The ‘Right to Food and Nutrition Watch 2015’ was released during the National Dialogue on India’s Agricultural Crisis & Farmer Suicides by Vijay Jawandhiya and Prof. Ramesh Padhye from Maharashtra. Shri. Vijay Jawandhiya is a leading farm activist in the Vidarbha region. He is one of the founder members of the Shetkari Sanghatana and of the Kisan Co-ordination Committee, an organisation of Indian farmers and a member of La Via Campesina, an international peasant’s organization. He has worked ceaselessly for the welfare of farmers and is best known for his unrelenting documentation of farmers’ suicides and his efforts to bring the issue to the government’s attention. Prof. Ramesh Padhye is a senior researcher and writer who has done extensive work on agrarian crisis in Maharashtra state.

**National Dialogue on India’s Agricultural Crisis & Farmer Suicides**

1st November, 2015, THE METHODIST CENTRE, Ground Floor, 21, YMCA Road, Mumbai Central, Mumbai-400 008, Maharashtra

**PRESS RELEASE**

“Peoples’ Nutrition Is Not a Business”

With malnutrition affecting more than 2 billion people all over the world and around 194 million (as per FAO recent report) people hungry in India itself and obesity rates rising, the Right to Food and Nutrition Watch 2015 underscores the artificial separation of nutrition and sustainable food systems, which is resulting in vertical, technical and product-based solutions that ignore human determinants and entitlements. Pointing to the influence of corporations on policy-making processes, authors throughout the publication warn that there exists commercialization of nutrition that is putting people’s sovereignty and rights at great risk.

‘The Watch’ is a product of a collaborative effort by the Right to Food and Nutrition Watch Consortium, which currently comprises 20 civil society organizations and social movements around the world and is also the most prominent monitoring tool of the Global Network for the Right to Food and Nutrition (GNRFN), an initiative of public interest by CSOs and social movements that recognize the need to act jointly for the realization of the right to food.
The increasing control of businesses over food systems and policies – ‘known as corporate capture’ makes nutrition a luxury affair. As demonstrated by the diverse predicaments the world has faced in the last decades, the present political and economic model seems to give priority to corporate interests over the realization of peoples’ right to food and nutrition.

‘The Watch’ uncovers the subtle but appalling corporate abuse and impunity around the peoples’ right to food and nutrition and provides a series of recommendations for States to prevent and punish initiatives that hamper the enjoyment of human rights. India’s traditional food is disappearing with the coming of packaged food and big corporate houses taking over the market. It directly affects the health and nutrition and income of the small farmers and local food production.

The Right to Food and Nutrition Watch aims to :- 1) present nutrition from a human rights perspective, beyond medical and technical conceptions and 2) expose corporate control and list a series of recommendations for States to guarantee the realization of the human right to food and nutrition and prevent corporate abuse and impunity.

First published in 2008, the Right to Food and Nutrition Watch is an annual publication that monitors key policies, processes and issues related to the right to adequate food and nutrition at the global, regional, national and local level. In doing so, it gives visibility to peoples’ struggles and efforts on the ground. As a monitoring tool, its goal is to contribute to strengthening accountability and advancing the realization of the right to adequate food and nutrition for all.

The Watch 2015 was launched at FAO Headquarters, unveiling key findings around nutrition and the impact of business operations on food policies. Representatives from civil society, social movements and the UN welcomed the report which will be a strong advocacy tool for furthering the cause of Right to food.

Going beyond corporate-rooted conceptions, this year’s Watch focuses on nutrition from a human rights perspective. “Peoples’ Nutrition Is Not a Business” is about the competing visions of nutrition, the causes of malnutrition and the policy responses, often targeting women inappropriately, both behind the scenes and in the public sphere. What are the main causes that explain why hundreds of millions go undernourished while half a billion suffer from obesity? What would it take to ensure that nutrition belongs to the peoples and not to the corporations?

The report has highlighted the following affirmation to strengthen the movement for Right to adequate and nutrition-

- Public policy must address food production and human nutrition simultaneously and through the legally binding human rights framework for the progressive realization of adequate food and nutrition for all.
- All countries (including developed countries) should conceive and implement comprehensive support programs to develop sustainable food production systems that ensure domestic food security and economies.
- The realization of women’s human rights predetermines all peoples’ human right to adequate food and nutrition; their leadership and participation in food and nutrition governance from the household to an international scale must be a priority.
- The CFS has been the preferred international arena for rural social movements seeking an alternative policy space to the WTO and the World Bank. Its work to strengthen local food systems that promote successful nutritional outcomes based on agro-biodiversity must continue and expand.
- Without absolute transparency and the participation of public interest CSOs and communities, international trade agreements, especially in food and agriculture sectors, must not be signed. Trade interests can never be allowed to supersede the right to adequate food and nutrition.

- Governments have the obligation to promote human rights through education and the empowerment of those, in particular, whose human rights have been violated, as well as through the efficient availability of remedy mechanisms for human rights holders to seek redress for violations. Peoples’ Nutrition Is Not a Business.
• The link between food production, access and nutrition must be strengthened: through the promotion and protection of labor-intensive and locally rooted food systems engaged in sustainable agroecological methods; through women and men’s secure access to land in urban, as well as rural, settings; and through restoration of traditional rights to harvest and re-use seeds. Nutrition is inherent to people, not to corporations. It must not be for sale or profit. Peoples’ food sovereignty and a human rights perspective are fundamental to addressing all forms of inequity, oppression and discrimination and to the democratization of national and global societies. Peoples must hold their governments accountable for the implementation of states’ national and extraterritorial human rights obligations.