



Food Includes



Best Practices of Food-Based Education

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FOOD INCLUDES: Reaching, Recruiting and Engaging Excluded Learners by Harnessing the Power of Food

Food Includes Consortium

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Introduction to Food Includes

Food has always been a unifier—a cultural, social, and educational tool that transcends barriers and connects people across diverse backgrounds. Recognising its transformative potential, the Food Includes Project was launched with the ambition to harness food as a medium for education and social inclusion. Food's ability to bring people together makes it a powerful tool to address some of society's most pressing challenges, such as inequality, social exclusion, and cultural misunderstandings. This best practices resource consolidates the insights, case studies, and strategies developed through the project, offering educators, community leaders, and policymakers practical inspiration for creating impactful food-based educational initiatives.

The Food Includes Project was born out of a pressing need to engage and empower excluded learners across Europe, including those from migrant backgrounds, marginalised communities, and economically disadvantaged groups. As a collaboration among eight dynamic partners, including universities, non-governmental organisations, and training institutions, the project brings together expertise from across the continent. This partnership aims to address educational disparities and foster social inclusion by leveraging food's universal appeal as a tool for connection, learning, and empowerment. Through its focus on innovation and collaboration, the project provides a model for using food to create more inclusive, equitable, and sustainable communities.



Food Includes

Objectives of Our Guide

Our Guide is designed for adult educators, disadvantaged learners and organisations promoting social inclusion, offering actionable insights and real-world examples to address their challenges and goals.

The best practices featured demonstrate how food can engage excluded learners, foster cultural integration, and build pathways to employment. Examples such as community cooking, food waste reduction projects, and urban gardening showcase tools and frameworks successfully used to create inclusive, learner-centred experiences, inspiring innovative approaches for diverse contexts.

Collaboration is at the heart of these examples, highlighting how partnerships between schools, NGOs, and local governments have amplified impact. By showcasing how these networks address barriers faced by refugees, migrants, and other disadvantaged groups, the resource encourages stakeholders to adopt similar strategies.

Through these best practices, educators, policymakers, and community leaders will gain:

- A deeper understanding of how food education promotes inclusion, sustainability, and engagement.
- Proven strategies for using food-based pedagogies to support adult learners.
- Confidence to collaborate with diverse stakeholders and implement effective initiatives.

This resource serves as a catalyst for embedding the Food Includes approach, empowering users to foster integration, reduce inequalities, and create more inclusive learning environments.



Why Food Education?

Food is far more than a necessity; it is a cultural anchor and an exceptional tool for learning and empowerment. It serves as a bridge between people, fostering understanding, curiosity, and meaningful dialogue about critical topics such as sustainability, health, and equity. By engaging with food, learners gain practical skills, develop empathy, and connect with local and global cultures in ways that resonate deeply.

Bridging Understanding and Fostering Curiosity

Food education provides a platform to explore the complex ecosystems and traditions that shape what we eat. From understanding where food comes from to examining its environmental impact, learners gain insights into the broader systems that sustain life. This knowledge cultivates respect for diverse cultures and fosters a shared sense of global responsibility.

Addressing Global and Local Challenges

Through food education, learners are equipped to tackle pressing challenges such as food waste and climate change. They gain practical tools to make informed decisions about sustainability—whether by reducing waste, supporting local food systems, or adopting more ethical consumption habits. These small yet meaningful actions contribute to larger efforts toward a more equitable and environmentally conscious world.

Building Life Skills and Social Connections

Food education teaches essential skills that extend beyond the kitchen, such as nutrition, budgeting, and teamwork. It also serves as a powerful connector, bringing people together to share meals, stories, and experiences. This collaboration fosters empathy, community, and a sense of shared responsibility for societal and environmental well-being.

Empowering Individuals and Communities

The examples within this guide highlight how food education can transform lives. From urban gardens to culinary training programmes, food-based initiatives empower learners to build confidence, acquire valuable skills, and contribute meaningfully to their communities. In doing so, food education creates pathways for personal growth and collective resilience.

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01

The FOOD-AWARE Project



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The FOOD-AWARE Project

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ABOUT PROJECT

The FOOD-AWARE project aims to empower European children to grow into responsible and conscientious food consumers.

Context

The FOOD-AWARE project was an Erasmus+ project running from 2018-2020 and with six involved partner organisations from 5 different countries (Poland, Belgium, Greece, Scotland, Austria). The project addresses the pressing need for educational and social inclusion through food education. It focuses on training teachers to impart knowledge to young students on crucial topics such as local food production, food waste, the food chain, resource efficiency, sustainability, circularity, and responsible food consumption.

The FOOD AWARE project was initiated in response to a critical global issue: one-third of the world's food is wasted while 12% of the population suffers from hunger. This staggering paradox highlights the urgent need for better food management and education. Additionally, the agricultural sector is a significant contributor to environmental challenges, accounting for 10% of the EU's overall greenhouse gas emissions. Despite these issues, there is a notable lack of understanding among both adults and children about the complexities of agricultural production and the EU food supply chain.

The FOOD-AWARE Project

Problem

The project's inception is rooted in the observation that many European children, particularly those in urban areas, lack awareness about how their food is produced and its origins. This disconnect extends to a broader societal issue where European farmers are not receiving fair returns for their high-quality, environmentally and welfare-conscious food production. These educational gaps also highlight a deficiency in early education on personal responsibility, especially concerning consumer choices and their broader implications.

Through integrating these subjects into early education, the FOOD-AWARE project aims to cultivate a sense of accountability not only for individual actions but also for choices as consumers. This initiative seeks to foster a deeper understanding and responsibility towards the planet, environment, and society, encouraging children to grow into conscientious and informed adults. The project's comprehensive approach aims to bridge the knowledge gap and promote a more sustainable and equitable food system, ultimately contributing to enhanced community engagement and social responsibility.



The project employs food education as its primary method, targeting specific groups such as school children, educators, and communities. By focusing on these groups, the initiative aims to achieve several learning outcomes. For children, the goal is to develop a deeper understanding of where their food comes from, the environmental impact of food production, and the importance of reducing waste. Educators are provided with resources and training to integrate food education into their curriculum effectively, fostering a culture of sustainability within schools. Communities were engaged through events and programs that promote local food systems and sustainable practices.

The FOOD-AWARE Project

Intervention

The FOOD AWARE project implemented an educational solution aimed at equipping teachers with the knowledge and tools necessary to engage students in topics related to food and farming. The program consists of five comprehensive training modules designed specifically for educators. These modules cover a range of topics, including an introduction to the context of food education, local food production, food waste, the food chain, and resource efficiency with a focus on sustainability and circularity. The final module emphasises responsible food consumption. These modules serve not only as informational resources but also as interactive guides to facilitate student engagement.

The training materials are complemented by a meticulously crafted training guide, which simplifies the process for both project partners and teachers. This guide assists in the creation and implementation of various learning tools and activities. Each module includes interactive student activity sheets, which are essential for helping teachers conduct their lessons effectively.

Through the structured yet flexible educational resources, the FOOD AWARE project aims to foster a deeper understanding of food-related issues among students, promoting awareness and responsible behaviour towards food consumption and sustainability.

Team Involved



The FOOD-AWARE Project

Outcomes

Following the intervention of the FOOD AWARE project, several immediate results and changes were observed across various domains, particularly in learner engagement, skills development, and community involvement. The project designed, developed and implemented a training for educators based on 5 modules: Local food production, Food waste, Food chain, Resource efficiency, and Responsible food consumption. To achieve its aim the outcomes of the project are the following:

IO1 Training methodology and training guide: A guide to help set up a training to introduce educators to the subjects, the project focuses on, and related teaching materials.

IO2 Project training materials: A set of modules designed and developed and related training materials to train educators on how to introduce in classroom the subject under discussion.

IO3 Project teaching aids: A set of teaching aids for the use as example and to enable educators to introduce the related subjects to students.

Long-Term Impact

The FOOD AWARE project provided key insights for future food education interventions. Prioritising early education was found to be crucial in instilling lasting sustainable habits in children, while the integration of comprehensive food education into school curriculums ensured that educators were adequately prepared. Community engagement was shown to reinforce these lessons and support local food systems.

Additionally, influencing children's behaviour was observed to create broader cultural shifts, affecting adult habits. Future interventions would also need to emphasise sustainability by addressing the environmental, welfare, and climate impacts of food production. These strategies built on the successes of FOOD AWARE, contributing to a more sustainable food system.



02

The Altza Baratza Project



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The Altza Baratza Project



Context

The Altza Baratza project was initiated to tackle the challenges faced by migrants and vulnerable populations in integrating into society. These challenges include language barriers, cultural differences, social isolation, and legal obstacles, which often hinder their ability to access services, find employment, and participate in the community. Caritas Gipuzkoa launched this initiative as part of its broader social mission to promote a more just and inclusive Gipuzkoa. The project aims to address the high unemployment rates among migrant women, young people, and other socially excluded groups by providing opportunities for skills development, autonomy, and community engagement through vegetable gardening.

The Altza Baratza Project

Problem

The Altza Baratza project emerged as a response to the social and economic challenges faced by migrants and vulnerable populations in the Basque Country, particularly in Gipuzkoa. Migrants in Spain often encounter numerous barriers, including language difficulties, cultural differences, and social isolation, which complicate their ability to integrate into local communities. These barriers are exacerbated by discrimination, restrictive immigration policies, and a lack of access to essential services such as healthcare, education, and employment.

For women, young people, and individuals at risk of social exclusion, such as the homeless and those with mental health issues, the road to stability and self-sufficiency is particularly challenging. Unemployment rates for these groups are significantly higher than those of the general population, further entrenching social inequality and isolation. Caritas Gipuzkoa, a non-governmental organisation focused on social justice and inclusion, identified the need for a holistic intervention that addresses both social and economic dimensions of exclusion.



Altza Baratza was conceived as part of Caritas' broader commitment to fostering a more inclusive and supportive society, grounded in dignity, social responsibility, and environmental sustainability. The project provides vulnerable individuals with a platform to acquire new skills, increase their employability, and build meaningful connections within their community, all through the medium of organic farming.

The Altza Baratza Project

Intervention

The Altza Baratza project was officially launched in February 2021 when the City Council of Altza allocated 5000m² of land for the creation of organic vegetable gardens. This land included a greenhouse, providing the space and resources necessary for participants to cultivate a variety of crops. Initially, the focus was on self-consumption, with participants learning to manage the garden and grow food for their personal use. By June 2021, the project had evolved into a fully structured occupational programme, with specific objectives aimed at promoting both social integration and employability.

Qualitative Objectives:

- Promote the socio-cultural integration of participants by encouraging collaboration and community-building through shared activities.
- Foster autonomy by equipping participants with the skills and confidence to independently manage a vegetable garden.
- Support participants in their transition to the labour market, helping them gain practical skills and knowledge that enhance their employability.
- Provide a space for participants to engage in therapeutic, educational, and recreational activities that contribute to their personal development.

Quantitative Objectives:

- Grow and collect 100 baskets of organic produce each month, with 40 baskets designated for consumption by participants and their families.
- Engage an average of 15 participants in training sessions, ensuring that at least 40% of the group is made up of women to promote gender equality within the programme.
- Organise participation in local fairs and markets to sell surplus produce, raising awareness of the project and generating additional income.
- Prepare participants for entry into the labour market by providing them with evaluations and tailored guidance.

The project operates with a combination of contracted and volunteer staff. Key roles include:

- Contracted Staff: Coordination, management (general and biological sciences), and social workers for participant support.
- Volunteer Staff: Experts in gardening, commercial skills, and volunteer management, providing essential guidance in areas such as biological pest control and teamwork.

The project is funded through a combination of sales from produce, grants from local foundations (such as Kutxa Bank Foundation and La Asunción organisation), and donations. However, the project faces financial challenges, including a gap of approximately €7,400 in the budget. Additionally, theft of crops and lack of market security have posed ongoing difficulties.

The Altza Baratza Project

Outcomes

The Altza Baratza project has seen significant positive outcomes between 2021 and 2023. A total of 98 participants have engaged with the project, with 12 individuals finding employment and 24 pursuing vocational courses (e.g., agricultural, hospitality, and construction fields). The project's hands-on approach and community focus have resulted in tangible outputs, such as 50 baskets of produce collected monthly, some of which are sold at local fairs.

The project has also enhanced participants' practical gardening skills, leadership capabilities, and language proficiency, especially for non-native speakers. Community involvement has increased, with more experienced volunteers joining to offer training in ecological agriculture and other areas. Participants have reported improved self-esteem, confidence, and mental health, as the project provides a structured and supportive environment.

Long-Term Impact

The broader impacts of the Altza Baratza project extend beyond immediate gains. Participants develop skills that enhance their employability and contribute to their social inclusion. The project strengthens community bonds and promotes environmental stewardship through organic farming practices. It has also contributed to changing perceptions of migrant communities, highlighting their positive contributions to the local economy and society.

The project's long-term impact on the environment and community cohesion continues to grow, with participants developing valuable skills that prepare them for future employment and active community involvement. Altza Baratza serves as a model for sustainable, community-driven initiatives that address social and economic disparities.



03

POR TI MUJER



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Por Ti Mujer Project



Context

The Por Ti Mujer project was founded to address the challenges faced by migrant women, particularly those over 45 years of age, living in Valencia. Migrant women are one of the most vulnerable groups when it comes to economic and social integration. Their experience is often characterised by unemployment, precarious work conditions, language barriers, cultural differences, and a lack of social networks. These obstacles are magnified for women who have been victims of gender-based violence, who face additional hurdles in rebuilding their lives.

Por Ti Mujer identified the need for a multi-faceted approach to support these women in gaining employment, acquiring new skills, and establishing a sense of community. In response, the organisation launched a series of initiatives focusing on culinary arts, urban gardening, and intercultural exchange, aiming to provide these women with the tools they need to improve their socio-economic situation and contribute meaningfully to their local community.

Por Ti Mujer Project

Problem

Migrant women in Spain, particularly those over the age of 45, face unique challenges in accessing stable employment. The catering and hospitality industry, which often employs women from migrant backgrounds, suffered severe setbacks during the economic downturn, further reducing job opportunities for this vulnerable group. According to Spain's Labour Force Survey, the unemployment rate for women over 45 in December 2013 stood at 29.1%, reflecting the severe economic disadvantage faced by these women.

In addition to economic challenges, migrant women often experience social exclusion, compounded by cultural differences, language barriers, and discrimination. For women who have been victims of gender violence, these issues are further complicated by psychological trauma and the difficulty of accessing resources to support their recovery. These factors contribute to a cycle of poverty and marginalisation, which can be difficult to break without targeted interventions.



Por Ti Mujer Project

Intervention

To address these challenges, Por Ti Mujer has developed three core programmes that work in tandem to provide migrant women with practical skills, employment opportunities, and social support.

Social Catering Programme

- Launched in 2014-2015, this comprehensive project targets 50 migrant women, providing them with professional training in various areas of the catering industry. The programme divides the participants into groups of 10, offering training in roles such as kitchen assistants, waitresses, administrative staff, event managers, and public relations experts. Throughout 10 specialised workshops, participants learn skills in cooking, customer service, event planning, and safety and hygiene. The programme also includes training in English for the hospitality industry, aimed at improving participants' employability in an increasingly globalised job market.

Urban Garden Programme

- Established in 2015 in collaboration with the Consell Agrari de València, this programme allows 20 migrant women to cultivate plots in the urban gardens of Sociópolis. The initiative serves both ecological and social goals, promoting food sovereignty and sustainable agricultural practices while also creating a space for intercultural exchange and social integration. The garden is divided into 14 plots, each cultivated by groups from different cultural backgrounds to encourage collaboration and understanding among participants.

GastroDiversas Programme

- GastroDiversas is an intercultural culinary initiative that celebrates diversity through food. Each year, women from various cultural backgrounds participate in a series of workshops led by professional chefs, where they learn to cook traditional Mediterranean and fusion dishes. The fifth edition of this programme involved 15 women from countries such as Colombia, Venezuela, Peru, Honduras, Morocco, and Tunisia. Together, they created an intercultural recipe book, reflecting their diverse culinary traditions and their shared experiences of migration.

Por Ti Mujer Project

Outcomes

The impact of Por Ti Mujer's programmes has been significant across multiple dimensions, from employment to social integration.

1. **Social Catering Programme** - Since its inception in 2011, the programme has supported over 100 migrant women with 50 women benefiting directly from the catering training in the early years. These women gained practical skills in cooking, event management, and customer service, which have enabled many of them to secure jobs in the hospitality industry. The social catering initiative has proven to be an effective tool for socio-labour inclusion, helping women move from situations of vulnerability into formal employment. The project also provided psychological support, helping participants regain confidence and self-esteem, which are crucial for reintegration into the workforce.
2. **Urban Garden Programme** has been a resounding success, providing migrant women with both practical skills in ecological farming and opportunities for social connection. The gardens have fostered intercultural exchange and helped participants develop a deeper understanding of sustainable living. By producing their own organic food, participants have not only improved their nutrition but also reduced their dependence on external food sources. Additionally, the garden has raised awareness about environmental sustainability and fostered a sense of responsibility towards the land and community.
3. **GastroDiversas Programme** has allowed women to share their culinary traditions while learning new skills from professional chefs. The intercultural recipe book produced as part of the programme is a testament to the women's achievements and their ability to work together across cultural divides. The programme has also played a key role in promoting social cohesion, helping participants develop friendships and support networks that extend beyond the kitchen. By participating in these workshops, migrant women have gained confidence and visibility in their local community, challenging stereotypes and building bridges with local residents.

Por Ti Mujer Project

Long-Term Impact

The long-term impact of Por Ti Mujer's interventions extends beyond the immediate outcomes of employment and skill-building. The project has contributed to the empowerment of migrant women in Valencia, helping them to regain control of their lives and achieve greater economic independence. By providing training and support, the project has enabled many women to break the cycle of poverty and marginalisation, while also fostering a stronger sense of community.

Por Ti Mujer has also contributed to changing public perceptions of migrant women, highlighting their valuable contributions to the local economy and society. The organisation's work has promoted gender equality, social inclusion, and environmental sustainability, laying the foundation for a more equitable and resilient society.

By combining social, economic, and environmental goals, Por Ti Mujer has created a model of community development that can be replicated in other regions. The project's success in promoting intercultural understanding and collaboration offers valuable lessons for other initiatives working with migrant populations. In the future, the organisation aims to expand its reach, offering more women the opportunity to participate in its life-changing programmes.





04

The Comfrey Project



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The Comfrey Project



Context

The Comfrey Project was established in 2001 as a response to the growing need for social and therapeutic support for refugees and asylum seekers in Newcastle Upon Tyne, UK. Initially starting with just six participants, the project aimed to help individuals adjust to their new environment by providing a structured programme that focused on recreation and voluntary work through horticulture. Over time, the project expanded, now managing two allotments and supporting a wide range of individuals, including refugees, asylum seekers, and others facing social exclusion.

Refugees and asylum seekers often face significant challenges when integrating into a new society. These include language barriers, cultural differences, and social isolation, all of which make accessing essential services, finding employment, and building meaningful relationships difficult. Additionally, many refugees and asylum seekers have experienced trauma or torture, which adds to their mental and emotional burden. The Comfrey Project provides a safe, welcoming space where these individuals can regain a sense of normalcy, develop new skills, and find support within their community.

The Comfrey Project

Problem

The process of adjusting to life in a new country can be overwhelming for refugees and asylum seekers. Many struggle with feelings of isolation, confusion about social norms, and discrimination based on their refugee status, ethnicity, or religion. Accessing education, healthcare, and social services is often complicated by language barriers and legal challenges. Moreover, many of these individuals face psychological trauma stemming from their experiences of persecution or conflict in their home countries.

The Comfrey Project was created to address these issues by offering a community-driven, therapeutic environment where participants could engage in horticultural activities. These activities not only provide a way to learn new skills but also foster social connections, improve mental health, and promote a sense of belonging.



The Comfrey Project

Intervention

The Comfrey Project operates two allotments in Newcastle Upon Tyne. One focuses on therapeutic gardening, particularly for victims of torture and asylum seekers who have experienced trauma. The other allotment is geared towards individuals with more advanced gardening skills, allowing them to focus on training in horticulture and food production. The project's mission is to use these gardens as a foundation for activities that improve physical and mental well-being while also fostering a sense of community and empowerment among participants.

The central hub of the project is a 2000m² community garden in Gateshead, which provides space for 25 volunteers and up to 50 project users. These individuals come from a range of backgrounds, including refugees, asylum seekers, families living in precarious situations, and people with disabilities. The garden operates on a flexible, self-directed basis, allowing participants to take part in activities at their own pace. Gardening, cooking, and shared meals are key components of the programme, offering both therapeutic and social benefits. A horticulturalist and a project coordinator are on hand to provide guidance and support.

Regular language cafés, where native speakers and learners come together, help participants improve their English language skills while engaging in hands-on activities. These cafés are part of the project's broader goal of encouraging social interaction and learning through practical experience. The community garden serves as a space for relaxation, creativity, and learning, where participants can work together, share meals, and build relationships.



The Comfrey Project

Outcomes

Learner Engagement

The hands-on nature of the project has led to a noticeable increase in participant engagement. Many refugees and asylum seekers have embraced the opportunity to learn about gardening, sustainability, and horticultural techniques. The practical aspects of the project make it highly engaging, with participants often taking on additional responsibilities within the garden, such as managing specific areas or mentoring new members.

Skills Development

Participants quickly acquire valuable skills in gardening, including planting, composting, and harvesting. These skills are not only useful within the project but also transferable to other areas of life, such as employment in horticulture or environmental fields. Additionally, the project fosters language development through regular language cafés, where participants can practice their English in a supportive environment. Collaborative activities also help participants develop teamwork, leadership, and organisational skills, with some individuals taking on mentor roles within the project.

Community Involvement

The project has fostered a strong sense of community among its participants. Shared goals and activities create bonds of trust and mutual support, with participants forming networks that extend beyond the garden. Local residents and community members have also become involved as volunteers, bringing diverse skills and experiences to the project. This influx of local volunteers enriches the project and encourages intercultural exchange, helping to break down social and cultural barriers.

Mental Health and Well-being

Many participants report improvements in their mental health and overall well-being as a result of their involvement in the project. The therapeutic benefits of gardening, combined with the sense of accomplishment that comes from seeing tangible results, contribute to reduced stress and increased happiness. The project offers a safe, supportive environment where participants can focus on healing and personal growth.

Economic and Educational Opportunities

The skills gained through the project have helped some participants pursue further education or vocational training. Others have found employment in gardening, landscaping, or related fields. The project's emphasis on sustainability and ecological practices has also helped participants develop a deeper understanding of environmental stewardship, which can be applied in both personal and professional contexts.

The Comfrey Project

Long-Term Impact

The long-term impact of the Comfrey Project is evident in its contributions to social inclusion, educational achievement, and community cohesion. The project has helped foster a more inclusive community by bringing together people from different cultural backgrounds and creating a space where they can collaborate and learn from each other. Through shared activities, participants have built supportive networks that provide both practical and emotional support as they navigate the challenges of integration.

In terms of educational achievement, the project has provided informal learning opportunities that enhance participants' knowledge of horticulture, sustainability, and food security. For many, the experience of participating in the project has inspired them to pursue further education or vocational training, leading to greater economic independence and stability.

The project's focus on sustainability has also contributed to environmental stewardship within the community. Participants learn about ecological farming practices, food sovereignty, and the importance of reducing their environmental impact. These lessons are carried forward into their personal lives, helping to promote more sustainable behaviours within their communities.

Overall, the Comfrey Project has created lasting positive changes for both individuals and the broader community. By promoting social inclusion, fostering educational achievement, and building a sense of belonging, the project has helped build a more resilient and integrated society. Its success demonstrates the power of community-driven initiatives to create meaningful, long-term impacts.





05

Red Cross: The Conscious Eating Workshop



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Red Cross



Context

Unhealthy eating habits are a growing concern among immigrant populations in Western Europe, particularly those who have adopted high-calorie, high-fat, and high-sugar diets influenced by the Western diet. This shift from traditional dietary patterns to more processed and fast foods has been linked to increased rates of obesity, diabetes, cardiovascular diseases, and other diet-related conditions. These health challenges are often exacerbated by cultural changes, limited access to healthy food, and socioeconomic factors.

The transition to a new country often leads to unhealthy eating habits due to time constraints, financial limitations, and a lack of knowledge about nutrition in the new environment. Immigrants may also face stress from adjusting to new cultural norms, leading to emotional eating and reliance on convenience foods. Many struggle to maintain a balanced diet due to high food costs, large portion sizes, and a lack of access to kitchens in some living situations.

The Red Cross Gipuzkoa identified these issues through its local assemblies, where social workers reported that many immigrants expressed confusion and difficulty maintaining a healthy diet. One notable example involved a participant who asked whether cooking with an air fryer was a healthy option, which sparked discussions among Red Cross staff about how to provide better support for healthy eating habits.

Red Cross

Problem

Many immigrants in Spain, particularly in Gipuzkoa, face a combination of challenges that negatively affect their dietary habits and overall health. Factors such as limited kitchen access, financial constraints, busy work schedules, and a lack of social support networks contribute to unhealthy eating patterns. These conditions are further complicated by the high cost of healthy food, making it difficult for vulnerable populations to maintain a balanced diet.

Recognising the need for a targeted intervention, the Red Cross Gipuzkoa designed the Conscious Eating Workshop with Air Fryer programme to address these challenges. The workshop aims to promote healthy eating habits, teach economical cooking techniques, and raise awareness about the importance of nutrition in maintaining physical and emotional health.



Intervention

The Conscious Eating Workshop consists of three 90-minute sessions, each focused on a different aspect of healthy living: sustainability, nutrition, and emotional health. The workshops are designed to create a trusting, non-judgmental environment where participants can learn practical skills through interactive, hands-on activities. The key focus of the workshops is to demonstrate that healthy eating does not have to be expensive or time-consuming.

The three sessions are structured as follows:

Session 1: Sustainability, Economy, and Health

This session introduces participants to basic home economics, including how to manage household budgets, plan meals, and make economical food choices. Participants learn to create shopping lists, select seasonal foods, and calculate food costs to save money. The workshop also promotes the idea of "conscious eating," encouraging participants to make mindful choices about their diet in relation to their health and environmental impact.

Session 2: Food and Nutrition

In this session, participants gain practical knowledge about healthy eating, including the basics of nutrition (using the Harvard plate model), understanding food labels, and learning about food preservation techniques. A key element of this session is demonstrating how to cook healthy meals using an air fryer, which allows for reduced oil consumption and more economical meal preparation. Participants also learn how to prevent diseases through healthy eating and dispel the myth that nutritious food is always expensive.

Session 3: New Emotionally Healthy Habits

This session explores the relationship between emotional health and eating habits. Participants are taught to differentiate between physical hunger and emotional hunger and are provided with tools to develop resilience and positive mental health. The session encourages the development of self-esteem and other coping mechanisms, helping participants build stronger emotional well-being through mindful eating practices.

The workshops are offered across nine local and county assemblies in Gipuzkoa, targeting vulnerable populations such as single individuals, single-parent families, and those without access to proper kitchen facilities. At the end of the workshops, participants receive an air fryer, funded by the bp Reacciona initiative, to help them continue applying the healthy cooking techniques learned during the sessions.

Red Cross

Outcomes

The Conscious Eating Workshop has generated several immediate outcomes, including increased learner engagement, skill development, and community involvement.

Learner Engagement

In most assemblies, attendance rates were high, with 100% attendance in four assemblies. Participants reported high satisfaction with the workshops, noting that they had learned a great deal about healthy habits, economical cooking, and self-care. Evaluation sheets showed that participants felt the workshops were valuable in helping them adopt healthier lifestyles.

Skill Development

Participants gained practical skills in meal planning, food budgeting, and cooking with air fryers. These skills have not only improved their ability to prepare healthy meals but also helped them manage household finances more effectively. Additionally, participants learned basic public speaking, online recipe navigation, and calculation skills, which boosted their confidence even if they did not have full language proficiency.

Community Involvement

The workshops fostered a sense of community among participants, who shared recipes, culinary traditions, and cooking techniques. This cultural exchange promoted mutual learning and understanding, helping to build trust and support networks among attendees. In some assemblies, the workshops led to the formation of emotional support groups, where participants continued to meet and share experiences after the workshops ended.



Long-Term Impact

The long-term impact of the Conscious Eating Workshop is expected to be substantial, affecting participants' dietary habits, emotional well-being, and financial stability.

Participants are likely to continue applying the knowledge gained during the workshops, leading to long-term improvements in their diet. By understanding nutrition and learning economical cooking techniques, they can make healthier food choices and reduce their risk of diet-related diseases. This shift towards sustainable healthy eating habits will help participants adopt a more balanced approach to their diets, which can positively influence their overall health.

Healthier eating habits, combined with the emotional resilience tools provided in the workshops, are expected to lead to better physical and mental health. Participants are likely to experience lower rates of chronic diseases such as obesity, diabetes, and cardiovascular conditions. Additionally, improved emotional well-being through mindful eating practices will help them manage stress and maintain a more positive outlook on life, further enhancing their physical and emotional health.

The workshops' emphasis on budgeting and economical meal planning can also help participants manage their finances more effectively, reducing stress related to food costs. By learning to plan meals and shop more efficiently, participants are better equipped to maintain financial stability over time. This financial management will contribute to their overall well-being, allowing them to focus more on other aspects of their lives without the added burden of economic insecurity.

Moreover, the workshops have fostered social integration by encouraging participants to share their culinary traditions and support one another. This sense of community and mutual support is expected to continue beyond the workshops, helping participants feel more connected and less isolated. The cultural exchange and shared experiences will likely promote a greater sense of belonging, contributing to stronger social bonds within their communities.



06

3Kitchens



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Welcome to 3 Kitchens

Food is an important aspect of culture and identity. It can be a powerful starting point for migrant women to share their cultural heritage and build connections with their local communities. Our 3 KITCHENS project is an adult education initiative to empower migrant women in three key areas: volunteering, employment, and entrepreneurship. It offers a nurturing space where they can connect with their culinary heritage, acquire new skills, and gain confidence.

Context

Migrant women face significant challenges in accessing employment, entrepreneurship, and economic security, making them one of the most disadvantaged groups in the European Union. The intersection of gender and origin places these women at a unique disadvantage, often leading to high unemployment rates, low-paying jobs, and frequent deskilling in casual or unregulated sectors. This marginalisation leaves them economically vulnerable, with limited access to stable employment opportunities.

However, many migrant women possess a valuable, transferable skill—cooking—which offers them a means of building connections and contributing to their new communities. Despite the potential of culinary skills, these women often struggle to leverage them for economic security and social inclusion. The 3 Kitchens project seeks to address this gap by providing adult education that focuses on empowering migrant women through food, helping them to upskill and explore pathways in volunteering, employment, and entrepreneurship. The project taps into the rich cultural heritage of food, using it as a medium to enhance learning, social integration, and career development.

3Kitchens

Problem

Food is central to culture and identity, and it provides migrant women with a unique opportunity to share their heritage while also connecting with local communities. Yet, despite this, many migrant women are left out of the formal economy, restricted to low-wage jobs or excluded altogether. The 3 Kitchens project addresses this issue by creating a safe and nurturing environment where migrant women can gain confidence and develop new skills through cooking. By focusing on culinary education, the project aims to improve their economic prospects and facilitate their integration into the workforce.

The project responds to the specific challenges faced by migrant women, such as limited job opportunities and the difficulty of accessing formal education. The initiative leverages food as a means to provide these women with upskilling opportunities, helping them to build confidence, improve their employability, and foster social inclusion. By promoting sustainability in culinary practices and ensuring a culturally sensitive approach, the project aims to create pathways for these women to succeed in both personal and professional capacities.



3 Kitchens

Volunteer • Seek Employment • Become an Entrepreneur

3Kitchens

Intervention

The 3 Kitchens project offers a structured educational programme that uses cooking as a tool for empowerment and economic integration. The project is organised into three distinct work packages:

First Step Volunteering Kitchen

This kitchen serves as an entry point for migrant women, offering them opportunities to volunteer in community settings. Through volunteering, participants begin to develop soft skills, build social connections, and regain a sense of purpose. The emphasis is on using cooking as a means to contribute to the community, while also allowing participants to gain confidence and become familiar with new social environments.

Steps to Employment Kitchen

The second kitchen focuses on preparing women for employment in the food industry. Participants receive training in practical culinary skills, food safety, and hygiene standards, all while learning how to adapt their existing knowledge of cooking to professional environments. This stage helps women transition from casual or volunteer roles into paid employment, equipping them with the skills necessary to work in catering, restaurants, or food-related businesses.

Low Barriers to Entrepreneurship Kitchen

The final kitchen supports women who wish to pursue entrepreneurship in the food sector. This work package offers guidance on how to start and run a small food business, providing training in areas such as menu planning, sourcing ingredients, and managing finances. By focusing on low-barrier entry points, the project enables women to explore business opportunities that align with their culinary heritage and local market demand.

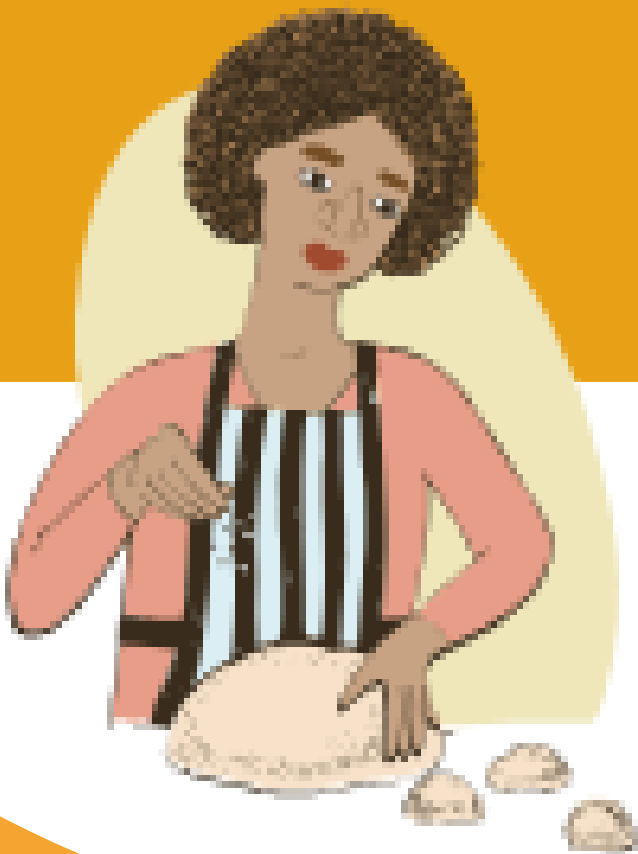
The project is designed to cater to several target groups, including adult educators, community and informal-based educators, socio-economically disadvantaged migrant women, and organisations such as NGOs, municipalities, and policymakers. It aims to promote social inclusion, develop technical and entrepreneurial skills, and improve the economic security of migrant women by creating accessible pathways into the workforce and self-employment.

3Kitchens

Outcomes

The 3 Kitchens project has achieved several immediate outcomes in terms of skill development, community engagement, and economic empowerment. Participants have gained practical skills in cooking, food safety, and nutrition, which have increased their confidence and opened up new employment opportunities. The project has also fostered social inclusion by creating spaces where migrant women can connect with each other and with local communities through food.

Participants in the project have reported increased self-esteem and a greater sense of belonging. The practical training provided in the Steps to Employment Kitchen has helped many women transition into paid work, while the entrepreneurship-focused kitchen has inspired some participants to explore launching their own food-related businesses. By focusing on practical, hands-on learning and addressing the specific challenges faced by migrant women, the project has had a significant impact on both their personal and professional lives.



To find out more, head to
<https://3kitchens.eu/>

3Kitchens

Long-Term Impact

The long-term impact of the 3 Kitchens project is expected to be substantial, particularly in terms of social integration, economic security, and community engagement.

Participants are likely to continue using the skills they gained through the project to secure stable employment or pursue entrepreneurial ventures. By building confidence and providing practical tools for career advancement, the project has created sustainable pathways for migrant women to improve their economic situation. This long-term empowerment will help participants break free from the cycle of low-wage, insecure jobs and move towards more fulfilling and stable careers in the food industry.

In addition to the economic benefits, the project has also strengthened social bonds and fostered a sense of belonging among participants. The shared culinary experiences in the volunteering kitchen have helped migrant women build connections with local communities, promoting cultural exchange and mutual understanding. This social integration is crucial for helping women feel more connected and supported in their new environments, reducing feelings of isolation and exclusion.

Furthermore, the project's focus on sustainable culinary practices has encouraged participants to adopt environmentally friendly approaches to cooking and food sourcing. By promoting the use of local ingredients, reducing food waste, and encouraging energy-efficient cooking methods, the 3 Kitchens project has instilled a sense of responsibility towards the environment, which participants can carry forward in their personal and professional lives.





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Valeria Antonenko



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Valeria Antonenko



Context

Valeria Antonenko arrived in Poland from Ukraine four years ago, driven by financial difficulties and the search for better job opportunities. Like many of her compatriots, she initially took on low-skilled jobs in cleaning and restaurants to cover her living expenses. This was a common experience for many Ukrainian immigrants before the outbreak of the war in Ukraine. At the time, Poland had a negative migration balance and was not a major destination for immigrants. However, with the onset of conflict, Poland became a significant refuge for Ukrainians, with over 18.8 million people entering the country, most of them women, children, and the elderly.

Upon arriving in Szczecin, Valeria found that Poland lacked comprehensive migration policies or support programmes tailored to the needs of immigrants. This gap in assistance made it difficult for newcomers like Valeria to find resources that could help them gain new skills and improve their employment prospects. The war in Ukraine led to a surge in aid and support for refugees, but formal training opportunities were still limited, especially in fields like confectionery, which Valeria eventually pursued.

The situation highlighted the need for better integration and education systems for immigrants in Poland. The country's historical lack of immigration policy, combined with the sudden influx of refugees, created a challenging environment for those seeking to establish themselves and build a career.

Valeria Antonenko

Problem

Valeria, like many immigrants, faced numerous obstacles in Poland, including language barriers, a lack of free training opportunities, and limited access to employment that matched her skills. She initially took on low-paying jobs to survive, without a clear pathway to improving her qualifications. These challenges are emblematic of a broader issue faced by many immigrants in Poland and other parts of Europe, where the focus on immediate survival often overshadows opportunities for professional and personal growth.

Moreover, Valeria's experience was compounded by the lack of government-supported training programmes that could help her acquire new competencies and increase her employability. Although there was a significant outpouring of emergency aid for refugees, formalised pathways to employment or entrepreneurship were scarce, leaving Valeria to seek out and pay for training on her own.



Valeria Antonenko

Intervention

A turning point for Valeria came when she decided to enrol in a confectionery course organised by a private company. Although she had no prior experience in baking or cooking, her desire to learn something new motivated her to join the programme. This course, attended by other Ukrainian immigrants, provided a safe and supportive space where Valeria could learn, connect with others, and begin her journey of personal and professional development.

During the course, Valeria not only learned the basics of confectionery but also improved her Polish language skills by practising with her classmates and instructors. The training environment, where participants could share their experiences and challenges, helped Valeria feel more confident and integrated into her new community. Through these interactions, she built strong relationships that continue to play a role in her social and professional life today.

The training also gave Valeria a sense of purpose and direction. By seeing how other immigrants were using their culinary skills to find jobs or start their own businesses, she gained the confidence to pursue her own goals in the confectionery industry. Over time, Valeria's skills and self-esteem grew, leading her to start her own confectionery business, Favorite Sweets Szczecin.



Valeria Antonenko

Outcomes

The immediate outcomes of Valeria's participation in the confectionery course were evident in her personal growth, skill development, and social integration.

Learner Engagement

Valeria quickly developed a strong interest in acquiring new skills, which had a direct impact on her self-confidence and motivation. Her active participation in the training sessions not only enhanced her knowledge of confectionery but also facilitated her integration into Polish society. The course provided an environment where both Ukrainians and Poles could learn together, fostering cultural exchange and mutual understanding.

Skills Development

Through the course, Valeria significantly improved her culinary skills, particularly in baking and confectionery, which laid the foundation for her future business. Additionally, her language skills improved as she regularly practised Polish with her fellow participants. The course helped Valeria develop a more open and confident attitude, which is crucial for immigrants trying to overcome the many social and professional barriers in a new country.

Integration

Valeria's participation in a course that included both locals and immigrants provided numerous opportunities for cultural integration. She formed lasting friendships with other participants, which helped her feel more connected to her new community. This sense of belonging was critical in reducing the feelings of isolation often experienced by immigrants and provided her with a social network that continues to support her to this day.



Valeria Antonenko

Long-Term Impact

After completing the confectionery course, Valeria successfully launched her own business, Favorite Sweets Szczecin, where she now offers a range of homemade confectionery products. This entrepreneurial achievement demonstrates the transformative power of education and skill development in helping immigrants achieve economic independence and self-sufficiency. Valeria's success serves as a positive example for other immigrants, showing that through determination and education, it is possible to overcome initial challenges and build a successful career in a new country.

In addition to her professional accomplishments, Valeria's participation in the training course has had lasting effects on her personal life. The relationships she formed during the course continue to provide her with emotional and social support, highlighting the role of education as a means of fostering community and social cohesion. By connecting with both locals and other immigrants, Valeria has been able to create a network of friends and colleagues that enriches her life both personally and professionally.

Valeria's journey from an immigrant struggling to find her footing in a new country to a successful business owner underscores the importance of accessible and supportive educational opportunities for immigrants. Her story highlights the potential for immigrants to make meaningful contributions to their host countries when given the right tools and resources.





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Maryna Larechyna



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Maryna Larechyna



Context

Maryna Larechyna moved to Poland from Odessa, Ukraine, seven years ago. Like many other immigrants, her decision to leave her home country was driven by financial challenges and the difficulty of finding stable, well-paying employment. Upon arrival in Poland, Maryna found herself taking on low-skilled jobs in cleaning and restaurant assistance to make ends meet. This pattern was typical for many Ukrainian immigrants in Poland before the war, as the country was not traditionally a destination for immigration. In fact, until recently, Poland had one of the lowest immigration rates in the European Union.

The outbreak of war in Ukraine, however, led to a massive influx of refugees into Poland. Over 18.8 million people have entered the country, with more than 90% of them being women, children, and the elderly. This dramatic shift transformed Poland into a country of refuge, but it also revealed gaps in the nation's support systems for immigrants. Before the conflict, Poland did not have a comprehensive migration strategy, and as a result, many newcomers, like Maryna, faced difficulties in accessing resources, such as free training programmes that could help them build skills and improve their employability.

Despite the immense aid provided by Polish citizens and NGOs after the war, which included essentials like clothing, food, and shelter, formal educational opportunities were still limited. Maryna, like many others, had to pay for the courses she found beneficial to her career goals. In this environment, her journey to improving her culinary skills became a personal challenge that would ultimately lead to her professional success.

Maryna Larechyna

Problem

Upon her arrival in Szczecin, Maryna faced the common challenges of many immigrants, including a language barrier, limited access to affordable training programmes, and difficulty finding skilled employment. While there were many forms of emergency aid available, formal pathways to education and professional development were still scarce, leaving individuals like Maryna to navigate these challenges largely on their own.

One of Maryna's key challenges was finding a training programme that not only aligned with her interests but also helped her learn Polish and improve her job prospects. Without formal assistance or structured support for immigrants, she had to seek out and fund her own training, which placed an additional financial strain on her already limited resources.



Maryna Larechyna

Intervention

Maryna's breakthrough came when a fellow Ukrainian immigrant convinced her to enrol in a culinary training programme designed for immigrants. Although Maryna had taken a cooking course in Ukraine, she was initially hesitant to participate in a similar course in Poland due to her lack of Polish language skills. However, the prospect of improving her culinary abilities, learning more about Polish culture, and meeting other immigrants persuaded her to give it a try.

The course, which focused on using food as a "seeking pedagogy," provided Maryna with more than just culinary training. She gained essential knowledge about nutrition, food traditions, and the broader application of culinary skills in the business world. One area that particularly interested her was healthy eating, especially within the realm of confectionery. The training emphasised the importance of reducing sugar intake and introduced alternatives such as honey, stevia, and natural fruit sweeteners. These lessons were invaluable to Maryna, as they allowed her to apply her passion for baking while also promoting healthier dietary habits.

The culinary workshops also served as a platform for social inclusion. Many participants attended with their children, and others included older individuals with disabilities, creating an inclusive environment. This allowed Maryna to meet new people, build friendships, and reduce the feelings of isolation often experienced by immigrants. The presence of both immigrants and locals in the course fostered cultural integration and helped Maryna feel more connected to her new community.



Maryna Larechyna

Outcomes

Maryna's participation in the culinary course led to several immediate and long-term outcomes in terms of skill development, social integration, and career growth. Initially hesitant, she quickly became enthusiastic about the culinary training. The supportive environment and the opportunity to interact with other immigrants and locals helped her overcome her doubts. Her engagement with the course led to significant personal growth, particularly in her language skills and culinary knowledge.

Through the course, Maryna not only improved her cooking and baking skills but also gained knowledge about healthy eating and alternative ingredients. She learned how to balance flavours while using less sugar, a skill that proved invaluable in her pursuit of a career in confectionery. Additionally, her proficiency in Polish improved, enabling her to communicate more effectively with others and boosting her confidence. The workshops provided a space where immigrants and locals could interact and learn from one another, promoting cultural exchange and integration. Maryna formed lasting friendships with fellow participants, which helped her feel more connected to her new environment. This social inclusion reduced her feelings of loneliness and provided her with a network of support in both her personal and professional life.



Maryna Larechyna

Long-Term Impact

The long-term impact of Maryna's participation in the culinary training has been transformative, both for her career and personal life. Her newly acquired skills allowed her to establish herself professionally by creating custom-made cakes. The culinary training not only improved her technical abilities but also gave her the confidence to pursue her passion and turn it into a business. Her success in the labour market is a clear example of how education and skill development can lead to self-sufficiency and economic stability, benefiting both immigrants and their host countries.

The knowledge Maryna gained in nutrition, healthy eating, and culinary techniques has had a lasting impact. She now applies these principles in her confectionery business, offering healthier options to her customers. Additionally, her improved language skills have enhanced her ability to communicate with clients and collaborators, further contributing to her business success. The relationships Maryna built during the course continue to provide her with emotional support and a sense of belonging. The course not only facilitated her integration into Polish society but also helped her maintain connections with other immigrants, creating a multicultural network that enriches both her personal and professional life.





09

FoodCloud

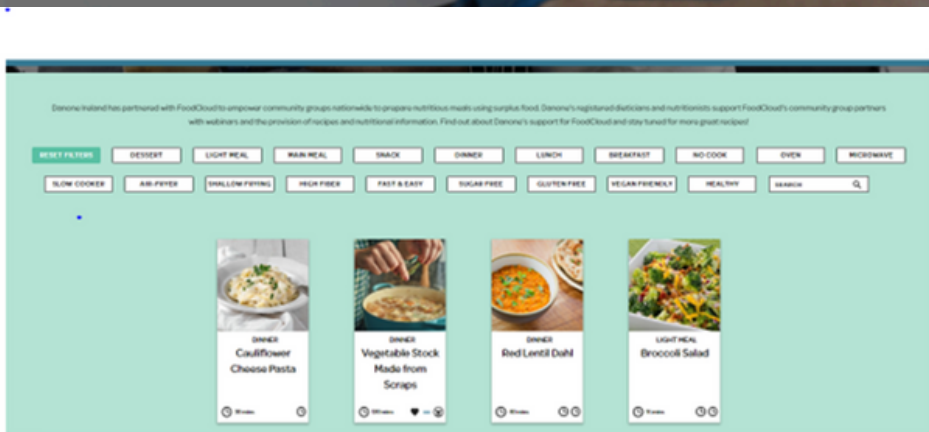


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FoodCloud

Recipes

Use your surplus food to create tasty recipes that are easy, fast and nutritious



Context

The concept behind FoodCloud addresses the issue of food waste by connecting organisations that need food with businesses that have surplus food, combined with an educational model to teach individuals how to address food waste effectively. The initiative was founded by Iseult Ward and Aoibheann O'Brien in 2013, after they met at Trinity College Dublin. During a social enterprise evening, the two discussed the growing problem of food waste in Ireland, where millions of tonnes of food were being discarded while many people experienced hunger.

They developed the idea of using a technology system to connect surplus food with people in need. What started as a student project quickly expanded when they recognised that a technical solution could address this societal issue. Their business plan led to a pilot project with a small café and bakery in Dublin, but they soon realised that the scale was too small and inefficient for charities. Their solution was to approach larger retailers and set up a platform that connected surplus food with local charities, creating a more sustainable impact.

FoodCloud

Problem

Ireland, like many countries, faces the dual challenge of food waste and food insecurity. It is estimated that 25,000 tonnes of food are wasted annually by businesses and households in Ireland, while one in eleven people face food hunger. Globally, one in seven people experience food poverty. FoodCloud's mission is to create an easy-to-use technology platform that efficiently redistributes surplus food between food providers, charities, and community groups. This platform allows any organisation with excess food to connect with charities that can use the food, preventing waste and addressing food insecurity at the community level.

In addition to food redistribution, FoodCloud recognises that education is crucial to minimising food waste in the long term. The organisation has developed a comprehensive set of educational resources, including accredited and non-accredited courses, to teach individuals about surplus food redistribution, food safety, and environmental sustainability. The educational component is vital in promoting awareness and empowering people to actively reduce food waste.



FoodCloud

Intervention

FoodCloud's intervention began with a small student project but grew into a large-scale social enterprise focused on addressing the imbalance between food waste and hunger. The core of the initiative is its technology platform, which connects food businesses with local charities, ensuring that surplus food is redistributed efficiently. The platform was built to be user-friendly, allowing any business to participate, regardless of its size or location.

In addition to this technology-driven solution, FoodCloud has developed a range of educational programmes to address the root causes of food waste. These programmes, available online and through workshops, provide practical knowledge on reducing food waste in homes and businesses. One notable initiative is the "Reducing Food Waste in the Home" online course, a free, three-week programme accredited by Atlantic Technological University (ATU). The course teaches participants about the food waste problem, how to minimise waste at home, and ways to contribute to their communities.

For those looking for more in-depth training, FoodCloud offers a one-year, part-time course titled "Sustainable Food Surplus Practices," certified at QQI Level 6. This course allows learners to build their knowledge of surplus food management and sustainability, with flexible learning options available.

Get in contact with FoodCloud

As a charity partner to FoodCloud, FoodCloud can support you to:

- Organise and collect good food that otherwise would be wasted
- Connect you with other local organisations involved in food sharing.

We can also provide resources and education tools to help you start your food sharing project. We will make sure your project includes everyone in the community working together for a world where no good food goes to waste.

FoodCloud

Outcomes

FoodCloud has achieved significant outcomes in both the redistribution of surplus food and its educational efforts. The platform has redistributed 3,126 tonnes of food in Ireland last year alone, the equivalent of preventing 10,000 tonnes of CO2 emissions. This food was distributed to over 600 charities across the country, helping to feed thousands of people in need.

In addition to the tangible results of food redistribution, FoodCloud's educational programmes have empowered individuals and communities to take action against food waste. The "All Taste Zero Waste" video series features international chefs who provide tips on using surplus ingredients, demonstrating how individuals can reduce waste in their kitchens. These educational initiatives encourage people to sign up for courses and take small steps that collectively have a significant impact.

By offering both short-term and long-term educational courses, FoodCloud ensures that individuals at all levels of understanding can engage with the issue of food waste. These courses help raise awareness, equip participants with practical tools, and foster a cultural shift towards more sustainable food practices.



FoodCloud

Long-Term Impact

The long-term impact of FoodCloud extends beyond food redistribution and into changing attitudes towards food waste on a national and global level. With Ireland's Circular Economy Bill placing food distribution on a statutory footing, FoodCloud's efforts have contributed to a broader policy shift towards sustainability. The organisation is actively working to meet the UN Sustainable Development Goal of halving food waste by 2030, ensuring that the issue remains a priority in Ireland's environmental and social policies.

Through its educational programmes, FoodCloud is fostering a generation of individuals and businesses that are more conscious of their role in the food system. By providing practical, actionable knowledge, the organisation helps people reduce waste in their homes and workplaces, contributing to a more sustainable future. The ripple effect of these educational initiatives can lead to systemic change, where food waste is no longer viewed as inevitable but something that can be actively prevented.

The impact on local communities has also been profound. By connecting surplus food with charities, FoodCloud has strengthened community ties and provided vital resources to those in need. The platform creates a circular system where food that would have gone to waste is repurposed to nourish people, fostering both environmental and social benefits.





Conclusion



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Conclusion



Food Includes

The Food Includes Best Practices guide underscores the significant potential of food as a multidisciplinary tool for education, social inclusion, and community engagement. By examining diverse case studies and evidence-based strategies, it illustrates how food-based initiatives can effectively engage excluded learners, promote cultural competence, and address critical societal challenges such as inequality and sustainability. Developed in collaboration with eight expert partner organisations, the guide provides a rich resource for educators, community leaders, and policymakers, grounded in practical application and theoretical rigour.

The universal and culturally resonant nature of food positions it as an ideal medium to bridge social divides and facilitate learning across diverse contexts. The guide highlights how food can empower individuals by equipping them with essential skills, fostering confidence, and enhancing their prospects for economic and social participation. Equally, it underscores the importance of inter-organisational collaboration, showcasing how partnerships among educational institutions, NGOs, local authorities, and other stakeholders can enhance the impact and sustainability of food-based interventions.

This resource is fundamentally about fostering empowerment on multiple levels. It seeks to equip educators with evidence-based approaches, support communities through collaborative efforts, and create pathways for learners to achieve meaningful inclusion and growth. By presenting adaptable frameworks and replicable practices, it demonstrates how the field of food education can catalyse systemic change and contribute to the broader goals of equity, integration, and sustainability.

The guide invites its audience to critically engage with the strategies and methodologies presented, encouraging adaptation to specific local contexts. It is hoped that this compilation of insights will serve as both a theoretical foundation and a practical toolkit for those seeking to harness food as a vehicle for social and educational transformation. Through the thoughtful implementation of these practices, stakeholders can contribute to a more inclusive, equitable, and sustainable society, reflecting the enduring potential of food as a conduit for connection and change.

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