inputs.

The above quotations serve to highlight how agroecology as an environmental approach is valued and even needed. However, this approach may require flexibility rather than rigidity in its use of external inputs and technologies. Two participants also discussed the concept of food system externalities as an impetus to create sustainable change in our food system, Theo commented:

> And then the other one is the environmental and biodiversity cost of the food system. And we are going to pay the piper, you know, we already are from that. So somehow, if we are able to get those costs to be borne by the people, or then by the firms or the groups that are responsible for that, then we may be able to move things in a healthier direction. So that the externality, the negative externalities associated with our food system are somehow dealt with. And when we talk about, you know, self-reliance…let us say, countries in Africa here. I am not sure, but I feel like part of what we could contribute, is helping African governments to understand how not to do it, how, you know, we have this so-called "modern food system," but we are realizing that there are a lot of hidden costs to it. And we might want to make those costs more transparent in the development process in Africa, so that they may not have to repeat the same mistakes, and they can do things, you know, more effectively, as they, you know, transition from where they are at right now to a so-called, you know, "transformed agricultural economy." So, I think all of that would be, you know, appropriate for a donor like USAID to liaise with African governments with and I think some of that would help to fit into, basically providing

> information to African governments and African society about what their journey to self-reliance could be, so as to not kind of get tripped up by mistakes that we have made along the way.

Theo's commentary detailed how sustainability and local participation could work together to shift a food system away from harmful externalities and in response to the lessons learned by the United States food system.

A second analytical component attributed to ecological modernization is the view of natural resource preservation and sustainability as a tool for economic growth. This is in contrast to the reduction of economic growth as a form of preservation and sustainability. These concepts, of course, are specific to the transformative agroecology frame only whereas others identify agroecology as less expansive or radical. This finding suggests that within the J2SR, agroecology as an environmental approach may be more epistemically dominant which I foreshadowed at the beginning of this section. Beginning with the corpus, the policy operationalizes environmental sustainability as a vehicle in support of economic growth:

> **Sustainable economic growth often follows a commitment to effective economic policy and responsible stewardship of a country's natural resources** *[sic]*. A key component of building self-reliance is enterprise-driven economic transformation, often enabled by a concerted program of investment and reform. In some countries, this transformation begins on farms, driven by the spread of tools and technologies that increase agricultural productivity." (p. 28).

Additionally, in the PRCI RFA, climate resilience is framed through the lens of inputs and technology adoption which are limiting to agroecology as a vision for decreased reliance on external inputs such as synthetic fertilizers or hybrid seeds, "this Innovation Lab Applicant may

have the opportunity to promote climate resilience by analyzing possibilities for government policies to promote climate-sensitive inputs, technologies, and practices through its policies and programs" (p. 19). Similarly, in the MRR RFA, there is a focus on technology adoption. For example, "this innovation lab will contribute to USAID's strategic objectives…by achieving impact through the development, testing, and adoption of innovation approaches; and through the shaping of development discourse" (p. 7)[16].

The linkage between sustainability and agroecology also appeared in the focus groups, as Elliott remarked "it seems to me that an underlying objective of both agroecology and J2SR is sustainability" with Violet echoing "I see these two concepts going hand-in-hand with each other". Related to this is that agroecology as an approach to environmental sustainability may work, but beyond that, it may be too vast or even radical with Dwayne commenting:

> …it depends on how you define agroecological so again, what I saw was a definition that was all the way to one end and it seemed like an extreme definition to me, right, no use of outside inputs. If we relax that definition, and think about agroecological approaches, as I'm simply paying a lot more attention to issues like soil health, right? Water quality, the externalities, what as economists we call the externalities of use of external inputs, and frankly, just of farming itself, on insect populations and other animal populations and so

[16] In the MRR RFA alone, there are seven references to technology adoption. Such as, "the MRR Innovation Lab, "is responsible for building the horizontal linkage across appropriate end-users, particularly in target countries, to enable a hand-off of relevant technologies and knowledge to those best positioned for its use to achieve Feed the Future goals and to track progress of such adoption throughout the life of the project" (p. 22). Other examples in the corpus include, a research priority for the PRCI RFA of "analyzing possibilities for government policies to promote climate-sensitive inputs, technologies, and practices" (p. 19). The policy framework indicates digital technologies as a site of inequality offering not of agricultural technology, but technology more generally "emerging technologies can extend the reach of affordable health care, education, energy, and financial services, for example to poor or rural populations, but disparities in access (*i.e.*, "digital divides") also could further widen opportunity gaps, particularly for women and members of marginalized groups". (p. 19). The policy also connects economic growth to technology offering, "a key component of building self-reliance is enterprise-driven economic transformation, often enabled by a concerted program of investment and reform. In some countries, this transformation begins on farms, driven by the spread of tools and technologies that increase agricultural productivity" (p. 28).

> on, so forth. If you take that broad approach to agroecology, while, not excluding the idea of using external inputs, then I think that there is a lot of scope for doing it.

This subsection revealed the way environmental modernization characterized by increased use of biotechnology as a form of sustainability and to combat climate change is dominant within the corpus and among the interpretations of many participants. Relatedly, the idea of sustainability as a key driver of economic growth was observed within the corpus but not spoken to directly by participants. The environmental agenda of agroecology is undoubtedly identified as important by participants, but the select usage of an environmental agenda only alongside the prioritization of biotechnology over other technologies such as intercropping, integrated pest management, or other ecologically-centered practices is considered limiting to an agroecological transition per Anderson and colleagues (2021) work.

Agroecology and Perceptions of Productionism.

As I mentioned above in this chapter, private-sector-driven development is revered within the J2SR, and subsequently, I observed the valuing of smallholder farming in the corpus seldomly[17]. Moreover, among participants while a few valued smallholders, many identified their existence as unrealistic or undesired. In the MRR RFA smallholders in the form of "agricultural SMEs" are identified as "critical conduits that can transform agriculture from a survival strategy into a viable, enterprising livelihood" (p. 14). Similarly, in the policy framework, a project improving "smallholder farmer irrigation schemes to increase production and productivity of high-value crops like this one: bananas" (p. 6) was noted as a model of advancing the J2SR. Within the PRCI RFA, the research agenda concerns the "displacement of income and

[17] I noted mentions of smallholder farming four times in the corpus across three texts. An additional example from the MRR RFA discusses "improving small farmers' and pastoralists productivity, as well as their ability to protect their productive assets in the face of shocks" (p. 14).

livelihoods of small farms and off-farm enterprises by technology, and global trade and markets where scale economies predominate, among others" (p. 14) which how smallholders have an important role in the J2SR. This in turn can create opportunities for agroecology, but a concern is that this value perpetuates a focus on productivity[18] and cash cropping reflecting the feed the world frame. The mention in the PRCI RFA is slightly different in that it acknowledges the threats of globalization on smallholder farmers, but suggests that adaptation occurs within the system rather than seeking to change the system that leads to the displacement of farmers.

Within the focus groups, feed the world a focus productivity emerged from the discussion with regards to increasing production to feed a rising population as Keith observed:

> I mean, the conversations I have with people who are the soil scientists and the agroecology people, they have a math problem. That, the basic math involved in feeding and producing food in the developing world is moving entirely in the wrong direction. There's less arable land, there [are] more people, [so] we're going to have to get more tonnage per hectare, there's no way around that.

There was also a prevailing theme that smallholder farming is not realistic nor desired as Jeremy reflected, "the goal of many small scale farmers is for their kids to not be small scale farmers". Theo in a different focus group offers parallel commentary:

[18] I observed Feed the World productionist logic 19 times across the corpus, for example in the policy framework as an illustration of development progress, "as we look ahead, we believe that in many countries, ending the need for foreign assistance is possible....farm productivity has more than doubled" (p. 8). The PRCA indicates a research priority to address "stagnant productivity" (p. 14). An additional logical component of Feed the World identified by Anderson and colleagues (2021) is a focus on free global trade. For example, the strategic transitions fact sheet indicates self-reliance as tied to "further mobilizing private capital, deepening trade relationships and access to international markets" (p. 2). In the private sector executive summary, USAID offers "the private-sector engagement policy is an Agency-wide call to action, and a mandate to work hand-in-hand with the private sector to design and deliver our development and humanitarian programs across all sectors, and to harness our resources to open markets, and other opportunities for U.S. businesses" (p. 1).

> And then just look at us, you know, my grandfather was a farmer but he did not wish that on me or any of his kids, he wanted them to get out of farming. And he, you know, wanted to sell his farm and said, “this is not the life for you”. And through education, you know, for people who were able to get an education, they're probably doing better now than they would have been doing on the farm. So that's likely to be true for Africans, too if no economic development occurs.

A final commentary that emerged from both Theo and Matthew in separate focus groups spoke to the politics of land. Theo offered the example of enclosures in Zambia ending with the idea that they are perhaps necessary and good:

> I was talking to a policymaker in Zambia five years ago now. And we were talking about land policy and why the Zambian government seems to favor this approach of transferring land from local communities to state farms and big landowners and medium and large scale farms, and he said, "look, our population, our urban populations are, you know, growing astronomically, and we can't, we need to figure out how to feed them. We don't want riots in the streets, blah, blah, blah. So we're trying to put land in the hands of people that are going to be producing commercial surpluses to feed these rapidly growing cities". And, you know, he's basically making the point that if we didn't do that, we're facing civil instability, upheaval, or hunger and all the problems that come with that. So he thought that he really believed that he was doing something that was in the national interest of everybody to basically be trying to kick people off the land, in order to put it in the hands of people that he thought were more productive and would produce surpluses. And then when you say, well, what do you want to do about, the 1000s of people who are now getting dispossessed of land and unable to make a livelihood off the land. And, you

> know, then he invoked the structural transformation argument, which is, "look at what happened in England, with the enclosures movement, people were kicked off the land there. And, you know, it looked like it was a terrible thing. But the agricultural production that happened, the wool production that happened, led to the rise of these cottage industries that ended up employing people and improving their standard of living dramatically compared to what they were doing as serfs on, you know, working on the land". So that, they basically said, "this is what progress looks like". And people get reemployed. And non-farm sector is part of the transformation process. And, you know, if you compare England now to England in the 1600s, most people would rather live in England now than England in the 16th century. So he said, "why would you want to stop us from doing that in Africa?" So it's really complicated. Because there, you know, there may be short term losers, who end up being long-term winners, through this kind of structural transformation process.

In contrast, returning to the commentary of Matthew offered earlier, "in Sub Saharan Africa right now, some governments are proactively promoting large scale land concentration, which usually is a very polite word for a very ugly process of displacing large sectors of smallholder farmers." In building upon this he noted that ensuring the economic viability of the smallholder is the only way to ensure they persist, reflecting a possible deviation from the corpus' emphasis on increasing production.

This section sought to illustrate agroecological opportunities within the J2SR and for land grants. As shown, the J2SR and the interpretation of it by land-grant actors makes agroecology variously possible. This work examined where the opportunities lie alongside what pitfalls may lurk in making those opportunities difficult. Participation, knowledge inclusion, a systems

approach, and valuing smallholder farmers are all possibilities. However, for each of these opportunities there was a similarly undermining condition. The prioritization of a private-sector and market-driven approach according to the literature is a prevailing challenge to agroecology, and this effect was noted across all the findings. Of note is the view that economics underly all other conditions reflecting both neoliberal acceptance and resistance, a topic discussed in greater detail within the next section. According to participants, agroecology and the J2SR are compatible, but this compatibility lies in the conception of agroecology as an environmental and sustainable approach that requires flexibility for the inclusion of external inputs. The reduction of external inputs is a key tenet of agroecology's vision for increased self-reliance as dependency is reduced. The next section, draws the above discussions together to discuss their material implications for land-grant praxis as examples of social practice.

Research Question 3: Material Implications for Land-Grants' Praxis

This final section addresses the interaction between land-grant actors and USAID's policy texts, including how they made meaning from it, how that meaning influenced their praxis, and where discussions of praxis reflected the maintenance or transformation of power relations. This section addresses social practice and discursive practice, where the latter is a part of the former. More specifically it considers: 1) how do the discursive practices and social practices reflect one another, and 2) how the discourse of self-reliance in tandem with land-grant praxis maintain or resist structures of power. This section addresses the explanatory intention of CDA by illustrating how actors are part of the larger social practice evidenced by how their interpretations of the discourse and actions are interwoven with their epistemic lenses as forms of acceptance, creative modification, or resistant critique (Fairclough, 1992).

I organized this research question from broad to narrow beginning first with overarching reactions to The Journey to Self-Reliance encompassing three component themes: 1) the dismissal or discounting of self-reliance and the associated framework as a political buzzword, 2) the large and complex visions of both self-reliance and of agroecology that open each to interpretation and varied usages. Shifting into the social practice findings, the prevailing theme is that the J2SR maintains power structures embedded within the neoliberal agenda, and more specifically supports the neoliberalization of the development apparatus vis-à-vis the sampled land-grants by pushing for the greater involvement of the private sector. I illustrate how this push becomes a site of power struggle as land grant praxis has variously reflected acceptance and slight creative modification, but not active resistance to this agenda. To tackle this overarching theme, I begin with land grant tensions and struggles related to the reproduction of a neoliberal ideology with regards to increased private-sector partnerships. The second sub-section speaks to how the participatory praxis of the J2SR simultaneously transforms and maintains the power imbalances among land-grant universities and their partners.

Reactions to the J2SR and Agroecology

Dismissal or Discounting of the J2SR. When asked for their initial perceptions of the J2SR and to anticipate its legacy, several participants identified it as a buzzword or similar. Joanna remarked that “I feel like every time there's a new administration, they tried to get a new buzzword for similar things” which Keith echoed with the addition of “I think we’ll hear something different in a few months out of the Biden administration,” Similarly, Maya identified it as “old wine in new bottle with the terminology, at least.” In terms of anticipated legacy, Theo noted, “I don't think it'll have a huge impact. It seems like every administration sort of kind of comes and goes with their buzzwords.”

Some participants also offered that the goal and timeline of self-reliance may not be feasible or even desired as Dwayne opined:

> So much of what we do try to develop [in] the capacity locally to produce public goods. And by definition, public goods require public funding, right? So that public funding has to come from somewhere. And with extremely fiscally constrained local governments, it's going to be extremely hard for a local center to generate enough grant funding, we live off grant funding right? For them to generate enough grant funding from their local government, from the national government to do the work that's needed. And second of all, I don't think you want them generating funding just from their national government. So, kind of the definition of self-reliance or sustainability, for a lot of the centers that we support, is the ability to get grant funding from a diversified portfolio of funders, which should include USAID. And so, unfortunately, sometimes this idea of self-reliance or sustainability becomes very myopically interpreted in the question. Well, we've supported them for five years, why do we have to keep supporting them? Why aren't they self-sufficient?

Elliott in the same focus group as Dwayne elaborated on the unrealistic expectations:

> …this terminology [of self-reliance] was used in the context of a statement about how the mission of USAID essentially was to work itself out of business to eliminate the need for foreign aid in the future. And I think that that's just unrealistic. I think that every institution...this kind of gets to the definition of what self-reliance is, you know, you can't imply that every institution becomes an island unto itself. You have to have continuing interactions with other institutions, not only within your own country but internationally. You know, in order to gain the support and receive an audience for what you're doing. So

> I think that you know, self-reliance needs to be a little bit more clearly defined and not in the context of an institution changing so that within a five-year timeframe, they no longer are going to need external support of any kind.

The above indicates how self-reliance as a goal may not be feasible especially within the constraints of development projects. Moreover, it articulates the idea of self-reliance as undesirable indicating that being in a relationship with other institutions, even if financially, is a good thing.

The Epistemic Complexity of Self-Reliance and Agroecology. Fairclough (1992) maintains that texts are elastic and open to various interpretations, and participants described both self-reliance and agroecology as complex and subject to multiple interpretations. The varied interpretations of both concepts reflect epistemic complexity and competing imaginaries. Subsequently, I attend to a subtheme to from participants that the continuum of agroecology discourses by Anderson and colleagues (2021) and the framing of discourses as "enabling" or "disabling" was unhelpful.

Beginning with self-reliance, Keith observed "there [are] so many things that full under that term." Elliot in a separate focus group similarly suggested, "self-reliance needs to be a little bit more clearly defined and not in the context of an institution changing so that within a five-year timeframe, they no longer are going to need external support of any kind." Juliet responding to Elliott noted of J2SR:

> Everyone has a different understanding of what it is. So, I think people might focus on different dimensions. I heard Elliott and for him, it is more about the institutional capacity that local people are able to do the analysis. For me, I am more thinking about climate change and environment, the agroecology, are we growing the kind of crop that

> can be drought-tolerant and for other people that might be the social dimension? Or are we engaging with marginalized groups? So, it is hard to talk about the legacy because I think we all have a different understanding and how we understand that concept will affect how we apply it, the kind of action we are going to take in our research.

Matthew expressed the same sentiment with a bit more focus on the intentionality of how he interpreted self-reliance and to what end:

> So, you could define responsibility as being self-reliant, certainly, my parents would have told me that as a kid. I mean, as you know, especially in debates around poverty in the U.S., right? There is always sort of a conservative narrative that the poor people who are irresponsible, right, and you know, they fornicate too much, they drink too much, they smoke too much they do, they have a lot of bad behaviors. So, this is what I meant earlier, in terms of, you know, with self-reliance, it puts an individual focus on it. And politically, that's actually genius strokes. So, when I see self-reliance, I do a lot of theoretical work on poverty traps, right? So, people that get stuck in situations from which they cannot move forward and be self-reliant, but I view that as a structural situation. So, I can look at that and I can say, oh, this is great, we are going to remove structural constraints that keep people from being self-reliant. On the other hand, the framing is sufficiently elastic, that I think other people could say, okay, this means that we are going to have programs that get people to stop drinking, smoking, and fornicating too much so that they can change their behaviors. And, take care of themselves the way they should have been doing all along. Right?...It's sufficiently elastic, that it's focused on the self, I think it lets people who may be thinking about structural things who may be thinking about the history of colonialism, they can say, "okay, this speaks to me", but

> other people who don't think about it that way, that see everything cast in terms of self-responsibility, and implicitly see people's poverty is a reflection of their own sort of poor decisions, it lets them sort of buy into it also. So, I think it is actually a totally genius phrase, and, you know, I have not been above using it, especially when I am trying to fundraise from USAID. And of course, I tilt it in the way that I think about it. But, you know, I think other people can, can feel happy about the language, because you could see it as sort of coded in exactly the opposite way that I might take it as a structural statement.

Discursively, participants conceptualized agroecology as an environmental concept rather than a transformative vision for the entire food system. This reflects how discourse and social action are imbricated. Participants' reflections on agroecology mirror those of self-reliance as the agricultural approach is equally identified as complex and epistemically challenging. For example, Violet offered:

> Some of the challenges [are] both the agroecological approaches and the J2SR are very complex concepts… It is really broad. It is very complex. It includes so many different dimensions. So, I am not sure how do you kind of tackle all those dimensions at once with so many different stakeholders? Because even me, I am a little bit even lost with what you kind of presented.

Whereas Jeremy indicated that agroecological work is happening, but that those instances attend to a minute piece of its system's frame:

> Agroecology as an approach is often too broad for, say, a project written under a policy, like the Journey to Self-Reliance, and you can fit the little piece that you are studying

> within that broader puzzle. And I think that needs to be done more. But each project is going to be looking at a very small piece of that puzzle

In addition to the complexity of agroecology is the view that the transformative vision encompasses more than participants were familiar with representing a possible contest of imaginaries. Elliot, for example, indicated the discipline of economics informs his view of agroecology, but that a challenge of its implementation is the varied weights attributed to values:

> As economists, we have a certain framework that we're working with, and certain terminology that we're accustomed to using, and one of the challenges is people certainly from different disciplines may use terms to mean things that that we don't necessarily read into those terms. So agroecological, for me, would not have suggested that it is a label for a much broader approach. And so, I think to some extent, the issues that are addressed in ways of approaches that lie at different points along the continuum that you laid out, can be reflected, at least in terms of terminology, they can be reflected in RFAs, in project results frameworks, in the substance of the activities that are being carried out, but how they're weighted, and what they mean in practice, is going to be different. And I think it's also a problem of there inevitably being multiple objectives for any given program. So, to give a really simple example in economics, there can be a dual objective of improving efficiency or profitability, improving the productivity of the use of resources in an aggregate sense, on the one hand, and on the other hand, you can have an objective that is distributional that has to do with how the gains from that are distributed within society. And there can be in some circumstances, trade-offs between them. And so when you add objectives into the decision-making process, then those trade-offs become more complicated. And I think that part of what's involved and the different points along

> the continuum that you laid out is implicitly differently weightings of those multiple objectives.

Building on that response, both Dwayne and Violet in the same focus group offered with respect to Anderson and colleauges (2021) continuum a questiong of why food sovereignty and feed the world were on opposite poles. For example, Violet indicated she understood food sovereignty in economic terms reflecting her disciplinary lens:

> I do not see them to be necessarily exclusive from one to another so you can still be food sovereign and feed the world. So maybe I am wrong, but to me, you can be food sovereign or close to be and also contribute to feeding the world. So, we see that with so many big countries probably like the U.S. where we grow so much of our food and we are also exporting…So to me when I am thinking about food sovereignty, it is often to step away from imports or to be less import-dependent. So, it seems that their definition it is way broader than that. So, it is not just reducing imports, but not getting involved in exports. To me, that graph does not make complete sense. But I guess their definition of food sovereignty is way broader than what we are used to. Because like, if you think about food sovereignty for many countries, that is why they are increasing rice production and rice productivity so they can reduce their dependency on imports, especially following the food crisis, but it seems that in their graph in their figure, they go even beyond import.

Dwayne added to Violet's comments:

> And so, I had the same reaction that Violet to the graph or that timeline or that continuum, right. And I have always seen food sovereignty as a more kind of, maybe this sounds patronizing, but economically informed concept, frankly, than food self-

> sufficiency. And as progress away from the idea of food self-sufficiency, where countries would simply produce all of the food they need that food sovereignty means simply that they can make their own decisions about how to meet their food needs. And that explicitly that could, and likely would include active trade, right, both importing and exporting. So again, I did not see those as being on opposite ends of the spectrum.

Dwayne and Violet's commentary reveal how some participants disagree with the positioning of feed the world and food sovereignty at opposite ends of the continuum. Similarly, a couple of participants across three focus groups identified the terminology of disabling as unhelpful specifically with regards to market-based approaches. For example, Matthew identifies is as distracting and that by describing livelihoods as economic, it does not mean other focuses are not also incorporated such as democratic systems:

> If you focus, livelihoods largely as income from market activities? How is that disabling to an agroecological approach?... it seems to me, it is distracting attention from some of the other things that you describe…If you look at democratic systems, the way economists often do…there actually are feedback loops from promoting livelihoods and people's ability to generate an income and feeding back into their ability to become a real player in the political system. …While certainly AID, does not say oh, we want to boost small farmer income, because that will help them throw the bastards out of out of power or something. You know, there is a cogent kind of argument to be made, in that people that are sort of in a very weak economic situation are also going to be in a very weak political situation. I guess I am just reacting a little bit to sort of the fact that [if] it is not the primary focus does not necessarily mean it is disabling.

Jeremy in a different focus group connects enabling and disabling to the romanticizing of smallholder farmers and vilification of the private sector:

> I think there's some tension in the way that we would, that some scholars would like to define enabling and disabling one, the one that kind of puts on a questionable pedestal, extremely small scale farming as a long term viable lifestyle… Vilifying the private sector initiatives as inherently disabling and seeing small scale farming in the long run as inherently enabling actually think is fairly inconsistent with a kind of holistic systems approach to development.

The above commentary provided across three of the four focus groups reveals the way land grant actors wrestled with the disabling and enabling language, and how this framing may not be the most productive descriptor through the eyes of these participants. This theme connects to another for how the focus group served as a place of awareness building and reflection for participants to consider how to incorporate agroecology into their work. Mary indicated that the ideas of both self-reliance and the way it can affect agroecology were new to her, including any disabling effects, but that she was interested in learning more:

> So, I did not have any prior thoughts about this topic. But definitely, you put some thoughts in my mind. And I am not so sure how to integrate them with my discipline as an economist because most of what I do has gone to the disabling column. You know, the Journey to Self-Reliance in terms of you know, agroecology, but, definitely, you put thoughts in my mind that I did not have before. And, you know, probably it is something that one would want to think through. I would not want to say you know, this is correct or not correct at this point. But definitely, there are thoughts that I would like to continue reflecting on and moving forward as in this journey to self-reliance. On the agroecology,

> it is a wide area, you know, because he said, it is a whole you know, everything is in that agroecology and in my discipline, we really try to remove as much and really focus on what we want to talk about or explore or determine or explore. And, so this idea of the system in agroecology system is not really my mainstream I do not know whether that is disabling or enabling, but thanks for putting those thoughts in my mind.

In a separate focus group, Maya reflected on how agroecology could be incorporated into the work of institutional capacity building:

> The J2SR has been more from an institutional lens, rather than an agroecology lens where by I guess this presentation and session has sort of opened my eyes to the possibility of applying J2SR from that perspective…And so in that sense, thinking about what my perceptions were and now you have introduced sort of a new element into that, that conceptual framework of J2SR. I see opportunities in the sense of, you know, in our view of how we want to build institutional capacity, and making institutions self-reliant, again, not implying that they cannot, they will not depend on other institutions for knowledge partnership, or, you know, other collaborative work. But just to make them more take their own agenda into their own hands kind of reliance. I see some opportunities to then introduce this agroecological lens, especially in institutions that are focusing on agriculture and food security-related research agenda, or policy agenda, that they could sort of introduce that in their discourse, or in their mandate, this type of an approach to further take the concept of J2SR at that level.

Finally, in the same focus group as Maya, Juliet grappled with how such complexity could be put into practice:

> So, I do not know how then do you explain [agroecology] in an easy way to the different people involved in it? It is really broad. It is very complex. It includes so many different dimensions. So, I am not sure how do you kind of tackle all those dimensions at once with so many different stakeholders? Because even me, I am a little bit even lost with what you kind of presented.

The above reflections illustrate the potential of agroecology capacity building with land-grant universities, but that perhaps alternatives to disabling language may be needed. However, it is also possible that even with increased awareness people may disagree agroecology possessions potential to advance food security globally. For example, the commentary offered by Matthew on La Via Campesina indicates how food sovereignty is both valued and also frustrating. He offered how the vision of La Via Campesina requires an economic underpinning to be possible:

> I’ve done research earlier in my life in Central America where market processes are leading to large-scale displacement of smallholder farmers and sort of wiping them out. Okay. So I personally think that's, that's, that's not a good thing for a variety of reasons. And so for me, this is the shift towards an inclusive agricultural growth strategy, sort of making the smallholder farmer sector more economically competitive, is like a precondition to the rest of this, right. I mean, so somehow, you know, railing at the UN or the FAO saying, oh, you're not doing agroecology. When you're actually interrupting meetings that are about trying to fortify the smallholder farmer sector. And sort of, yes, it's taking as given that that land is a valuable resource. And if you if you have a sector [of] smallholders, that are sitting there who actually economically are not competitive, they are very liable to be to be wiped out. I mean, this is a huge issue. As I'm sure you know, in Sub Saharan Africa right now, some governments are proactively promoting

> large scale land concentration, which usually is a very polite word for a very ugly process of displacing large sectors of smallholder farmers. So, the way I've always thought about it is promoting the livelihood [and] the market access [of] farmers is a precondition to their survival.

Matthew's reflection reveals a level of nuanced complexity in how he views agroecology as a possibly transformative agenda, but it also indicates neoliberal acceptance where agroecology is not feasible without first economic and market conditions. This reflects a possible viewpoint that a market first agenda may be perceived as inevitable for international agricultural development.

The above passages illustrate how participants wrestled with various forms of self-reliance simultaneously expressing a level of consciousness about how it is interpreted differently, and how those interpretations can be politically useful. While agroecology reflects a similar level of complexity to self-reliance, most participants did not contend with its concepts in the same way. Instead, participants generally expressed surprise and subsequently curiosity over agroecology's various forms, especially the broader vision presented. Participants often returned to the more familiar concept grounded in environmental principles by indicating how broad the transformative imaginary is, the difficulty in understanding its breadth, and also the feasibility to applying it to food security projects. This reflects what is likely a limited awareness of agroecology's transformative potential. For example, Dwayne noted, "and then on the concept of agroecology. I'm not [an] expert in it, I'm interested in it, but…." Participants may be more familiar with self-reliance because it is a term that has been used many times, and it is the focus of the USAID policy under which their work is performed. Agroecology as a transformative food system imaginary was not a priority in the corpus, making it a fresh concept with which to contend.

In this next section, I discuss the social practice of The Journey to Self-Reliance by focusing on the material implications of private-sector prioritization and a participatory paradigm. In line with the social practice tenet of CDA, I pay attention to the ways these discursive tensions manifest as maintenance, creative modification, or resistance to social power. I discuss how participants variously contended with the private-sector approach reflecting both acceptance and concern over its feasibility. Meanwhile, I illustrate that the participatory paradigm was well accepted as participants identified the redistribution of money and research agenda setting away from the land-grants towards partners in the Global South as a named value.

Social Practice of the J2SR

Private-Sector Partnership Tensions. As mentioned earlier in this chapter, the J2SR prioritizes the private sector as an engine of development reflecting the continued promulgation of neoliberal logic. One prevailing theme across all focus groups was the acceptance of a market-based approach to addressing the needs of development. Nonetheless, a greater focus on the private sector as a key development partner with whom land-grants and the development apparatus should work was variously resisted or accepted. USAID released the private sector engagement executive summary and policy framework as indicated before the PRCI project's RFA at MSU whereas the MRR project at UC Davis was released following the private-sector policy and on the same day as the policy framework. This is notable because I observed a difference in how these two organizations wrestled with the Journey to Self-Reliance's private sector approach. For example, participants from MSU expressed surprise over the prioritization of private-sector leadership whereas the UC Davis team articulated partnering explicitly with the private sector. Moreover, the two broad groups expressed various frames through which to advance self-reliance as dictated by their RFAs. The PRCI RFA generally articulates institutional

capacity building as its trajectory towards self-reliance, which was similarly mirrored among MSU participants. The MRR RFA articulates market-led interventions through partnerships with the private sector, which was also mirrored by UC Davis participants.

Related to the focus on private-sector-driven development, participants' reflections were varied in terms of its material impacts. From the MRR lab, Tiffany articulated USAID is "big on the private sector in general. In our work, we tend to focus more on the local....it makes more sense to work with [the] local private sector or at least regional." Such a focus indicates acceptance of the private-sector engagement approach. Others, like Jeremy, defended the private sector by expressing caution over the typology of discursive approaches by Anderson et al., (2021), who contrasts the glorification of small-scale farming against the vilification of the private sector:

> In addition to my training as an economist, I am also trained as a kind of participatory community development practitioner. I think there is some tension in the way that we would, that some scholars, would like to define enabling and disabling one, the one that kind of puts on a questionable pedestal, extremely small-scale farming as a long-term viable lifestyle. So, you make many references to the private sector, but the private sector is not a homogenous thing. It is not actually a thing that exists at all. Vilifying the private sector initiatives as inherently disabling and seeing small-scale farming in the long run as inherently enabling is actually, I think, fairly inconsistent with a kind of holistic systems approach to development. The goal of many small-scale farmers is for their kids to not be small-scale farmers. And the goal is to make enough of a living and to see the next generation do something that is more reliable, and less subject to weather and economic shocks. Not to continue in the same system that we have been in for a long time. And the

> role of the private sector is not to necessarily make a large profit. It is that properly designed products within the private sector that are locally appropriate, because those private sector companies are run by local interests, and have a long-term commitment to an area, can provide services and provide opportunities that publicly funded projects that need to maintain public support and need to compete with other public interests for their budgets just probably cannot do in the long run. And so, I think it is tricky to apply some of the enabling disabling typology to agricultural development in the context that that this policy is focused on.

Similarly, Matthew offered that the prioritization of the private sector was not inherently challenging to agroecology:

> …if you focus on livelihoods largely as income from market activities, how is that disabling to an agroecological approach?...it seems to me, it's distracting attention from some of the other things you describe. I suppose, I mean, I think the other point I would make, as you know, some things like political power – I mean, if you think about a democratic, if you look at democratic systems the way economists often do, which may not be your way, or any normal person's way of looking at it, I mean there are actually feedback loops from promoting livelihoods and people's ability to generate an income and feeding back into their ability to become a real player in the political system….
> You know, there is a, there is a cogent kind of argument to be made, in that people that are sort of in a very weak economic situation are also going to be in a very weak political situation. So I don't, I guess I'm just reacting a little bit to sort of the fact that it's not the primary focus doesn't necessarily mean it's disabling.

Moreover, Matthew's commentary that defended smallholders from enclosures and looked to make them economically viable could be identified as slight creative modification because he was not advocating for the dissolving of smallholders in favor of a more efficient and corporate-led structure. Instead, Matthew adopted neoliberal logic while seeking to preserve what is now an alternative mode of living within the social practice of neoliberal ideology.

Then there was a theme from MSU participants in one focus group together who reflected, and at times, questioned the role and possibilities of working with the private sector:

> And I am just, you know, it seems to me that one of the concerns about private sector involvement is exactly the extent to which private firms are going to be taking into account impacts, broader impacts on society as a whole. They are obviously interested, maybe not explicitly, maybe they are not recognizing the benefit that they get from public investment and public goods. But they are typically, except for really big companies that have a corporate responsibility arm, they are typically not devoting resources to contributing to that. They're devoting their resources to improving their own bottom line. So I am wondering how in some of these broader in some of these approaches that have more of a focus on inclusivity, that's consistent with an emphasis on private sector activity? (Elliot)

And this example by Clarissa where she discussed the need for more thought on private sector partnerships:

> And so I think going back to, I mean, just the points that have already been made around systems effects and systems thinking, those are sometimes, you know, furthering economic value or increasing partnerships does not inherently mean sustainability or in some aspects. So, yeah, I think opportunities would certainly be on developing stronger

> criteria for public-private partnership and thinking more long term about impact, not just the economic output or number of collaborators, which I often see as the metrics used. (Clarissa)

Lastly, Joanna offered an important example:

> I still think there are a lot of assumptions that are being made by USAID in this framework, and I think similar to what some other folks have said it sort of assumes that certain things are in place. You know, how do you rely entirely?...I think self-reliance sort of ignores the poorest of the poor. And the fact that you're always going to need, there's probably going to be 10 to 20% of the population that just really have nothing to fall back on. They're living on the edge of existence and one shock is going to throw them into a terrible situation. So there always needs to be something there. And does the private sector take that into account?

The above reflections serve as examples of possible contestation that the private sector is the appropriate or best vehicle through which development should be achieved. These illustrate tensions between the motivations of private sector to achieve capital returns alongside the need for development to advance social goods that may not necessarily be bound to profits. Building on this is the reflection for how the private sector may lack sufficient resources or infrastructure to attend to development needs.

Participatory Praxis as Power Struggle. Related to participation are the two themes of capacity building and how participants viewed the J2SR as a support towards increasing participation among partners in the Global South. I argue that the focus on capacity building alongside increased control by principal investigators in the Global South illustrates the simultaneous maintenance of power relations between land-grants and organizations in the

Global South. I also contend the shifting of funds to PIs is a slight creative transformation of these relations as limited power has shifted away from land-grants who nonetheless remain accountable for the research despite directly funding research at other institutions. Furthermore, the possibilities for shifting power was limited because the J2SR theory of change indicated capacity building as preceding the control over research. Thus, the possibilities of shifting epistemic power were lessened because capacity building could further embed the market-first approach as a research agenda. At the same time, actors may be unaware of the possible effects of these embedded ideologies because of the underlying acceptance of neoliberal logic, as discussed above.

I begin by illustrating the interconnection between neoliberal acceptance, capacity building, and local participation by citing Maya's comments concerning the shift towards supporting partners in doing research themselves:

> [The J2SR] has pivoted the focus from 'do it yourself' to 'build their capacity to do it.' Thus, building local capacity to do research and outreach is receiving more emphasis and resources [and], the theory of change of doing international food security work has changed. It now includes 'involvement/participation/capacity of local partners' as necessary conditions to achieve results and outcomes. There is a lot more emphasis now on sustainability, ownership, and co-creation in discussions among development practitioners and funders.

Theo in a separate focus group also offered how as development practitioners we need to center local decision making to achieve self-reliance:

> So, part of self-reliance, I think that, for me, the key tenet there is improving capacities for people to govern and make their own decisions. And there is a tension in this because

> if we really were to focus on self-reliance as helping countries become sort of [to] have the capacity to thrive and address their self-identified problems with their self-identified solutions if that is the if that's sort of the key to self-reliance, then, I think our values in some way are secondary. I do not know if I fully believe that or not, but you know, on one level, I think that has merit.

One critical component underlying Theo's commentary is on equipping people to make their own decisions which subsequently connects to the importance of building democratic and participatory systems. Keith noted the importance of local decision making within university research and policy agendas:

> There is more support for the capacity development type work that Theo does. And there has been more support for the work that we do and sort of building local innovation ecosystems where universities can actually be very involved in driving either local policy through programs like PRCI, or through real innovation creation, you know, research-based innovation creation that our groups been working on.

The goals of building capacity towards self-reliance or ending development aid resonate with some participants. For example, returning to Theo, he embraced this as as validation of his professional philosophy:

> I believe that I've always had most of the values of self-reliance in what I'm trying to do anyway. So I would say it was just good for me to see that. This term kind of came up as an explicit value of USAID. And one that, like I said, from the beginning, I was very happy to see self-reliance being emphasized. So I don't really think it's influenced what I do that much, but maybe there's been, I don't know, you're probably not very familiar with my work but probably most of what I've been doing the last five years has been

> working to build the capacity of African policy institutes in Africa, which I see as a form of self-reliance. USAID has made funds available to help us do that. And, and this PRCI Innovation Lab is dedicated to building institutional capacity in Africa for policy analysis. So I would say if anything, it's positively impacted the work that my associates and I at MSU have been working on.

Similarly, in a separate focus group, Timothy observed about working to make the land grant unecessary:

> I think it would be good to have a strategy where in a sense, we are trying to work ourselves out of the job in the sense that we are trying to build institutional capacity in the countries where we were working. And I've always seen that every grant that I have worked on from USAID, there was always a big component of trying to build local capacity. And that I think is a really good thing.

Meanwhile, Tiffany reflected that she anticipated, or at least hoped, that the focus on capacity building will continue, even if language changes:

> So, I think the language might change, but the overall mission, objective, tenor of the work [of] trying to increase the local capacity of local farmers, local researchers, local private sector, to take on some things on their own and reduce the reliance on donor support, I think that will probably continue.

Relatedly, the second theme emerging from the local focus is a minor power shift in which land-grants cede funds and principal investigator roles to research institutions in the Global South. Some participants noted that this may lead to land grants serving in supporting rather than leadership roles in the future. This connects to the commentary from Mary who noted how the J2SR may allow her to “self-determine the agenda within some boundaries…at least my voice as

a researcher in this part of the world can be heard in terms of determining the kind of matters and issues that we like to look into". This theme was especially strong among the participants affiliated with the MRR lab who built the "All In" program specific to funding researchers in the Global South directly. For example, Matthew viewed the logic and language of the J2SR as a catalyst of this type of shift:

> We have explicitly proposed turning the traditional Innovation Lab model upside down… So, you know, so the traditional model funds researchers at land-grants, what we did with the "All In" program, we took a portion of our research budget, and we put it out to bid to PIs who are based in African research institutions, sort of taking out the land-grants completely. So, when we were first thinking about doing this, I think, Journey to Self-Reliance was actually implicitly really important. Because we were worried that AID would actually become very unhappy with this idea. Because they would say no, that the Innovation Labs are, you know, this is our political strategy to make sure red-state senators support the budget of USAID. …So, for us, we sort of tentatively put this idea out there. And I think because of USAID's own rhetoric of Journey to Self-Reliance including the kind of the elements of that Timothy was talking about, you know, because a lot of the language was explicitly, countries need to be able to not only be self-reliant, but to problem solve, so that they stay self-reliant, they need their own scientific enterprise, we could actually hide behind that, if that's the right word, and sort of feel like we could get away with it. If that Journey to Self-Reliance language had not been there, I am not sure we would have actually tried to tell USAID, we are going to take, whatever our research funds for this cycle, somewhere between 15 and 20 million, and put more or less 5 million of that amount of money into this program, which actually runs counter to

> the political, what I see is the political logic, and AID absolutely loves it, right? They think it is fantastic. And, Timothy likes it, you know, for largely the same reasons. But the Journey to Self-Reliance for us was an enabler of this.

Similarly, Tiffany viewed J2SR as supportive of her work but suggests this shift was inevitable and USAID helped expedite it:

> So like our investment as a land grant institution, we're working on better partnering, with the universities we work with, and the universities in these countries, to create research systems in those countries that are self-reliant and can address local problems, come up with local solutions, do local research, [and] I think that's going to have an, I hope that's going to have an enduring impact on both the way in which U.S. institutions, particularly land-grants, like ours, work with local research organizations, I hope that endures. And that kind of came out of [the J2SR] to some extent. And then I hope, it seeps out of the land grant and Innovation Lab system into increasing investments in local research institutions, by other organizations to other parts of USAID, other donors, things like that. Because by strengthening their capacity to work with USAID, which is a bit of a beast in terms of regulations, and contract management and reporting, so overcoming that helps. It is not just [that] a lot of [us] land grant universities have been trained to increase improve [our] collaborative nature and [our] relationships with local research organizations. And I think that itself will have enduring impacts. And to some extent, that could be looked at as a legacy of the Journey to Self-Reliance. And to some extent, I think it is a natural progression. And that these institutions were already growing their capacity, and it was time to actually start working with them a little bit more as equals rather than, oh, we hire these people, you know, because there is this historical

> thing with the Innovation Lab system where you have to work with a local in-country research institution, but a lot of times it was not an equal relationship. So, I think the trends, a lot of Innovation Labs, but particularly us, you then try to transfer that leadership to the local institutions. Is that a part of a journey to self-reliance? Or is that the natural progression of things? It is hard to say. I think it is more the latter than the former. But I think the Journey to Self-Reliance definitely helped push it to the forefront of the conversation and maybe made [the trend] move a little more quickly than it might have otherwise.

In terms of anticipated legacy, Maya argued that as a result, "the funding relationship from development agencies to land-grant institutions will change from direct recipient of funds to sub-recipients (via local institutions)." Albeit, her commentary sounds as if the prediction will occur in the distant future rather than soon. In terms of local partners, the predominant organizations with whom land grants mentioned working with are local research institutions (both) and the local private sector (only the MRR). Tiffany indicated increasing the capacity of "local farmers, local researchers, local private sector" but there were no mentions of civil society organizations as partners among any participants for capacity or for direct funding.

In this chapter, I traced the three research questions of my dissertation moving between the textual construction of self-reliance that reproduces neoliberal ideology and participatory praxis and how this construction affects the discursive practice of agroecological opportunities. Building on these two layers, I indicated how the sampled land grant actors variously contended with both self-reliance and agroecology. The next and concluding chapter, draws all three levels of Fairclough's model together to develop recommendations for next steps.

CHAPTER 6: DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Introduction

As earlier chapters revealed, policy texts cannot be explicated apart from the larger social context within which they are created, consumed, modified, and acted upon. Instead, policy discourse is relational as it reflects, maintains, or contests these larger social conditions. The mediating factor at play between discourse and the larger world is the interpretation by people who consume discourse because texts are always open to interpretation (Fairclough, 1992). Subsequently, both discourse and the interpretations by people are embedded within larger forces that reflect the maintenance or resistance of unequal power relations. My research sought to address the overarching research question of: in the context of USAID's "The Journey to Self-Reliance," how, if at all, do land-grant universities play a role in constructing the discourse of self-reliance in the domain of international food security development? In this final chapter, I center on addressing my three operational questions, drawing connections between the overarching themes discussed in chapter five and the available literature. In so doing, I describe how land-grant universities may contribute to the maintenance of the status quo through their acceptance and reproduction of the neoliberal ideology that undergirds self-reliance. Moreover, I optimistically offer evidence of possibility through which land-grant actors may resist neoliberalism in support of a more transformative agroecological agenda.

The first question I explain focuses on how self-reliance was represented in the corpus of The Journey to Self-Reliance from 2018 to 2020? My research revealed how USAID's conception of self-reliance maintained neoliberal ideology as a dominant political-economic orientation through anti-welfare rhetoric focused on capacity and the prioritization of market-led approaches towards development. That discourse, however, also supported marginal shifts by actively

promoting local participation and leadership, which potentially could support the democratic possibilities and self-determination of the Global South. However, I caution that these potentials exist within the epistemic boundary laid by USAID's neoliberal self-reliance definition.

The second question addressed how, if at all, the discourse of self-reliance reflected agroecological possibilities for land-grant universities. For agroecology, I discussed the epistemic tensions between a neoliberal private sector prioritized approach and an espoused local participation and leadership focus. I argued that these tensions largely minimize opportunities for transformational agroecology, but that scientific agroecology might be feasible.

The third and final question investigated the material implications on land-grants' international food security development praxis. I contended that the discourse of self-reliance may have supported a partial cession of material and epistemic power to research institutions in the Global South yet arguably this shift lives within the epistemic frame outlined by USAID's concept and accountability requirements. Additionally, I argue that civil society and subsequently transformative agroecology are at risk of marginalization as articulated partnerships focus on the private sector and research institutions rather than multi-sectoral coalitions that are critical for food system transformation (IPES-Food & ETC Group, 2021).

Operational Question One: USAID's Self-Reliance

This question sought to reveal what USAID meant by self-reliance in its policy framework and to describe the various constructs and ideologies underpinning it. The overarching finding for self-reliance representation is the reproduction of neoliberal ideology alongside a focus on local leadership. This conception blends the two types of self-reliance presented in the literature review. Namely, self-reliance as a concept embedded in sustainability reflected the view that environmental sustainability is a tool for economic growth rather than

protection of the ecological ceiling indicating that this idea of sustainability reflects neoliberalism (Caradonna, 2014; McMichael, 2018; Raworth, 2017). Consequently, continued unfettered economic growth as promoted by self-reliance may lead to ecological collapse among other social and infrastructure consequences (Raworth, 2017).

Looking to others' work, my research finds evidence of continuing dominance of neoliberal ideology within the current food regime, international development, and higher education. This work did not set out to confirm this as it is well-founded in the literature and was unlikely to be refuted. However, this work does build on the research of Duffield (2007a) who documented the neoliberal tendrils within self-reliance as an international development goal, and Ferns and Amaeshi (2019) who highlighted the neoliberalization of sustainable development, including the prominent role played by the private sector in its workings. Both of these works use a discursive lens to understand self-reliance and sustainability. The promulgation of neoliberal ideology both within the discourse and in its material articulation support Latour's (2018) argument that globalization opens the world to a singular standardized narrative of growth and development rather than a plurality of visions.

Although the corpus placed a strong influence on local leadership and local solutions, I argued the epistemic possibilities of local solutions are restricted by the boundary drawn by the tenets of the aforementioned neoliberal ideology. Moreover, this work also supports the pilot findings by Kelinsky-Jones and Niewolny (2021) who demonstrated that the J2SR may reproduce neoliberal ideology at a higher level through the prioritization of private-sector-led development. Significantly, this dissertation illustrated local knowledge could be used as a tool to inform private sector interventions. This finding was not reflected among the focus group participants. As a result, it is unclear whether this discursive risk manifests in the material world

and thus is considered a preliminary finding. Should this possibility truly manifest, this is reminiscent of Zanotti's (2011) work on how civil society was repurposed in the 1990s by the development apparatus to access the world's poor, making it increasingly possible for bilateral agencies and international organizations to monitor and intervene according to good governance standards.

The J2SR's focus on private sector partnerships to advance development connects to the critiques of the corporatization of higher education due to decreased public funding, leading to the pursuit of private funding (Heller, 2016; Santos, 2018). Notably, this represents a moment when public funding could be interpreted as contributing to higher education's corporatization by prioritizing private sector partnerships and subsequently centering research and development interventions around private sector interests.

Operational Question Two: Agroecological Possibilities

Question two sought to understand where agroecological possibilities lie for land-grant actors by examining the interaction between the discourse and land-grant actors. A prevailing theme is that possibilities for agroecological transformation are highly limited by the predominance of neoliberal market-first logic, environmental modernization, and increasing production (Anderson et al., 2021). However, given the focus on environmental sustainability, participants noted some scope for what Bellamy and Ioris (2017) call scientific agroecology. Moreover, the articulations by participants concerning increasing efficiency and decreasing harmful inputs illustrate that these land-grants may have begun the journey towards agroecological transitions (Gliessman, 2016). Nonetheless, to many scholars, anything short of advancing political agroecology is co-optation because it dilutes the possibilities for transformation (Anderson et al., 2021; Trauger, 2015). One participant criticized La Via

Campesina for not compromising on their agenda, echoing these scholars' views for maintaining the agenda intact.

This is inherently a challenge of epistemic tension and negotiation between a radical rights-based agenda and current dominant practices. This was analyzed by Trauger and colleagues (2017) who ask the question "can the revolution be institutionalized?" (p. 1). The authors discussed the challenges associated with bridging a radical agenda and state policy. To this end, they called for increased and new democratic spaces to support ongoing epistemic negotiations such as increased civil society leadership.

Among focus group participants, there was a theme that agroecology needs technological advancements to be relevant and successful. While one participant briefly acknowledged the dependence of inputs concerning transnational companies like Monsanto, there was nonetheless a sentiment that agricultural technology and external inputs would be required to fulfill production needs in an agroecological approach. This reflects the ongoing epistemic tensions related to the productionist frame to imagine changing the current system. At the same time, it invites agroecology into the current system and asks it to change. The implication is that these ontological and epistemological tensions risk land-grants prematurely foreclosing on the visions of peasants and farmers in the Global South. Moreover, a focus on technology as a given impinges on their democratic rights to help decide the future of their communities. For example, Pimbert (2018) argues that technology adoption and usage should be decided upon by local communities rather than external decision-makers since democracy is a linchpin of food sovereignty. One reason for this is that agroecology is at risk of manipulation towards corporate enrichment when the agenda is advanced alongside a technocratic focus (Bellamy & Ioris, 2017). Similarly, Collins' (2017) work on Northern university-run development projects reminds of the

dangers of perpetuating Easterly's (2014) “tyranny of experts” where scholars and practitioners derive development solutions in a vacuum that are then applied uniformly.

Despite the J2SR’s articulation of local solutions and leadership as important, there were no observed incidences within the corpus or within the focus groups of how technology adoption would be decided upon in communities. Instead, the corpus focused on overcoming technology adoption hesitancy and the focus groups highlighted the view that technology for agriculture is more of a requirement versus a consideration for local decision-making. Other scholars have contended that the world’s poor are unsustainable where they may be blamed for climate change and environmental damage, thus sustainable solutions focus on improving their capacity (Duffield, 2007a; Reid, 2013; Rist, 2019). Similarly, the J2SR argued for overcoming technological hesitancy and risk aversion through increased technological adoption, which focuses the idea of sustainability on behavioral adaptation by citizens in the Global South rather than other problematic practices such as continued corporate growth.

Within the focus groups, participants expressed awareness of these epistemic tensions by identifying how their disciplinary frames provide a common vocabulary and way of thinking about agricultural production that makes engagement with agroecology’s expansive vision difficult. Some participants articulated that in their processing of these ideas they were surprised their frames could be disabling to agroecology. I suggest that this represents one of the first stages in critical praxis which is to develop awareness about alternative ontological and epistemological realities (Niewolny, 2021; Sorrells, 2014). Moreover, since the imaginary represents a shared set of norms and beliefs, such awareness building could serve to expand previously limiting imaginaries (Stephenson, 2011). However, I caution that the disabling and enabling language of Anderson and colleagues (2021) may not be as supporting towards critical

praxis given the reactions by some participants. Moreover, although presented as a continuum, it may nonetheless perpetuate the confusing nature of presenting food security and food sovereignty as a binary (Clapp, 2014).

Operational Question Three: Implications for Land-Grants' Scholar-Practitioner Praxis

Some participants embraced the goal of self-reliance to end the need for development by improving the world's conditions in such a way that they do not need aid. This could support the anti-welfare rhetoric observed in self-reliance and often reflected in United States' policy due to the perception that social support is unsustainable and that many are not deserving of support (Halvorsen, 1998; Kiš, 2018; Marsland, 1995). Moreover, Duffield (2007a) views self-reliance as an impossible goal, a sentiment a few participants echoed indicating caution against reproducing this sentiment in their praxis. In light of this impossibility, Halvorsen (1998) contends that the idea of self-reliance deprives people who need the aid of important support, further enshrining them in a state of poverty. Ultimately, I find that the impact of the Journey to Self-Reliance as a concept is not inherently prognostic because participants commonly believed it to be a new political buzzword that will one day be phased out. Instead, what is accepted and reproduced is the underlying neoliberal logic that moves self-reliance through the material world. That is, I found that those involved with this frame focused more on the ideological current that underpinned it rather than its marketing and policy packaging.

In further support of this, some participants exhibited slight forms of creative modification in response to the J2SR whether it be the dismissal of self-reliance as a political buzzword or articulating varying ways that the concept could be interpreted and espoused. Those who identified the policy as political jargon or a buzzword suggest that the policy was unlikely to influence praxis as it was not taken very seriously. For example, UC Davis identified the

localized focus within the corpus to be a catalyst for their program to fund principal researchers in the Global South directly despite the perception that it may be politically unpopular within the United States. Yet, academic to academic partnerships, such as those described, do little to democratize knowledge since academics globally tend to be fairly homogenous epistemically (Gaventa & Bivens, 2014). Indeed, many voices believe that to effect change - whether that is through democratizing knowledge, changing imaginaries, or transforming the food systems - partnerships must include co-creation of possibilities with the civil society (Gaventa & Bivens, 2014; IPES-Food & ETC Group, 2021; Niewolny, 2021; Stephenson, 2011).

Expanding on the theme of directly funding research institutions is the connected theme of capacity building. The J2SR's focus on capacity building as a vehicle to support more local organizations to obtain USAID funding is a positive shift towards increased community control. However, what self-reliance is and how to get there have predetermined metrics created by USAID. This automatically limits the degree of self-determination because it precludes any conception of self-reliance other than the neoliberal one. I argue that this limits participatory possibilities for local actors to engage in interactive participation according to Pretty's (1995) typology because external control will always be maintained since USAID has already conceptualized self-reliance. I argue that the focus on local capacity and leadership is both a constraining and an opening for international agricultural development. It constrains because it may further embed neoliberal ideology within international agricultural development and opens because discourse is not automatically absorbed, but instead variably interpreted (Fairclough, 1992). This means that even though capacity building efforts may reflect the reproduction of neoliberalism, it does not mean that actors in the Global South will automatically reproduce the same logic frames in their research and priorities.

In terms of partnerships, even though USAID defines the private sector broadly and includes cooperatives, no participants mentioned working with such organizations. Moreover, no land grant actors in focus groups identified working with civil society organizations. Instead, research institutions and local private sector organizations were the two primary partnerships articulated. The shift of control of research funds to principal investigators in the Global South represents a possibility for epistemic justice and self-determination of communities. However, as this research did not observe any involvement with civil society or cooperatives, the possibility of this epistemic and material power shift is limited because only some actors are in play within the knowledge economy and those who remain, such as universities, find themselves limited in achieving social justice because of economic pressures (Gaventa & Bivens, 2014). As a result, I contend that civil society actors and the expansive possibilities of moving towards justice are at risk of marginalization as research institutions and the private sector become the prevailing partner norms. Cooperatives play a vital role in civil society, especially for food system movements (IPES-Food & ETC Group, 2021). Thus, agroecological possibilities may be significantly challenged by the omission of civil society participation and leadership.

Returning to the work of Santos (2018), universities and research institutions can tend to support and educate the elites of society to serve corporate and market-driven needs. To Santos (2007b), universities fundamentally lean towards perpetuating Northern science as the best way to make decisions rather than allowing for indigenous, experiential, spiritual, or other knowledge forms to hold equal footing. Collins and Mueller (2016) documented a similar phenomenon with indigenous knowledge with land grant extension. Should this be accurate, the ramifications of ceding research funds, as an attempt to redistribute epistemic and material power, is that development agendas may become more locally representative on paper, but in reality, they

might only represent Northern scientific knowledge. As a result, I caution that social movements like food sovereignty and agroecology are at continued risk of being disregarded since they are typically advanced outside the walls of higher education by civil society and grassroots organizations.

Recommendations for Praxis, Policy, and Research

This research identified recommendations at three levels, including land-grant praxis, policy, and future research. In terms of land-grant praxis, given the aforementioned risks to civil society participation and subsequently self-determination by communities, I recommend land-grant universities and USAID intentionally look to develop multisectoral and civil society partnerships as a way to center the needs of those most affected by food insecurity (IPES-Food & ETC Group, 2021; Niewolny, 2021). Projects can never fully attend to the myriad of experiences, needs, and concerns present in an entire country; however, looking towards partnerships that represent a broader swath of the population, especially including those who are most affected as Niewolny (2021) illustrates, would be a beneficial first step towards equitable food system transformation. For example, when I worked at the international development office, employees traveled to other countries to conduct “scoping missions” to identify prospective partners with whom to partner on USAID-funded requests for application. While these trips are different in nature than what I propose given the specific funding goal, they nonetheless indicate the availability of relationship-building resources among some land grants. As such, I encourage land grants to prioritize these types of trips not because of possible funding, but because collectively, the global food system is at a critical state and in need of partnerships that will help effect change.

My second praxis recommendation is for capacity-building efforts on agroecology targeted at land-grant scholar-practitioners. This would need to include multiple offerings beginning at what agroecology is, and what transformational potential it contains for international agricultural development. Such interventions could be advanced through conference sessions and extension trainings. Since single events may be insufficient to provide ample time to cover material, pre-conference workshops that are longer in length would be advantageous. For example, the Association for International Agricultural and Extension Education holds a multi-day conference annually. An entire track dedicated to agroecology that builds across the three days could be used to introduce agroecology as a concept and end with ways for international development actors to incorporate agroecology into their own work.

My third idea is for existing innovation labs to prioritize agroecological work. Since participants stated the J2SR's focus on sustainability makes room for agroecology, this could the opening for LGUs to invest in agroecology. Imploring sustainability and inclusivity together would likely help LGUs center agroecology as more than an environmental agenda. Subsequently, LGUs could submit stories from agroecological projects to USAID as an example of exemplar agricultural research and development. USAID often highlights specific projects that help raise awareness of their funding impact. Such an activity would not only build awareness of agroecology more generally but may also help convey to USAID and beyond a tangible example of agroecology's possibilities.

My fourth recommendation invites land grant universities and other institutions of higher education to identify and cultivate possibilities to incorporate agroecology into the curricular and extension education work, especially those aligned with critical food systems education (Meek & Tarlau, 2017). One possible venture would be to invest in centers or institutes focused on

agroecology and food system transformation which could include aligned courses, non-formal events, and research funding to engage faculty and students alike. Such a center could be synergistic with building the capacity of land grant actors. With these types of initiatives, I encourage facilitators of these educational opportunities to partner with (and compensate for their time) civil society actors and organizations both locally and internationally to center different conceptions and implementations of the agroecological vision to elucidate how it is locally and culturally adapted. Such a collaboration would also serve to continue building relationships towards increased partnerships with civil society entities in line with recommendation one.

For USAID specifically, my first recommendation is for agroecological capacity building and advocacy. This research invites USAID to consider opening their definition of self-reliance to become more representative and supportive of imaginaries grounded in the struggles of the Global South, such as calls for agroecology and food sovereignty. Expanding the notion of self-reliance may require additional capacity building within USAID especially in light of how agroecology appeared to be conceptualized as an environmental approach. Thus, I recommend targeted educational offers for USAID employees to help broaden their understandings of agroecology beyond its environmental agenda. I offer two vehicles for this recommendation. The first recommendation is for the Board for International Food and Agricultural Development (BIFAD), the group charged with advising USAID on food security and higher education; BIFAD regularly hosts events and webinars, but they have yet to host one specifically on agroecology. In light of BIFAD's convening and advisory power, focusing on and advocating for agroecology would likely be beneficial.

My second recommendation to USAID is to incorporate agroecology into research priorities. For U.S. universities specifically, I suggest USAID launch an innovation lab for agroecological food systems This would support land-grant actors continuing to contend with the agroecological imaginary because they would need to consider, research, and articulate agroecology in both proposals and project work plans. However, USAID's Bureau for Resilience and Food Security and Feed the Future fund other projects outside of the IL umbrella. Thus, this recommendation is not seeking to limit this imaginary to only Innovation Labs. Within projects intended for land grants or other United States organizations, USAID should articulate the expectation that the successful applicant must partner with multisectoral groups, including civil society organizations in target organizations. In addition to partnerships, specific participatory practices should be articulated to center on multiple forms of agricultural and place-based knowledge. Some methodologies could include Community Based and Participatory Research or Participatory Action Research. Since agroecology is not commonly funded nor prioritized for research in the Global North, USAID could sit at the forefront of international development research and praxis (Montenegro de Wit & Iles, 2016; Pavageau et al., 2020).

In terms of future research, an extension of this work is to sample additional land grant universities, Innovation Labs, and the institutional partners in the Global South with whom LGUs partner. I suggest current LGU scholar-practitioners employ institutional ethnography alongside Critical Discourse Analysis as a way to study their organizations with regards to agroecological possibilities. Eyben's (2010) work illustrates how institutional ethnography or organizational anthropology can be employed within the context of an international development organization (in her case, the U.K. Department for International Development). For institutional ethnography specifically, Smith's (2005) work is highly instructive. Greenwood (2017) believes

that to change the university it must be done from within and that changing the university is required to foster other societal change. Thus, Participatory Action Research as a form of organizational research should be employed towards critical praxis (Greenwood, 2017; Pimbert, 2018). Given some of the responses from land grant actors about the disabling and enabling language for agroecology, I encourage scholars to investigate how Anderson and colleagues (2021) continuum and associated framing are useful towards fostering increased awareness about agroecology's promise. If others find the language to be confusing or unhelpful, continued refinement of the concepts would prove beneficial.

Finally, I invite further research on the methodological application of CDA as a prompt for critical reflexivity in focus groups. The sample size of this research is insufficient to make methodological claims, but in light of the awareness expressed by participants, and drawing upon the tradition of critical praxis, I continue to think such a methodology could prove fruitful in advancing critical praxis and boundary-stretching work. For example, connecting back to my recommendations on capacity building, if international development offices at land grants decide to incorporate a multiday workshop on agroecology, part of that workshop could include the presentation of a Critical Discourse Analysis of extension's documents. This could be used as a way to highlight the current discursive and material realities of agroecology within the organization followed by dialogues among participants on ways to advance agroecology. However, simply identifying ideas to advance agroecology is insufficient without institutional support. Thus, connecting back to my earlier recommendations, universities must prioritize and fund agroecological initiatives. This could be useful to increase the length of engagement participants have with both CDA and agroecology. Using evaluative approaches to research the effects of the engagement would be essential to determine CDA's potential in such a setting.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: Table of Innovation Labs

Table 6

List of Innovation Labs

Lead Institution	Number of Innovation Lab(s)	Names of Innovation Lab(s)*	Funding Dates
Kansas State University	4	Applied Wheat Genomics	2013-2023 (five-year extension)
		Reduction of Post-Harvest Loss	2013-2021 (three-year extension)
		Sorghum and Millet	2013-2020 (five-year extension)
		Sustainable Intensification	2014-2024 (five-year extension)
Michigan State University	2	Food Security Policy Research, Capacity, and Influence	2018-2024
		Legume Systems Research	2018-2023
Purdue University	2	Food Processing and Post-Harvest Handling	2014-2022 (three-year extension)
		Food Safety	2019-2024
University of California, Davis	2	Genomics to Improve Poultry	2013-2023 (five-year extension)
		Markets, Risk, and Resilience	2019-2024
University of Georgia	2	Climate-Resilient Sorghum	2013-2018?
		Peanut	2013-2023
Washington State University	2	Climate-Resilient Wheat	2013-2018
		Animal Health	2020-2025
Cornell University	1	Crop Improvement	2019-2024
Mississippi State University	1	Fish	2018-2023

Texas A&M University	1	Small-Scale Irrigation	2013-2023 (five-year extension)
Tufts University**	1	Nutrition	2010-2019
University of Illinois	1	Soybean Value Chain Research	2013-2021
University of Florida	1	Livestock Systems	2015-2020
Virginia Tech	1	Integrated Pest Management	1993-2021 (three-year extension)

*All Innovation Lab names begin with "Feed the Future Innovation Lab for." To reduce redundancy, these are removed from the table.

** Tufts University is the only university that is not a land-grant.

Appendix B: A Priori and Theoretical Framework Table

Table 7

A Priori and Theoretical Framework

Position/Assumption	Supporting Literature	Construct	Research Questions	Analytical Questions	Method
The way constructs are described in the text is important to the discursive practices and social practices	Discourse is a three-level concept of texts, discursive practices, and social practices that interact/ People, events, and artifacts derive their meaning within the social world from their discursive representation (Fairclough, 1992).	Discourse as representational power	How is self-reliance represented in "The Journey to Self-Reliance"?	What vocabularies are used when referencing self-reliance?	Critical Discourse Analysis
Self-reliance varies in its usage.	Differences occur between the neoliberal school and the community-based. Neoliberal self-reliance focuses on individual responsibility without social support (Duffield, 2007a) Community self-reliance seeks increased community self-reliance because of the failure of social support while also insisting the system change (Galtung, 2019; Hope, 1983; Reese, 2018)				

The use of positive or negative language conveys values which inform what is acceptable socially	By looking at the use of positive or negative terms, a researcher can determine the values or assumptions embedded in a text (Fairclough, 2003)	Evaluation serves as a discursive indicator of appropriateness	How is self-reliance represented in "The Journey to Self-Reliance"?	What values or assumptions are subsumed in the corresponding statements?	Critical Discourse Analysis: Evaluation
The modality of verbs conveys power with regards to expectations, accountability, and knowledge validation	Deontic modality conveys what needs or should happen. Epistemic modality conveys that which is considered truth or that which is predicted to occur (Fairclough, 2003). The various levels are indicated by specific verb uses (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2014).	Modality as power	How is self-reliance represented in "The Journey to Self-Reliance"?	What modalities are most frequently reflected in the corresponding statements?	Critical Discourse Analysis: Modality
The way actors are described in discourse implies their social role	How actors are described in text is a form of representational power (Fairclough, 2003)	Representation as power	How is self-reliance represented in "The Journey to Self-Reliance"?	How are various actors positioned in relation to "The Journey to Self-Reliance"?	Critical Discourse Analysis: Representation, Modality, and Evaluation
Discourse is a system of statements drawn from various disciplines and fields	Discourse is a system of statements that interact, inform, and govern one another (Foucault, 1972).	Interdiscursivity as discursive governing	What are the material implications of these representations?	What particular discourse are drawn upon?	Critical Discourse Analysis: Interdiscursivity

Social practices are influenced by ideologies	Social practices as part of the three levels of discourse are influenced by larger societal conditions such as ideology and hegemonic power (Fairclough, 1992).	Ideology as discursive struggles over power	How, if at all, does the discourse of self-reliance reflect agroecological possibilities for land-grant universities?	What ideologies inform these representations? How do the discursive practice and social practice reflect one another?	Critical Discourse Analysis: Interdiscursivity
The meaning-making of discourse mediates actors' thoughts and actions.	The interaction between actors and discourse can reveal their meaning-making or interpretation (Fairclough, 2003). Their interpretation can fold up into Bourdieu's idea of the habitus, which is the way in which a person internalizes or naturalizes ways of being and acting (Schirato & Roberts, 2018). The habitus is dialogic (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992).	Actions are mediated by meaning-making	How, if at all, does the discourse of self-reliance reflect agroecological possibilities for land-grant universities?	How does the self-reliance discourse reflect agroecological possibilities?	Focus Groups: Inductive coding, in vivo coding, values coding, and evaluative coding. Critical Discourse Analysis: Identification.

Actors hold agency but in interaction with the structure.	Social practices and structures work with human agency (the ability to make choices) to inform the construction of texts (Fairclough, 2003). Humans are capable of changing their beliefs and pursuing action towards social justice via conscientization or awareness-raising (Freire, 2005; Lather, 1991).	Critical praxis	What are the material implications on land-grants' international food security development praxis?	How does the discourse of self-reliance maintain or resist structures of power?	Focus groups: Inductive coding, in vivo coding, values coding, and evaluative coding

Appendix C: Focus Group Protocol

Focus Group Semi-Structured Question Guide

1. Semi-structured focus group question guide (before the presentation):

   1a. What are your initial reactions or thoughts on “The Journey to Self-Reliance”?

2. Presentation (described in the attached document)

3. Semi-structured focus group questions (after the presentation):

   3a. What are your reactions to the analysis? Have your thoughts on “The Journey to Self-Reliance” changed? Remained the same? Please explain.

   3b. What opportunities for agroecology do you identify within “The Journey to Self-Reliance”?

   3c. What challenges for sustainable agriculture do you identify for land grants within “The Journey to Self-Reliance”?

   3d. How does “The Journey to Self-Reliance” impact your work?

   3e. How do you think the legacy of the J2SR will shape international agricultural development for land-grants and their partners?

   3g. Is there anything anyone would like to share before we close?

Appendix D: IRB Approval

VIRGINIA TECH.

Division of Scholarly Integrity and Research Compliance
Institutional Review Board
North End Center, Suite 4120 (MC 0497)
300 Turner Street NW
Blacksburg, Virginia 24061
540/231-3732
irb@vt.edu
http://www.research.vt.edu/sirc/hrpp

MEMORANDUM

DATE:	July 29, 2020
TO:	Kim Niewolny, Lia R Kelinsky-Jones
FROM:	Virginia Tech Institutional Review Board (FWA00000572, expires October 29, 2024)
PROTOCOL TITLE:	Investigating higher education agents & USAID discourse
IRB NUMBER:	**20-470**

Effective July 29, 2020, the Virginia Tech Human Research Protection Program (HRPP) determined that this protocol meets the criteria for exemption from IRB review under 45 CFR 46.104(d) category (ies) 2(ii).

Ongoing IRB review and approval by this organization is not required. This determination applies only to the activities described in the IRB submission and does not apply should any changes be made. If changes are made and there are questions about whether these activities impact the exempt determination, please submit an amendment to the HRPP for a determination.

This exempt determination does not apply to any collaborating institution(s). The Virginia Tech HRPP and IRB cannot provide an exemption that overrides the jurisdiction of a local IRB or other institutional mechanism for determining exemptions.

All investigators (listed above) are required to comply with the researcher requirements outlined at:

https://secure.research.vt.edu/external/irb/responsibilities.htm

(Please review responsibilities before beginning your research.)

PROTOCOL INFORMATION:

Determined As:	**Exempt, under 45 CFR 46.104(d) category(ies) 2(ii)**
Protocol Determination Date:	**July 29, 2020**

ASSOCIATED FUNDING:

The table on the following page indicates whether grant proposals are related to this protocol, and which of the listed proposals, if any, have been compared to this protocol, if required.

Date*	OSP Number	Sponsor	Grant Comparison Conducted?

* Date this proposal number was compared, assessed as not requiring comparison, or comparison information was revised.

If this protocol is to cover any other grant proposals, please contact the HRPP office (irb@vt.edu) immediately.

Appendix E: The Codebook

Code	Definition	Purpose/Meaning of the Code	In Vivo Example
Modality – Deontic High	Must, must not, ought to, shall, shall not, has to, have to, required, need Required, need	To demonstrate strong expectations or accountability language as indicators of relational power	
Modality – Deontic Medium	Will, will not, should not, can, cannot, supposed	To demonstrate medium-strength expectations or accountability. Not necessarily required but likely expected.	
Modality – Deontic Low	May, might, might not, could, could not, would, would not, allowed	To demonstrate low-strength expectations or accountability. Less what is expected and more on what is allowed.	
Modality – Epistemic High	Certainly – is without a doubt; truth proclamation	A predictive statement intended to convey what will happen or what is true.	
Modality – Epistemic Medium	Probably – could be	A predictive statement to convey what will likely or probably happen.	
Modality – Epistemic Low	Possibly – might be	A less predictive statement in terms of what could happen.	
Agency: Activated	Active voice versus passive voice. Who is doing the acting on others? Example: Farmers choosing their crops (active)	Actors as active, acting upon something/another, exercising agency, making things happen, controlling others.	

Agency: Passivated	Passive voice vs. active voice. Who is being acted upon by others? Example: Crops are chosen for farmers based on conditions (passive)	Those being acted upon, affected by, being a beneficiary of something/someone/a process
Evaluation: Desirable/Positive	Positive words such as: great, good, model, exemplary Example: “This is the model for development”	The use positive adjectives or framing.
Evaluation: Undesirable/Negative	Negative words or associations: bad, avoid, flawed, negative, not. Can also be something situated in opposition to a positive value. Example “That is not how development is done”	The use of negative adjectives or framing
Neoliberal self-reliance	Individual or community responsibility without state support Hardworking Maintaining status quo Basic needs provided by individual or communities Good governance as encouraging resilience	A framing of self-reliance as an individualized and independent quality in opposition to governmental support.

Alternative self-reliance	Collective efforts because of state support failure Country or community control Reordering world order Nationalization to ensure basic needs Participatory/bottom-up	A framing of self-reliance as a mode of resistance to the neoliberal failings of the state. An assertion of independence alongside governmental support.
Neoliberal sustainable development	Economic growth as top value Code for climate change The poor contribute to unsustainability Globalization with sustainability	The co-optation of sustainable development as a mode of maintaining economic growth and production alongside greener practices.
Sustainable development	Economics oriented around many values to protect ecological ceiling Localization over globalization	The pursuit of sustainable development as a systems-based vision of economics not only that of economic growth.
Productionist paradigm	A focus on increased technology, inputs, and production as the goal of agricultural development.	A common value-set related to food security and agricultural development work

Appendix F: The Cases - Population Frames

Figure 4

Food Security Group at Michigan State University

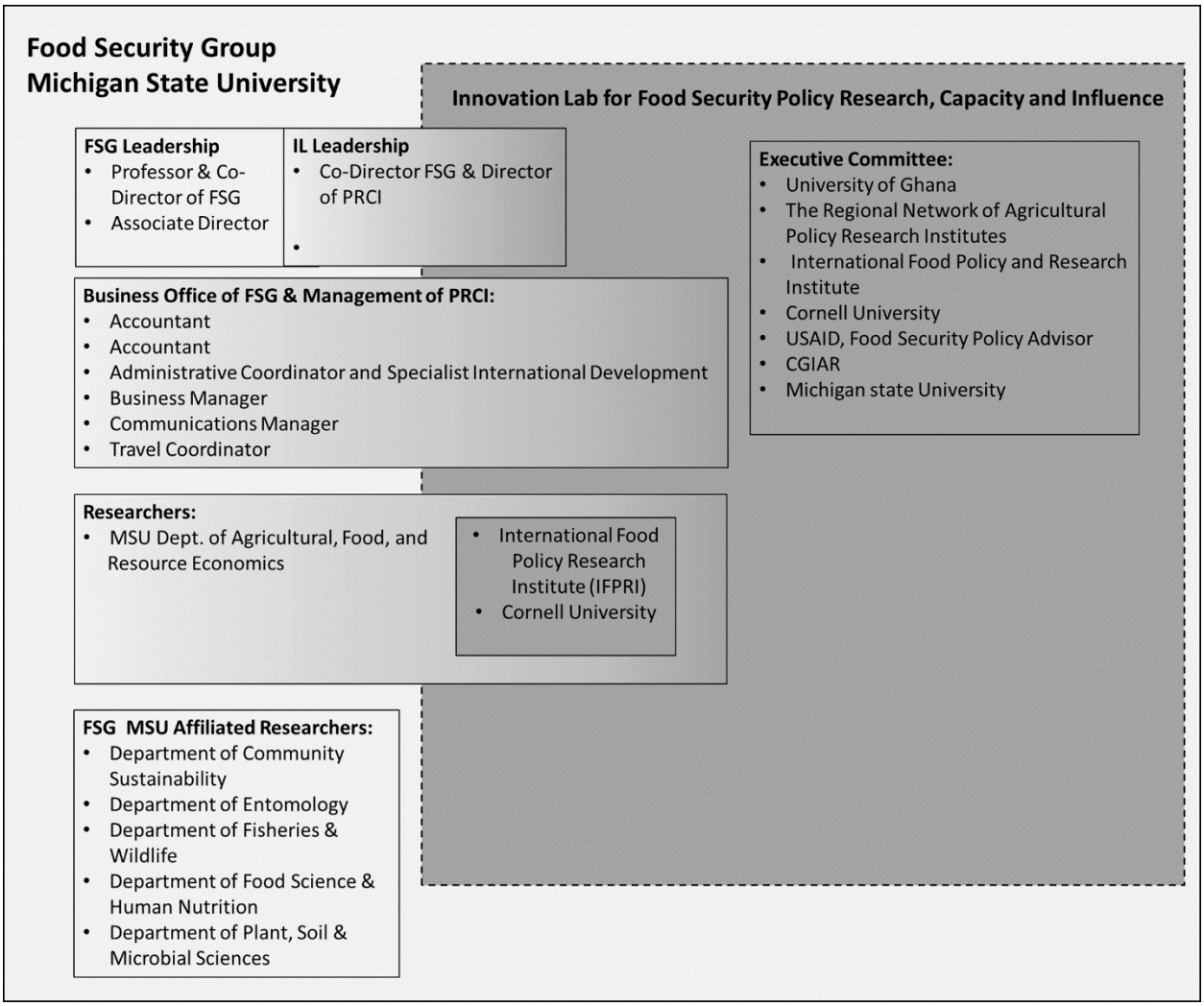

Figure 5

Markets, Risk, and Resilience Innovation Lab at University of California – Davis

Innovation Lab for Markets, Risk, and Resilience
University of California Davis

Management @ UC Davis
- Director
- Associate Director
- Research Finance Officer
- Policy Engagement Coord.
- Strategic Communications Manager

Advisory Board
- Universidad de los Andes
- Paris School of Economics
- University of California San Diego
- USAID, Resilient Communities and Systems Division
- University of Ghana

Researchers
- UC Davis
- George Washington University
- Harvard University American University
- Intl. Livestock Research Institute
- University of Maine
- World Bank
- Stetson University
- Tegemeo Institute of Agricultural Policy and Development
- Tufts
- Aalto University
- University of Delaware
- Precision Ag for Dev
- BRAC University
- UC Berkeley
- Idinsight
- University of Madison-Wisconsin
- Mathematica Policy Research
- UC Davis

Principal Investigators

U.S. Universities
- Hamilton College
- UC Berkeley
- University of Alabama Center for Insurance Information and Research
- Cornell University
- New York University
- University of Minnesota
- UC Davis
- Harvard University
- Texas A&M University
- Northwestern University The Catholic University of America
- Williams College
- McGill University
- Georgia State University
- UC Santa Barbara
- University of Illinois
- Yale University
- University of Georgia
- University of Colorado Boulder
- Syracuse University
- The Ohio State University
- University of Florida
- Michigan State University
- University of Alaska Anchorage
- University of Michigan
- UC Santa Cruz
- Purdue University
- Stanford University
- The George Washington University
- University of San Francisco
- Ohio University
- Kansas State University

Foreign Universities or Governmental Research Institutes
- Indian School of Business
- University of Ghana
- Ethiopian Institute for Agricultural Research
- University of Zurichtigator
- University of Oxford
- Tel Aviv University
- Universidad de los Andes
- Mozambique Ministry of Health
- University of Zambia
- Egerton University
- Université Gaston Berger
- Utrecht University
- University of Dar es Salaam
- University of Athens
- Instituto Tecnológico Autónomo de México
- Sokoine University of Agriculture

Intl. Ag Research Center(s), NGOs, IGOs & Non-profits
- International Food Policy Research Institute
- Innovations for Poverty Action
- Precision Agriculture for Development
- World Bank
- Michelsen Institute
- International Livestock Research Institute
- International Center for Tropical Agriculture
- The Earth Institute Center for Climate Systems Research
- African Development Bank Group
- Interdisciplinary Analysts
- CGIAR

Appendix G: Participant Recruitment Email

Subject: USAID Food Security & Participation Focus Group

Thank you for your interest in participating in our research on how U.S. university international development practitioners and researchers interpret and are informed by USAID's "The Journey to Self-Reliance." We seek to understand how this new USAID framework resonates with you in your professional capacity, and how it impacts your international development and food security research and practice.

Participation in this research study is voluntary and will include one focus group. The focus group should take approximately 90-minutes of your time. All participants must be over 18-years of age. Participation is voluntary and by Zoom. The video session will be recorded so it may be transcribed for qualitative analysis. The use of video is completely voluntary. You will be asked questions about your reactions to an analysis of USAID's policy, and how you think the framework influences your work. You are free to skip any questions that you don't want to answer. This study has been reviewed by the Virginia Tech Institutional Review Board (protocol # 20-997). You may reach IRB at 540-231-3732 or irb@vt.edu.

Focus Group 1: Date/time TBD
Focus Group 2: Date/time TBD

RSVP here to one of the focus groups. We will provide the Zoom link to you following your RSVP. Should you wish to participate, but are unable to make the above date and time, please email Lia Kelinsky-Jones at liak9@vt.edu. Should there be sufficient interest, an additional focus group at a later time will be considered.

Thank you,

Dr. Kim Niewolny, Principal Investigator
Niewolny@vt.edu
540-231-5784

Lia Kelinsky-Jones, Co-investigator
Communicating researcher
Liak9@vt.edu
571-421-7265

Appendix H: Focus Group Consent Form

USAID Journey to Self-Reliance & Universities Focus Group

Thank you for your interest in participating in our research on how U.S. university international development practitioners and researchers interpret and are informed by USAID's "The Journey to Self-Reliance." We seek to understand how this new USAID framework resonates with you in your professional capacity, and how it impacts your international development and food security research and practice.

Participation in this research study is voluntary and will include one focus group. The focus group should take approximately 90-minutes of your time. All participants must be over 18-years of age. Participation is voluntary and by Zoom. The video session will be recorded so it may be transcribed for qualitative analysis. The use of video is completely voluntary. You will be asked questions about your reactions to an analysis of USAID's policy, and how you think the framework influences your work. You are free to skip any questions that you don't want to answer. This study has been reviewed by the Virginia Tech Institutional Review Board (protocol # 20-997). You may reach IRB at 540-231-3732 or irb@vt.edu.

We will do our best to protect the confidentiality of the information we gather from you, but we cannot guarantee 100% confidentiality. Any data collected during this research study will be kept confidential by the researchers. The focus groups will be recorded using the Zoom record function and a back-up audio-recording device. They will then be transcribed. The researchers will code the transcripts using a pseudonym (false name). The recordings will be uploaded to a secure password-protected computer in the researcher's office. The researchers will maintain a list that includes a key to the code, which will be deleted as soon as no longer needed. The recordings will be stored for 3-years after the study has been completed and then destroyed.

By completing this form, you indicate your consent to participate.
Name:
Email:
University/Organizational Affiliation (College/Center, you may indicate more than one):
Position Title:

Dr. Kim Niewolny, Principal Investigator
Niewolny@vt.edu
540-231-5784

Lia Kelinsky-Jones, Co-investigator
Communicating researcher
Liak9@vt.edu
571-421-7265

Appendix I: Supporting Frequencies

Table 8

Full Table of Sustain Collocations*

Collocation of Sustain*	Frequency
growth	16
results	14
economic	12
development	9
quality	5
USAID	5
agriculture-led	4
country's	4
high	4
our	4
poverty	4
with	4
countries	3
escapes	3
gains	3
goals	3
management	3
natural	3

outcomes	3
pathways	3
resilient	3
as	2
engagement	2
escape	2
global	2
inclusion	2
over	2
policy	2
positive	2
progress	2
reducing	2
their	2
time	2

Appendix J: Figure Permissions

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The Film and Video Archives (http://www.unmultimedia.org/tv/archives.html) of the United Nations provide over 60 years' worth of historical film and video materials for use in news, documentaries and other productions related to the aims of the United Nations. To seek permission to use a video, please submit your request to Audiovisual Library Contact Form (https://www.unmultimedia.org/accounts/contact_us.html?app=30&lang=en).

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Kelinsky-Jones, Lia

From: Eve Hawksworth <eve.hawksworth@politybooks.com>
Sent: Tuesday, October 27, 2020 7:28 AM
To: Kelinsky-Jones, Lia
Subject: RE: Figure permission

Dear Lia,

I have now received confirmation from our Head of Rights that we are able to waive the fee for use of the figure. However, we reserve the right to request a fee for similar future uses and we ask that you get in touch with us again if the dissertation is published commercially.

With best wishes,

Eve

Eve Hawksworth
Rights Manager, Polity

65 Bridge Street
Cambridge
CB2 1UR
UK
www.politybooks.com

From: Eve Hawksworth
Sent: 16 October 2020 16:06
To: 'Kelinsky-Jones, Lia' <liak9@vt.edu>
Subject: RE: Figure permission

Dear Lia,
Apologies for the delay in my response – it has been Frankfurt Book Fair this week (albeit digitally) so I have had a lot of meetings!
The quote would be the same for an adapted figure. As it is a PhD thesis we would usually grant permission for free, but as it must be published online open access, we need to charge a fee. It is generally not part of our policy to allow material to be used in open access repositories (we would usually insist on password protection).
Will your adapted figure be significantly different? I will ask our Head of Rights on Monday if there is any possibility of lowering/waiving the fee and I will get back to you.
Have a great weekend!
With thanks,
Eve

Eve Hawksworth
Rights Manager, Polity

65 Bridge Street
Cambridge
CB2 1UR
UK
www.politybooks.com

From: Kelinsky-Jones, Lia <liak9@vt.edu>
Sent: 16 October 2020 15:50
To: Eve Hawksworth <eve.hawksworth@politybooks.com>
Subject: RE: Figure permission

Dear Eve,

I wanted to check-in to see if you'd seen my note asking about the possibility of adapting rather than reprinting? Thank you in advance and I hope you have a lovely weekend.

Best,
Lia

From: Kelinsky-Jones, Lia
Sent: Monday, October 12, 2020 11:34 AM
To: Eve Hawksworth <eve.hawksworth@politybooks.com>
Subject: RE: Figure permission

Dear Eve,

Thank you for providing that. After speaking with my chair today, I would instead like to adapt the figure rather than reprint it to encompass another element of my theoretical framework. Does that change the below quote?

Thank you,
Lia

From: Eve Hawksworth <eve.hawksworth@politybooks.com>
Sent: Monday, October 5, 2020 6:31 AM
To: Kelinsky-Jones, Lia <liak9@vt.edu>
Subject: RE: Figure permission

Dear Lia,

Thank you for letting me know, and apologies for the delay in my response.

As your dissertation will be published online open access in your university's repository, we would need to charge you for use of the figure. I can offer you the following quote:

From: Discourse and social change
Author: Norman Fairclough
Pages/Chapters: p.73

In *Lia Kelinsky-Jones – PHD dissertation*

Our terms are as follows:

Territory: USA only
Language: English
Format rights: Electronic only
Licence term: Non-exclusive rights to use specified figure in above publication. Five years.
Fee: $65 USD payable within 30 days of invoice. Failure to pay upon invoice will result in your permission licence being cancelled.

Please confirm whether you accept these terms. I need your written agreement in order to send out a formal licence and invoice.
I look forward to hearing from you.

With thanks,

Eve

Eve Hawksworth
Rights Manager, Polity

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CB2 1UR
UK
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From: Kelinsky-Jones, Lia <liak9@vt.edu>
Sent: 30 September 2020 11:53
To: Eve Hawksworth <eve.hawksworth@politybooks.com>
Subject: RE: Figure permission

Dear Eve,

I am not sure if this I what you are referring to, but I do have to make it available in our university library's electronic thesis/dissertation system. Does this sufficiently answer your question? Otherwise, I have no agreements to publish my dissertation.

Thank you very much,
Lia

From: Eve Hawksworth <eve.hawksworth@politybooks.com>
Sent: Wednesday, September 30, 2020 6:27 AM
To: Kelinsky-Jones, Lia <liak9@vt.edu>
Subject: RE: Figure permission

Dear Lia,
Thanks very much for getting in touch. Please can I confirm that you do not have an agreement to publish the PhD and that this would just be for the purposes of submission?
With best wishes,
Eve

Eve Hawksworth
Rights Manager, Polity

65 Bridge Street
Cambridge
CB2 1UR
UK
www.politybooks.com

From: Kelinsky-Jones, Lia <liak9@vt.edu>
Sent: 29 September 2020 19:59
To: Eve Hawksworth <eve.hawksworth@politybooks.com>
Subject: Figure permission

Dear Eve,

I am requesting permission to use a figure owned by Polity Press in my PhD dissertation. I do not plan to alter the figure. Please see below for the details requested. If I have accidentally missed a required detail, please let me know.

ISBN-13: 978-0745612188
Author: Norman Fairclough
Title: Discourse and social change
Page number: 73
Edition: 1
Year of Publication: 1992

Contact information:
Lia Kelinsky-Jones
Liak9@vt.edu
571-421-7265

Thank you in advance,
Lia

Lia Kelinsky-Jones
Ph.D. Candidate, Agricultural, Leadership & Community Education
Graduate Assistant, Outreach & International Affairs
Virginia Tech