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A polycentric approach to enhancing  
smallholder resilience in the Philippines:  
The MASIPAG Food Sovereignty Model

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## Organic smallholders are cultivating resilient rice systems

**Amber A. Heckelman**

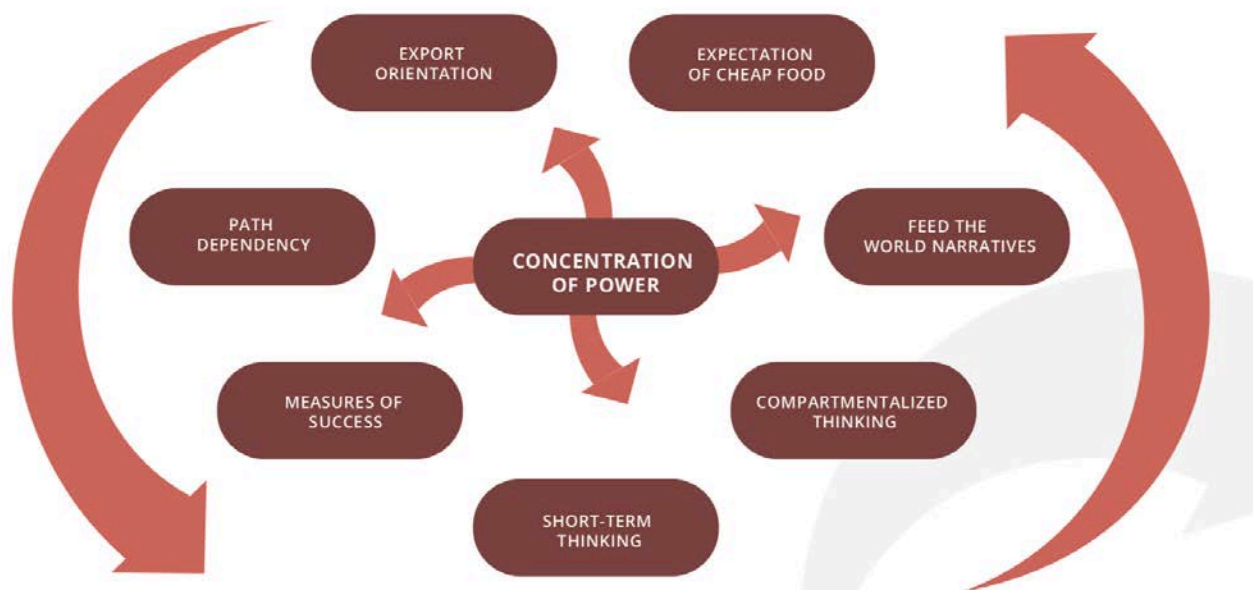
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In the Philippines, organic rice systems are proving to be more climate resilient than conventional rice systems. This is according to a [Self-evaluation and Holistic Assessment of climate Resilience of farmers and Pastoralists \(SHARP\)](#), a methodological tool developed by a team at the United Nations' Food and Agriculture Organization.



# Why is organic agriculture in the margins?

FIGURE 12 - THE EIGHT KEY LOCK-INS OF INDUSTRIAL AGRICULTURE



# How are smallholders transitioning to organic?



## MASIPAG

Magsasaka at Siyentipiko para sa Pag-unlad ng Agrikultura  
(Farmer-Scientist Partnership for Development)

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# Background

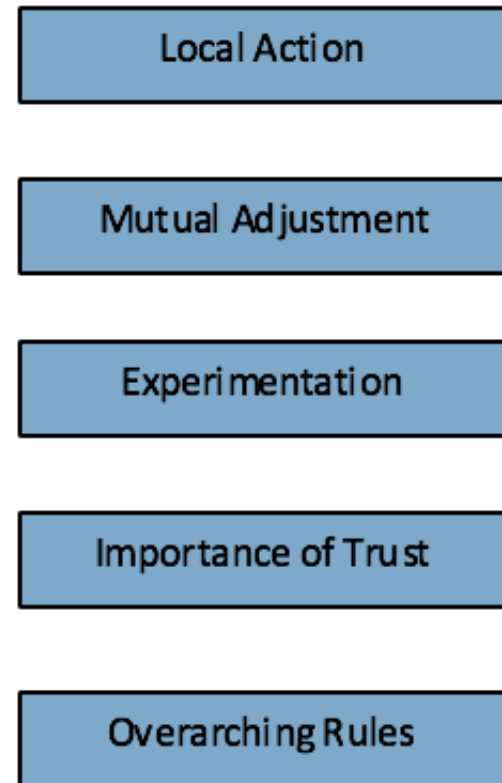
- Understanding Polycentrism
- Describing food sovereignty
- Defining smallholder resilience





# Polycentric systems

- A bottom up, dispersed, and multilevel pattern of governing that is capable of enhancing “innovation, learning, adaptation, trustworthiness, levels of cooperation of participants, and the achievement of more effective, equitable, and sustainable outcomes at multiple scales” (Ostrom 2010: 552).



Jordan et al., 2018

# Food Sovereignty

- The right of local people to control their own regional and national food systems (Via Campesina, 1996)

Focus on Food for People

Value Food Producers

Localizes Food Systems

Puts Control Locally

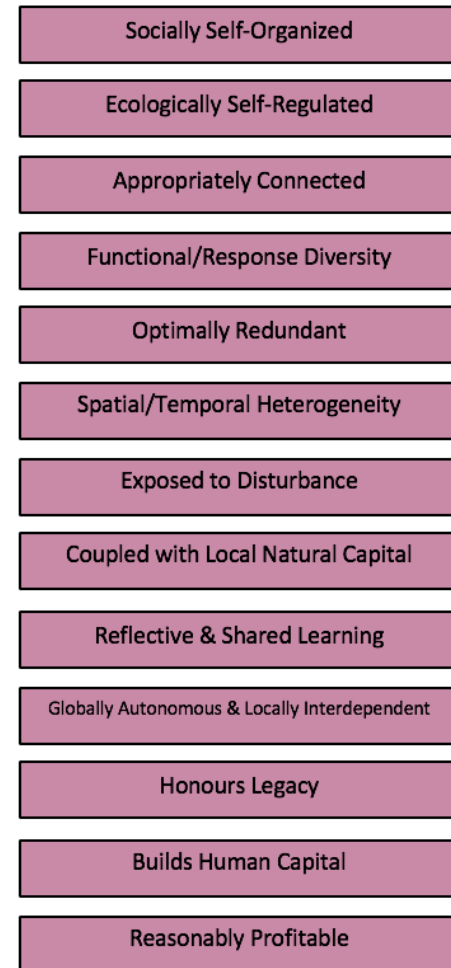
Builds Knowledge & Skills

Works with Nature

Nyéléni, 2007

# Smallholder Resilience

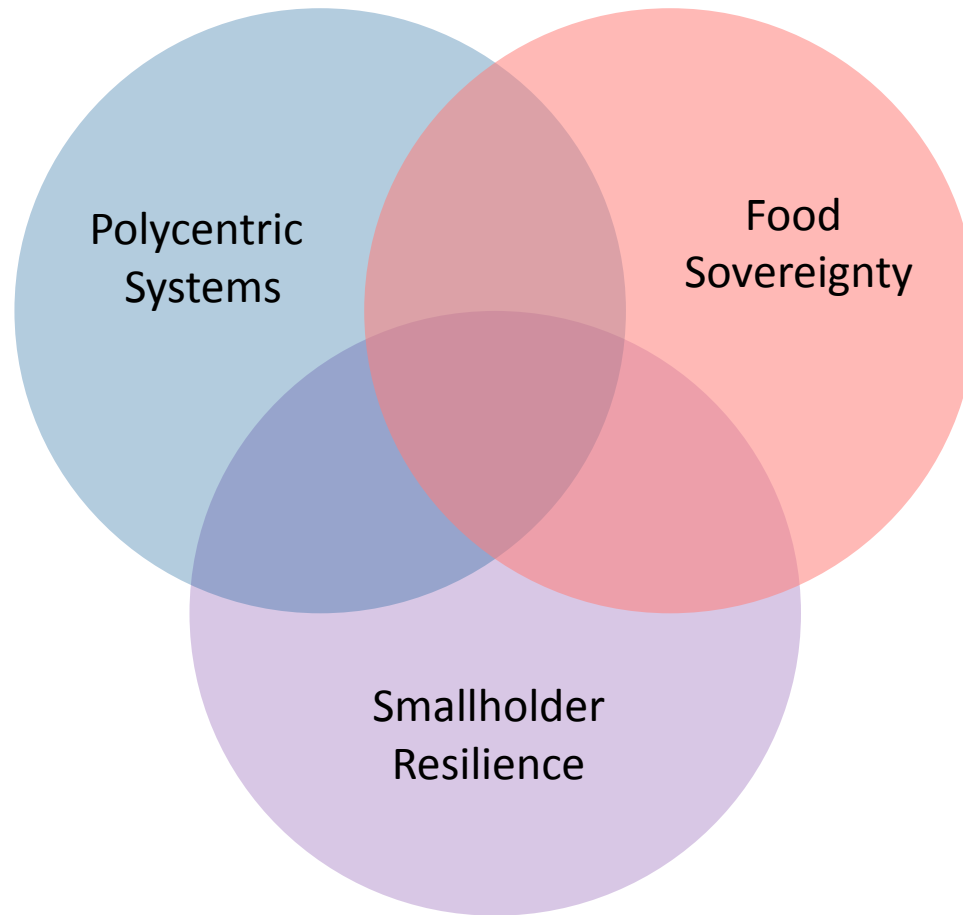
- Resilience building is multi-scalar and interdependent; must address various shocks and stresses; and requires strengthening community capacities (Gunderson & Holling, 2002; Folke, 2006; Magis, 2010; Constanas & Barret, 2013; Ross & Berkes, 2014)



Cabell & Oelofse, 2012



# Polycentric-Food Sovereignty-Resilience Nexus






## The MASIPAG Model

- Decentralized Structure
- People's Organizations
- Trial Farms
- Political Activism
- Collaboration





*Farmers' control of the seeds and associated knowledge in the diversity, productivity and sustainability of rice farming makes empowerment of farmers a reality. It is only through this method where farmers become not only passive recipients, but active participants in genuine development.*

– Chito Medina

Former National Coordinator  
of MASIPAG



# Acknowledgments

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# Thank you!

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