

BUILDING INCLUSIVE FOOD SYSTEMS

A Roadmap for Local Governments and Communities





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1. Overview

1. OVERVIEW

1.1. The European Food Security Project

The [EU Food Security HUB](#) is a European initiative coordinated by the Associació Benestar i Desenvolupament (ABD) and funded by the Erasmus+ programme. Running from December 2022 to June 2025, the project aims to promote cooperation, knowledge sharing, and the scaling up of good practices among organizations working to enhance food security and sovereignty. Its primary objective is to develop a common European competency framework that supports innovative career pathways, addressing food insecurity through sustainable and socially inclusive approaches.

In response to the heightened unemployment and social vulnerability exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic—particularly among youth and low-skilled individuals—the EU Food Security HUB focuses on improving access to quality education and vocational training for migrants, refugees, and other marginalized groups. By fostering public-private cooperation and emphasizing the creation of green jobs, the project contributes to poverty eradication and supports the green and sustainable transition of EU economies.

This guide represents one of the key outputs of the EU Food Security HUB project. By leveraging the collective expertise and experiences of project partners, this guide aims to inform policy-making and foster the implementation of effective strategies to combat food insecurity across Europe.

1.2. A Roadmap for Local Action on Food Security

Food security is a critical global challenge that requires effective local action. While its root causes are often structural, successful responses depend on collaboration between governments, community organizations, and citizens. Local governments play a vital role in this effort, given their proximity to communities and capacity to implement policies that foster resilience and inclusivity.

By highlighting inspiring practices, sharing peer-to-peer recommendations, and offering practical guidance, the guide equips these actors with actionable strategies to lead the fight against food insecurity. Collaboration, innovation, and citizen involvement are emphasized as the key drivers of transformative change.

Departing from this perspective, the European Food Security Hub project has drawn on valuable lessons from diverse experiences across Spain, Italy, Greece, and France. These examples demonstrate how local governments, through targeted actions and partnerships, can create systemic change in their communities. The guide seeks to motivate governments to lead these efforts while fostering collaboration with local initiatives.

Key audiences for this guide include:

- **Local Government Teams:** Leaders and planners who shape policy and implement programs to promote food security.
- **Social Enterprises:** Organizations that innovate to address food insecurity through sustainable practices and community engagement.
- **Local Food Networks:** Grassroots groups that connect producers, consumers, and distributors to enhance food accessibility and reduce waste.
- **Other stakeholders:** Public and private institutions, such as schools, hospitals, farmers, food industry, supermarkets, or restaurants involved in the food system.

However, this guide does not offer a one-size-fits-all blueprint. Instead, it collects lessons, tools and practices from diverse European contexts. It also highlights practical pathways for action, including public awareness campaigns, community garden projects, and sustainable food procurement.

To sum up, the key idea underlying this guide is that local governments are called upon to act as catalysts for change, leveraging their unique position to lead, design, and deliver responses to food insecurity. Through **collaboration with local initiatives and a commitment towards social innovation**, local governments can create meaningful and lasting impacts.



2. Building Food Security from the Ground Up



2. BUILDING FOOD SECURITY FROM THE GROUND UP

2.1. Anchoring Food Policy in the Milan Pact

In 2015, more than 200 cities from around the world came together to sign the Milan **Urban Food Policy Pact (MUFPP)**, a landmark commitment to develop sustainable, inclusive and resilient urban food systems. Departing from the MUFPP as a guiding framework is essential for understanding and enhancing the role of local governments in promoting food security.

The MUFPP is the most widely endorsed global municipal agreement on urban food systems, offering a comprehensive and action-oriented framework rooted in the lived experiences of cities. It acknowledges the strategic role that local governments play in shaping food environments, coordinating actors across the supply chain, and implementing policies that promote equitable access to nutritious, culturally appropriate, and sustainably produced food.

As food insecurity becomes increasingly urgent due to global shocks and local inequalities, the MUFPP remains a powerful compass. This guide is born from its spirit and designed to help local governments and communities across Europe put its values into practice—especially the following **three key principles** of the Pact:

a) Fostering Community-Based Food Initiatives

Article 4 of the MUFPP calls on cities to:

Involve all sectors of the food system (including local authorities, technical and academic institutions, civil society, small-scale producers and the private sector) in the development, implementation and evaluation of food-related policies, programmes and initiatives.

This guide embraces the idea that **effective food policy is not something cities do to communities, but with them**. Community-based food initiatives—such as solidarity markets, agroecological gardens, cooperative kitchens or seed exchanges—do not just fill gaps left by state or market. They generate **social innovation**: they rebuild local economies, strengthen trust networks, and empower vulnerable groups through roles as co-creators rather than recipients of aid.

More specifically, community-led projects create:

- **Ownership and dignity**, through participatory governance and choice-based models.
- **Social connection**, by linking food with culture, health, education and neighbourhood life.
- **Resilience**, by embedding knowledge, production and solidarity within the territory itself.

This guide provides local authorities with tools to **identify, support and scale** these grassroots initiatives—shifting from assistentialism to co-production and local leadership.

b) Promoting Social Equality and Inclusion

Food insecurity is not only about scarcity but also about inequality—of income, access, opportunity, and recognition. The MUFPP calls on cities to strengthen food assistance in ways that empower individuals, reduce stigma, and promote systemic inclusion. In this light, food policy becomes a powerful lever for equity when it targets the structural drivers of vulnerability, rather than simply responding to symptoms.

As stated in Article 7 of the Pact, cities should:

Encourage social and economic inclusion by promoting decent employment for all, particularly youth and women, and by strengthening food assistance and social protection programmes to reduce inequality, hunger and malnutrition.

The operationalisation of inclusive food systems entails:

- **Dignified access** – through models that respect cultural identities, user preferences, and the right to choose, such as points-based groceries or community stores.
- **Empowerment pathways** – by turning recipients into active agents: co-producers, volunteers, entrepreneurs, and local leaders.
- **Cross-sector linkages** – by connecting food action with education, care work, health, employment, and housing strategies.

This guide highlights how targeted investments in inclusive food infrastructure—like neighborhood kitchens, school gardens or job-training hubs—can open real opportunities for social participation and mobility. By anchoring food security in rights and inclusion, local governments can build food systems that not only nourish bodies, but also restore voice, agency, and justice.

c) Advancing Territorial and Climate Sustainability

A third element that is central to the MUFPP is the territoriality of food systems—they occupy land, generate transport flows, and influence urban metabolism. The MUFPP urges cities to integrate food policy into **urban planning, land use, climate adaptation and environmental justice**. The Pact explicitly urges cities to embed food into spatial and environmental planning frameworks. As stated in Article 6, cities should:

Promote sustainable diets and nutrition through the integration of food into urban planning, development and climate change policies, including use of public space, zoning, and transportation.

Sustainable food systems mean:

- **Territorially rooted production** – fostering local, agroecological and circular agriculture that reconnects food with place.
- **Climate-sensitive design** – reducing emissions and resource use through short food circuits, waste reduction and biodiversity protection.
- **Policy coherence** – aligning food policy with broader sustainability goals (zero waste, green infrastructure, just transitions).

The guide offers some practical examples about how to **embed food security into local sustainability plans**.

2.2. Local Food Innovation in Action: Reflections from the EU Food Security Hub Workshop

A workshop held in El Prat in July 3, 2024, in the framework of the European Food Security Hub offered a vivid illustration of how local food initiatives can evolve beyond traditional assistance to become engines of dignity, inclusion, and transformation. Rooted in the everyday realities of municipalities and communities, the gathering highlighted **how food support systems can be reimaged to restore agency**, build relationships, and generate social value.

Through shared experiences—like El Prat’s innovative grocery model and solidarity-based gardens—participants explored how food insecurity can be tackled not just as a problem of scarcity, but as an **opportunity for community-building and democratic participation**.

This section distills the core insights from that encounter, offering practical guidance for cities aiming to move along the food insecurity continuum—from emergency aid to structural redesign—through socially innovative, community-led approaches.

In this regard, the following table captures the **core added value of community-based food initiatives**, as surfaced during the El Prat workshop. These experiences show that when local food support is grounded in **participation, dignity and shared responsibility**, it becomes a catalyst for **social innovation**—transforming recipients into active agents, and food into a vector of empowerment and community-building.

Far from assistentialist models, these initiatives challenge the logic of top-down charity by fostering local agency, relational ties, and embedded knowledge. What emerges is a food system not only more inclusive and effective, but also more democratic and resilient. Each principle in the table represents a **distinct pillar of this transformation**, illustrated through tangible practices that other cities and territories can use as a source of inspiration.

Table 1: Community - Based Food Initiatives as Drivers of Social Innovation

Identified consequences of community-based food initiatives	What it means in practice	Illustrative initiatives
Sense of control	People choose what, when and how they eat, ensuring a sense of dignity in access to food.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • La Botiga d’El Prat, a points-based community grocery that swaps charity for choice and nutrition education . • “Supportive shopping” volunteers who accompany users in hubs to respect preferences.
Participation in community life	Food activities double as social connectors that combat isolation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Neighbourhood gardens & seed-saving circles where residents co-grow and mentor. • Multi-cultural food festivals showcasing migrant cuisines.

Feeling valued & able to contribute	Recipients become co-producers, volunteers or micro-entrepreneurs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Users staff pick-up points or co-host cook-alongs. • Cascina Sant'Alberto trains vulnerable youth for agro-jobs.
Nourished & respected	Holistic wellbeing—nutritional, mental, cultural.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nutrition workshops built around familiar recipes. • Co-located counselling or health checks.
Shared decision-making	Beneficiaries co-write rules, budgets and menus.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • User advisory committees embedded in programme governance. • Quick-pulse surveys informing menu rotations.

The El Prat gathering also reinforced a second central idea: **local governments are uniquely positioned to drive systemic change in food security**. Their capacity to connect policy with practice, and institutions with communities, allows them to act as key enablers of socially innovative and sustainable food systems.

However, this role requires more than just funding or oversight—it calls for **strategic, iterative, and relational approaches** that empower communities while embedding food policy into broader urban agendas.

The table below outlines a “**virtuous circle**” of municipal action, synthesizing the concrete steps local authorities can take to move from fragmented interventions to coherent, inclusive strategies. Each step is supported by practical actions that have emerged from real-world experience—many of them discussed and shared in El Prat.

Table 2: What local governments can do in the field of food security

Step	Concrete actions & tips
Place food security on the agenda	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Insert commitments in City Plans or Public-Health Strategies. • Use local evidence dossiers for advocacy. • Leverage festivals & media to normalise the topic.
Build an evidence base	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Map existing gardens, relief services, waste streams. • Conduct vulnerability & supply-chain assessments.
Forge collaborative governance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Convene <i>food councils</i> mixing NGOs, chefs, farmers, retailers and residents. • Act as hub-facilitator rather than sole provider .
Lead by example	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apply healthy-food standards in municipal canteens. • Pilot zero-waste procurement in schools .
Unlock resources & spaces	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small-grants programmes for grassroots food labs. • Open vacant lots for gardens or mobile markets.
Communicate wins & iterate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publish impact dashboards; celebrate volunteer milestones.

Local governments are not only the level of governance **closest to people's everyday lives**, but also the most directly connected to the **territory where food is produced, distributed, consumed, and shared**. This dual proximity—social and ecological—gives municipalities a unique ability to lead food policies that are both **climate-conscious and democratically grounded**.

By supporting community-based initiatives and embedding food security into urban planning, land use, and public procurement, local governments can help build food systems that respect environmental limits while reinforcing **social cohesion, participation, and equity**. In doing so, they position food policy not as a niche agenda, but as a strategic tool for **territorial resilience and democratic renewal**.

3. Inspiring Examples

3. INSPIRING EXAMPLES

3.1. Learning from Practice

In this section, we explore a series of case studies drawn from European cities **participating as partners in this project**. These examples showcase a diverse range of **innovative, community-based initiatives** developed to address food insecurity through socially inclusive and environmentally sustainable approaches. Each initiative reflects the unique challenges, assets, and policy environments of its territory, offering **valuable, context-specific lessons** for others working in the field.

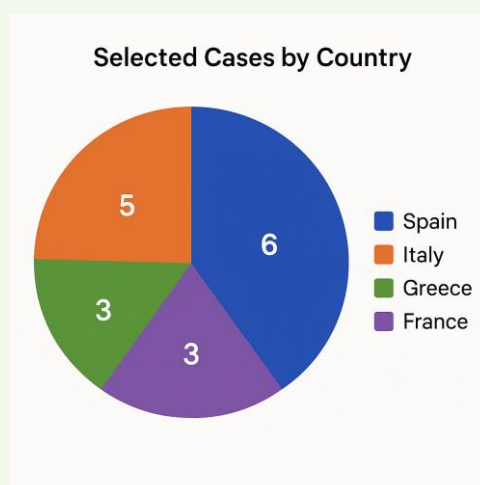
The selected case studies highlight the **active role of local governments, civil society actors, and community members** in designing and implementing solutions that go beyond assistentialist models. From urban beekeeping in Milan to comprehensive municipal food strategies in Barcelona, the initiatives analyzed illustrate how local food systems can be transformed through **participatory governance, circular practices, and strong territorial grounding**.

The comparative lens allows us to distill **actionable insights and best practices**, which can be **adapted and scaled** by other municipalities and grassroots organizations working toward food justice. Ultimately, this analysis will offer local authorities and practitioners a **roadmap for designing resilient and democratic food systems**, rooted in the lived realities of their communities. This roadmap will be provided in the last section of this guide.

3.2. Case Studies

Next, a curated selection of 17 case studies identified within the framework of the EU Food Security Hub project will be presented. The practices reflect a diversity of contexts, governance models, and innovation strategies addressing food insecurity.

Figure 1: Selected Cases by Country



The cases span a wide geographical spectrum—covering **Spain, Italy, Greece, and France**—and include both municipal strategies and community-led models. They were **selected** for their relevance to community-based responses to food insecurity and their potential to inform the design and implementation of local food policies grounded in dignity, inclusion, and sustainability.

The **analysis** was conducted through a desk-based review of publicly available information, combined with documents and materials shared by project partners. Sources included project documentation, initiative websites, local media, and policy reports. Together, these cases offer a rich mosaic of practices that reflect the evolving role of local governments and communities in building more equitable and resilient food systems.

The table below offers a snapshot of the selected **case studies**. Additional details on each initiative can be found in the **Annex**.

Table 3: Case Studies From Each Country

Spain

Region	Case study
El Prat de Llobregat	Prat Alimenta. Comprehensive food strategy "Prat Alimenta" is an integrated food strategy, aimed at promoting food security, sustainability, and community engagement. This comprehensive strategy addresses various aspects of the local food system, from production to consumption, and aims to create a resilient and sustainable food environment for the community.
	"La Botiga" "La Botiga" is a pioneering social store located in El Prat de Llobregat, Spain, designed to address food insecurity while promoting community engagement and sustainability. This project is part of a broader initiative to develop new food relief models that go beyond mere food distribution.
	Cuina de Barri "Cuina de Barri" is an innovative community kitchen initiative designed to address food insecurity by providing nutritious meals while promoting community engagement and sustainability. The initiative is grounded in an efficient design that allows for the preparation of balanced meals using local and seasonal products.
Barcelona	Alimenta: Comprehensive food strategy "Alimenta" is a comprehensive food strategy initiative launched to address food insecurity and promote healthy, sustainable food practices among vulnerable populations. This project forms part of Barcelona's broader efforts under the 2030 Healthy and Sustainable Food Strategy,

	which seeks to transform the city's food system through inclusive and community-focused approaches.
	<p>Espai Alimenta. Community kitchen initiative</p> <p>Part of Barcelona's broader Alimenta strategy, Espai Alimenta offers community kitchens and workshops to promote food security, dignity, and sustainability among vulnerable populations. It supports autonomy through collective cooking, training, and local food sourcing.</p>
	<p>Més amb Menys</p> <p>"Més amb Menys" (More with Less) is a community-driven initiative in the Roquetes neighborhood of Barcelona. Launched in 2011, the project aims to address basic needs, reduce social isolation, and promote sustainable living through communal activities such as cooking and sewing workshops. The initiative is part of a broader effort to foster solidarity and empowerment among residents.</p>
Lleida	<p>"El Palet"</p> <p>"El Palet" is an innovative project initiated by the Banc dels Aliments de les Comarques de Lleida. This project aims to dignify access to food for individuals in precarious situations, promote healthy eating habits, and combat food waste.</p>

Italy

Region	Case study
Milan	<p>Urban Beekeeping at Cascina Cuccagna</p> <p>A community-driven project that integrates beekeeping into urban life, enhancing biodiversity, environmental education, and local engagement. Workshops, honey production, and pollinator-friendly gardens turn urban farming into a tool for awareness and inclusion.</p>
	<p>Villaggio del Contadino della Coldiretti (Coldiretti Farmer's Village)</p> <p>The "Villaggio del Contadino" (Farmer's Village) is an annual event organized by Coldiretti, Italy's national farmers' association.</p> <p>This event aims to promote Italian agriculture, showcase local food products, and engage the public in discussions about sustainable food practices and agricultural policies. The village moves across various Italian cities, including Rome, Milan, Naples, and Palermo, transforming urban spaces into vibrant hubs of agricultural activity.</p>

	<p>Food Hub Cuccagna</p> <p>The "Food Hub Cuccagna" is part of Milan's innovative approach to tackling food waste and food insecurity.</p> <p>This initiative is a cornerstone of the city's broader food policy, aiming to halve food waste by 2030 while providing nutritious food to those in need. The Food Hub Cuccagna, along with other neighborhood hubs, serves as a model for sustainable urban food management.</p>
	<p>Radici di Comunità at Nuovo Vicolo Cuccagna</p> <p>"Radici di Comunità" is an innovative project based in Nuovo Vicolo Cuccagna, Milan, aimed at urban regeneration and social inclusion. Initiated by Cascina Cuccagna in collaboration with La Mescolanza Impresa Sociale, and supported by foundations such as Fondazione Alia Falck, Fondazione Banca Popolare di Milano, and Fondazione AEM, this project transforms an abandoned urban space into a vibrant community hub.</p>
	<p>Pianeta Cuccagna: Giovani, Cibo e Comunità</p> <p>"Pianeta Cuccagna: Giovani, Cibo e Comunità" is a dynamic project based at Cascina Cuccagna in Milan. This initiative, led by the Associazione Consorzio Cascina Cuccagna in collaboration with Està and Fondazione ACRA, and supported by the Fondazione di Comunità Milano, focuses on building a food community centered around sustainability and global citizenship education for young people.</p>
Messina	<p>Mangia & Cambia (Eat & Change)</p> <p>"Mangia & Cambia" (Eat & Change) is an innovative initiative designed to address food security and promote sustainable food practices. This project is part of a broader movement (Slow food initiative across all Italy) to integrate food sustainability into the urban fabric, engaging the community in meaningful ways.</p>
Palermo	<p>Terra Franca</p> <p>"Terra Franca" is an innovative community project located in the Cruillas district of Palermo, initiated by the Human Rights Youth Organization (HRYO). This initiative focuses on the socio-economic inclusion of disadvantaged groups by transforming land confiscated from the Mafia into a productive community garden and educational hub, offering non-formal educational activities and free-time activities in a disadvantaged neighbourhood</p>

Italy (multi-regional)	In Cibo Civitas. National awareness and youth empowerment project Led by LVIA and Slow Food Italia, this initiative empowers youth and promotes sustainable food systems across four regions. It combines training, local campaigns, and food policy dialogues with public institutions to foster civic engagement and environmental responsibility.
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Greece

Region	Case study
Athens	Social Grocery Store (Koinoniko Pantopoleio) A volunteer-based social store offering essential goods at no cost to low-income households. The project relies on donations from local businesses and supports both dignity in access and community solidarity, while helping to reduce food waste.

France

Region	Case study
Paris	Caisse Alimentaire du 8ème Arrondissement The " Caisse Alimentaire du 8ème Arrondissement " in Paris is an initiative managed by the Caisse des Écoles, focusing on providing nutritious meals to school children and reducing food waste. The project integrates sustainable practices and educational programs to promote healthy eating habits and environmental awareness among young students.

3.3. Comparative Analysis

a) Analytical Framework

The comparative analysis of the 17 local food security initiatives included in the previous table aims to identify the **types of initiatives** implemented, their concrete **impact** on the ground, and their **contribution** to the objectives set out in the **Milan Urban Food Policy Pact**.

It also seeks to highlight the main **enabling conditions**, design features, and governance arrangements that have supported their success, as well as the **challenges** they have encountered. This approach allows for a deeper understanding of how diverse urban contexts are translating food security goals into practice, and what lessons can inform future local strategies.

b) Typology of Initiatives

This section answers the question: *What kinds of approaches are emerging to address food insecurity?* The goal here is not to describe the initiatives, but to classify them according to their **core operational logic**—what they aim to do and how they are structured to do it.

In this regard, the initiatives reviewed can be grouped into **four broad categories based on their operationalisation and purpose**. This typology helps illuminate the diversity of models emerging across Europe and allows for clearer comparative insights. Each category captures a different way of addressing food insecurity—whether through comprehensive public policy, proximity-based service delivery, educational engagement, or circular solidarity practices.

The table below describes these four broad categories, offering a structured lens through which to interpret the contribution of the selected case studies.

Table 4: Typology of Initiatives

Typology of practice	Description
Comprehensive Municipal Strategies	These initiatives are led or strongly supported by local governments and framed within official municipal plans or strategies. They address food insecurity holistically by embedding food policies into broader urban agendas such as sustainability, public health, or social cohesion. They align with international frameworks like the SDGs and the MUFPP, and often involve multi-sectoral coordination and stakeholder engagement through governance tools like food councils.
Community Kitchens and Food Hubs	Place-based initiatives that combine the provision of nutritious food with community engagement and social support. Often, located in vulnerable neighborhoods, they offer meals, workshops, and food distribution in dignified, welcoming spaces. They reduce stigma, foster connection, and promote healthy eating while being co-managed by civil society and/or municipal actors.
Educational and Youth-Focused Models	Initiatives that use food as a tool for education, empowerment, and civic engagement among children and youth. They promote food literacy, sustainability, and vocational skills through school programs, urban agriculture, or mentoring. These models cultivate long-term food citizenship and contribute to social inclusion and capacity-building.
Km 0, Circular and Solidarity Economies	Initiatives that prioritize redistribution, Km 0, and waste prevention within the food system. They include social groceries and surplus recovery schemes rooted in cooperative or solidarity principles. These projects uphold dignity, minimize food waste, and contribute to environmental goals and economic justice.

Typology of Initiatives



Figure 2: Typology of Initiatives Identified in Case Studies

The following list organizes the 17 documented practices into these four categories.

Comprehensive Municipal Strategies

- Prat Alimenta (El Prat)
- Alimenta (Barcelona)

Community Kitchens and Food Hubs

- Cuina de Barri (El Prat)
- Espai Alimenta (Barcelona)
- Food Hub Cuccagna (Milan)
- Caisse Alimentaire du 8ème Arrondissement (Paris)

Educational and Youth-Focused Models

- Pianeta Cuccagna (Milan)
- Urban Beekeeping (Milan)
- Radici di Comunità (Milan)
- In Cibo Civitas (Italy) (also cross-cuts strategies)
- Terra Franca (Palermo) (strong educational and inclusion component)

Circular and Solidarity Economies

- La Botiga (El Prat)
- El Palet (Lleida)
- Més amb Menys (Barcelona)
- Social Grocery Store (Athens)
- Mangia & Cambia (Messina)
- Villaggio del Contadino (Italy)

Some initiatives, such as *In Cibo Civitas* or *Terra Franca*, span multiple categories (strategy + education, or circular economy + youth engagement), but for analytical clarity, they can be primarily positioned in one cluster while noting their cross-cutting nature.

c) Food System Entry Points

The four strategic approaches described in the previous section —municipal strategies, community-based services, educational engagement, and Km 0, circular solidarity models—not only reflect different governance and implementation logics, but also correspond to **distinct points of intervention along the food chain**.

This section answers: *Where in the food system do these initiatives intervene?* Mapping the initiatives against **food system stages** (production, transformation, distribution, consumption, waste prevention) shows how local actors cannot only innovate socially or institutionally, but also contribute to **reconfiguring the material flows and relationships** of the food chain.

From production to waste prevention, the initiatives collectively illustrate how local actors can act at multiple stages of the system to promote food security. The table below maps these interventions across key food system entry points, showcasing how diverse operational models can be.

Table 5: Food System Entry Points

Entry Point	Examples
Production	Terra Franca (Palermo), Radici di Comunità (Milan), Pianeta Cuccagna (Milan), Urban Beekeeping (Milan), Villaggio del Contadino (Italy)
Transformation	Espai Alimenta (Barcelona), Més amb Menys (Barcelona), Cuina de Barri (El Prat), In Cibo Civitas (Italy), Mangia & Cambia (Messina)
Distribution	Food Hub Cuccagna (Milan), El Palet (Lleida), La Botiga (El Prat), Social Grocery Store (Athens), Caisse Alimentaire du 8ème (Paris)
Consumption	Alimenta (Barcelona), Caisse Alimentaire du 8ème (Paris), Pianeta Cuccagna (Milan), Més amb Menys (Barcelona), In Cibo Civitas (Italy)
Waste Prevention	Mangia & Cambia (Messina), Food Hub Cuccagna (Milan),

d) Common Impacts and Outcomes

The typology outlined above captures the structural diversity of local responses to food insecurity, while the food system entry points reveal where along the chain these interventions are most active—from production to waste prevention. Yet understanding how these initiatives function and where they intervene is only part of the picture. Equally important is what they achieve.

While the operational models differ, a set of recurring impacts and outcomes can be identified. These reflect the multifaceted contributions of the initiatives to individuals, communities, and the environment.

The following table offers a detailed overview of the main impact areas observed across the 17 food security initiatives analyzed. Rather than simply listing outcomes, it unpacks the **core dimensions through which each initiative generates value**—socially, economically, environmentally, and institutionally.

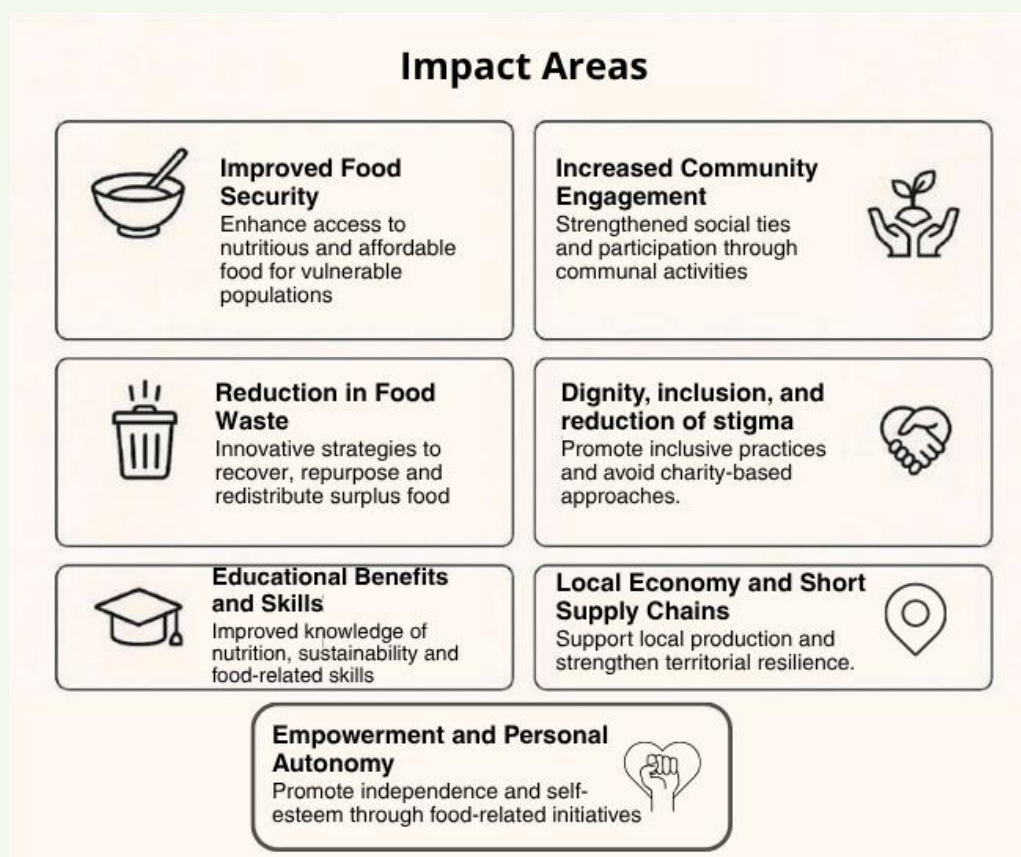
These categories have been inductively obtained through an in-depth reading of the case studies and reflect the multiple ways in which local food initiatives contribute to **sustainable and inclusive urban development, social equality and wellbeing**. By clarifying what each impact area entails, the table helps local authorities and practitioners better identify the mechanisms at work and the types of transformations food initiatives can support in their territories.

Table 6: Description of Impact Areas Across Case Studies

Impact Area	Description
Improved Food Security	Initiatives in this category focus on enhancing stable and dignified access to nutritious, affordable, and culturally appropriate food for individuals and families facing vulnerability. They often integrate food provision into broader strategies of social protection and public health. Mechanisms include regular meal distribution, access to fresh produce, and nutritional education. Their strength lies in shifting from emergency food relief to systemic food access as a public responsibility.
Community Engagement and Social Capital	These initiatives activate community networks and foster solidarity through collective food-related activities. Participation mechanisms include volunteering, co-design, and local partnerships, which contribute to building trust, reducing isolation, and embedding food practices in neighborhood life. They often turn food from a basic need into a catalyst for civic cohesion, mutual support, and place-based identity.
Support for Local Economies and Short Chains	These projects strengthen the resilience and sustainability of local economies by creating direct and fairer connections between producers and consumers. They promote local sourcing, reduce intermediary dependence, and increase the visibility of small-scale and agroecological farmers. This area is key to linking food security with sustainable food chains, economic development and territorial cohesion.
Food Waste Reduction and Circularity	Interventions in this area prioritize the recovery, redistribution, and responsible management of surplus food, often through innovative logistics and partnerships. They align with broader environmental goals by reducing landfill waste, lowering emissions, and closing food system loops. These initiatives operationalize circular economy principles at the local level while addressing immediate social needs.
Education, Awareness and Skill Building	This impact area captures initiatives that embed educational dimensions—whether targeting youth, adults, or mixed-age communities. Topics range from nutrition and sustainable

	consumption to food sovereignty and agroecology. These actions develop food literacy and life skills, encourage healthy lifestyles, and empower individuals to make informed choices as eaters, citizens, and producers.
Dignity, Inclusion and Stigma Reduction	Initiatives in this category deliberately challenge the charitable logic of traditional food aid. Instead, they create empowering spaces where food is accessed with choice, respect, and autonomy. Approaches include points-based models, participatory governance, and user-centered design. These initiatives seek to normalize food support and reinforce inclusion, equality, and self-worth.
Empowerment and Personal Autonomy	Beyond access, these initiatives provide pathways for personal development and green jobs through active roles in the food system. Beneficiaries may become co-creators, staff, entrepreneurs, or local leaders. This impact area emphasizes capacity-building, employment potential, and increased agency in shaping individual life paths and collective food futures.

Figure 3: Typology of Impact



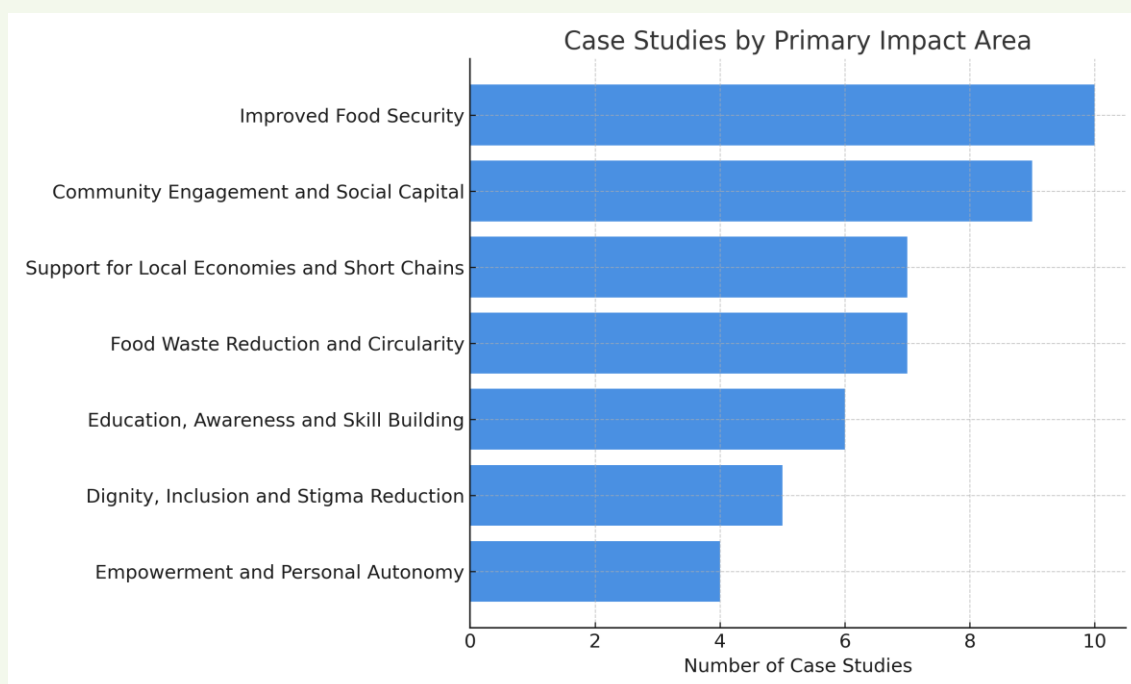
Building on the six impact areas illustrated above, the following table provides a comparative overview of the key impacts and contributions of the 17 initiatives analyzed in this document.

Table 7: Matrix of Case Studies and Primary Impact Areas

Case Study	Improved Food Security	Community Engagement & Social Capital	Support for Local Economies & Short Chains	Food Waste Reduction & Circularity	Education, Awareness & Skill Building	Dignity, Inclusion & Stigma Reduction	Empowerment & Personal Autonomy
Prat Alimenta (El Prat)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
La Botiga (El Prat)	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
Cuina de Barri (El Prat)	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓
Alimenta (Barcelona)	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	
Espai Alimenta (Barcelona)	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
Més amb Menys (Barcelona)	✓	✓				✓	
El Palet (Lleida)	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓
Urban Beekeeping (Milan)	✓	✓	✓		✓		
Radici di Comunità (Milan)	✓	✓			✓		✓
Pianeta Cuccagna (Milan)	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓
Food Hub Cuccagna (Milan)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
Mangia & Cambia (Palermo)	✓	✓	✓	✓			
Villaggio del Contadino (Italy)	✓	✓	✓				
In Cibo Civitas (Italy)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Terra Franca (Palermo)	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓
Social Grocery Store (Athens)	✓	✓				✓	✓
Caisse Alimentaire du 8ème (Paris)	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	

Finally, the table below displays the distribution of the 17 case studies across key impact areas, offering insight into the relative prevalence of each type of outcome within the sample.

Table 8: Distribution of Case Studies by Primary Area of Impact



e) Contribution to the Milan Urban Food Policy Pact

The Milan Urban Food Policy Pact (MUFPP) provides a global framework for advancing sustainable and inclusive urban food systems. It is structured around **six interrelated categories of action**, which offer a comprehensive guide for cities seeking to transform their food systems through local policy and practice – **governance, sustainable diets and nutrition, social and economic equity, food production, food supply and distribution and food waste**.



Figure 4: Action Areas of the MUFPP

Due to the International relevance of this global framework, this section analyses *how the reviewed practices align with internationally agreed priorities*, and more specifically, with the categories of action proposed by the MUFPP.

Therefore, while the previous section identified key impact areas through an inductive analysis of locally grounded food initiatives, this section will show that these outcomes resonate closely with the global policy vision embedded in the Milan Urban Food Policy Pact.

By comparing the impact logic of the 17 initiatives with the Pact's commitments, this section demonstrates how **community-based innovation at the municipal level can serve as a powerful driver of policy coherence, sustainability, and food justice across Europe.**

First, the following table provides a description of the different action areas of the MUFPP.

Table 9: MUFPP Action Areas and Policy Focus

MUFPP Action Area	Description
Governance	This action area focuses on establishing effective and inclusive food governance systems. It emphasizes the importance of participatory approaches, interdepartmental collaboration, and coherent policy development at the local level. Cities are encouraged to set up food councils, define shared strategies, and involve civil society in food-related decision-making.
Sustainable Diets and Nutrition	This action area promotes access to healthy, nutritious, and culturally appropriate food for all citizens. It encourages cities to improve food environments, reduce diet-related diseases, and foster awareness of nutrition, often through education and public procurement reforms.
Social and Economic Equity	This pillar focuses on guaranteeing equitable access to food, particularly for vulnerable populations. It supports policies that reduce food insecurity, combat poverty and social exclusion, and empower communities through inclusive models and dignified assistance.
Food Production	This action area supports the protection and expansion of sustainable food production in and around cities. It promotes urban agriculture, short food supply chains, agroecological practices, and improved access to land and infrastructure for small producers.
Food Supply and Distribution	This category aims to build resilient, inclusive, and sustainable food distribution networks. It includes support for local markets, improved logistics for urban food delivery, and enhanced links between urban demand and rural supply.
Food Waste	This pillar promotes actions to reduce food losses and waste across the entire food system. Cities are encouraged to support food recovery initiatives, promote awareness campaigns, and integrate circular economy principles into local food governance.

The following matrix maps each case study against the six action areas of the Milan Urban Food Policy Pact, highlighting the specific contributions of each initiative to advancing food security, community resilience, sustainability, and social inclusion.

Table 10: Distribution of Case Studies in MUFPP Action Areas

Case Study	Governance	Sustainable Diets and Nutrition	Social and Economic Equity	Food Production	Food Supply and Distribution	Food Waste
Prat Alimenta (El Prat)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Alimenta (Barcelona)	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
Més amb Menys (Barcelona)	✓	✓	✓			✓
La Botiga (El Prat)	✓	✓	✓		✓	
El Palet (Lleida)	✓	✓	✓		✓	
Cuina de Barri (El Prat)	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
Espai Alimenta (Barcelona)	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
Urban Beekeeping (Milan)				✓		
Radici di Comunità (Milan)	✓		✓	✓		
Pianeta Cuccagna (Milan)	✓	✓	✓			
Food Hub Cuccagna (Milan)	✓		✓		✓	✓
Mangia & Cambia (Messina)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Villaggio del Contadino (Italy)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
In Cibo Civitas (Italy)	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
Terra Franca (Palermo)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Social Grocery Store (Athens)	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
Caisse Alimentaire du 8ème (Paris)	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓

The comparative analysis of the 17 case studies reveals a multidimensional alignment between the **practical outcomes** of local food security initiatives and the **strategic priorities** of the Milan Urban Food Policy Pact (MUFPP). While each initiative is shaped by its specific territorial, institutional, and social context, taken together, they offer tangible illustrations of how cities and communities are operationalizing the MUFPP's global policy agenda through grounded, context-sensitive interventions.

The seven impact areas identified across the case studies—ranging from improved food security and dignity to education and economic inclusion—mirror, and in many cases expand upon, the six action areas of the MUFPP. This demonstrates that the Pact's categories are not only theoretically sound but practically applicable as a framework for guiding urban food strategies at the local level.

The initiatives also show notable **cross-cutting contributions**. Many projects simultaneously advance **Governance**, **Social and Economic Equity**, and **Sustainable Diets**, illustrating the interconnected nature of urban food systems

While all six MUFPP categories are represented, three areas stand out in frequency and depth:

- **Social and Economic Equity:** A core focus across the board, reflecting a commitment to social welfare and rights-based approaches to food.
- **Governance:** Many initiatives benefit from multi-actor collaboration and participatory processes, even when they are not municipality-led, showing the growing maturity of food governance structures.
- **Food Waste:** A common entry point for innovation, especially through circular economy principles and surplus redistribution.

Certain areas like **Food Production** are less prominently addressed, which may reflect urban constraints on land use or the limited role of cities in agricultural policy. However, initiatives such as **Terra Franca** and **Urban Beekeeping** show that even dense urban contexts can reclaim productive functions for social and educational purposes.

In sum, the MUFPP serves not only as a compass but also as a mirror: it helps local actors structure their interventions, while also being enriched and legitimized by the diverse realities and innovations taking place on the ground. The 17 initiatives analyzed offer a robust demonstration that the Pact's vision is not only aspirational—it is already in motion.

f) Strategic Levers: What Makes These Initiatives Work

While previous sections have categorized and assessed the initiatives by type, food system entry point, impact and alignment with the MUFPP, this section draws cross-cutting insights across all cases to understand *how* and *why* these initiatives succeed—or face limitations—in practice.

The analysis of the 17 initiatives reveals a series of **recurring operational patterns** and **strategic design choices** that underpin their success. These are not abstract principles but concrete mechanisms developed through practice—often in response to complex social, economic, or logistical challenges. Together, they highlight the conditions under which food initiatives can

transition from isolated interventions to embedded components of urban resilience and inclusion strategies.

- **Territorial Anchoring and Responsiveness to Local Needs**

One of the most consistent features across the initiatives is their strong anchoring in local realities. Rather than applying generic models, these projects are shaped by—and highly responsive to—the particularities of place. They emerge from the lived needs of specific communities and are designed to meet urgent or long-standing vulnerabilities.

In *Barcelona*, initiatives like **Espai Alimenta** and **Alimenta** were developed as direct responses to the food insecurity crisis exacerbated by the pandemic. Similarly, **La Botiga** and **El Palet** reflect the outcome of municipal co-design processes aimed at improving access for vulnerable populations within clearly defined territorial zones. In *Milan*, **Radici di Comunità** demonstrates how food-based programming can be embedded in areas facing systemic exclusion.

- **Multi-Functionality and Layering of Social Roles**

Successful initiatives often move beyond a single service logic, instead combining several roles: food provision, education, social connection, skill-building, and environmental stewardship. This **multi-functionality** enables them to create deeper and more diverse forms of value.

Projects like **In Cibo Civitas** offer training and policy advocacy alongside food activities, while **Cuina de Barri** operates simultaneously as a community kitchen, a skills development hub, and a relational space. **Food Hub Cuccagna** blends logistical recovery with public awareness, volunteer mobilization, and civic engagement.

- **Hybrid and Distributed Governance**

Many of the case studies function within **hybrid governance ecosystems**, where leadership, decision-making, and implementation are shared across multiple actors: municipalities, NGOs, food banks, cooperatives, and community networks.

For example, **Prat Alimenta** reflects a municipal initiative with substantial input from social services and third-sector actors. **Villaggio del Contadino** is coordinated by Coldiretti, a national association of agricultural producers, but implemented at the local level. Both **Alimenta** and **Espai Alimenta** illustrate the operational strength of governance models that rely on **civic–public partnerships** and intermediary organizations.

- **Operational Infrastructure and Logistical Capacity**

Behind many of the high-impact initiatives lies a foundation of **well-developed infrastructure and logistics**. These include physical spaces for distribution, cold storage, transport networks, and information systems.

Projects like **El Palet** and **La Botiga** operate within a structured ecosystem of food banks and public kitchens. **Terra Franca** has repurposed land confiscated from organized crime for socially beneficial farming. **Food Hub Cuccagna** serves as a centralized redistribution point that combines storage, recovery, and outreach.

- **Modularity and Replicability**

Several initiatives are intentionally designed for **scalability**. Their modularity—clear objectives, documented methods, adaptable tools—allows for replication in different contexts.

Prat Alimenta is part of a growing regional network, offering a model for cross-municipal learning. **Alimenta** and **Espai Alimenta** use shared protocols and partnerships that facilitate expansion across Barcelona’s districts. **In Cibo Civitas** explicitly develops toolkits to support youth-led replication.

Here is the table summarizing the **seven strategic levers** identified in the analysis:

Table 11: Strategic Levers and Definitions

Strategic Lever	Definition
Territorial Anchoring and Responsiveness to Local Needs	Embedding initiatives in the social, institutional, and territorial fabric enhances relevance, legitimacy, and community ownership.
Multi-Functionality and Layering of Social Roles	Designing initiatives with layered purposes makes them more resilient, appealing to a broader set of stakeholders and eligible for diverse funding streams.
Hybrid and Distributed Governance	Multi-actor governance fosters resource pooling, innovation, and political durability—especially where local government capacities are uneven.
Operational Infrastructure and Logistical Capacity	Strong operational infrastructure underpins reliability and scalability, especially for initiatives that manage surplus food or require redistribution.
Modularity and Replicability	Modular design, clear documentation and adaptable formats enables transferability and scale while preserving flexibility and responsiveness to local variation.

Despite the strengths highlighted above, many initiatives face **structural vulnerabilities** that limit their long-term viability. These include:

Community engagement fatigue: Volunteer-dependent models struggle with consistency and retention, and reliance on unpaid labor.

Funding and continuity: Reliance on short-term or project-based funding. Sustainability plans often underdeveloped.

Transferability and scaling: In real-world initiatives, scaling has a complex nature. It is not an automatic process. Strong dependence on local infrastructure and leadership; risk of losing community ownership or over-standardization can jeopardise the potential of the initiative.

4. Interviews with Political Representatives



4. INTERVIEWS WITH POLITICAL REPRESENTATIVES

4.1. Complementary Approaches to Local Food Practices: Connecting Case Studies and Interviews

Sections 3 and 4 of this guide draw on two complementary sources of evidence to examine how municipalities across Europe are responding to food insecurity through concrete practices and programmatic interventions.

Section 3 presents 17 case studies selected from partner cities of the European Food Security Hub. These were compiled through a **desk-based analysis** of project documentation, policy reports, initiative websites, and other published sources. The goal was to construct a structured, comparative overview of municipal and hybrid food initiatives—capturing typologies, system entry points, impact areas, and strategic levers across diverse urban contexts.

Section 4, in contrast, draws on a series of **semi-structured interviews** conducted with municipal representatives in **Palermo (Italy), Nea Filadelfeia – Nea Chalkidona (Greece), and Louvigny (France)**. These interviews focused on the same object of analysis—**local food initiatives and municipal responses**—but from a different angle: that of direct institutional reflection.

The interviews allowed for the collection of **qualitative insights** on how initiatives emerge, what challenges are encountered, and how local actors envision future policy developments. The interview data is not typological, but interpretative and prospective. It also offers a more narrative and exploratory view of municipal practice—shedding light on internal dilemmas, policy trajectories, and institutional learning processes that are not always visible in project documentation.

This dual approach strengthens the analytical robustness of the guide in several ways:

- It captures a **broader diversity of contexts**, by including cities that are not case study hosts.
- It provides **depth of interpretation**, by giving voice to local practitioners and institutional actors.
- It allows for a **cross-validation of findings**, as many of the enabling conditions and structural barriers identified in Section 2—such as interdepartmental collaboration, funding instability, or dignity-based design—are echoed in the interviews.

Importantly, the only overlapping city—**Palermo**—offers a unique vantage point: it allows us to compare a documented initiative (*Terra Franca*) with the municipality's own strategic framing of its challenges and future priorities. This confirms the value of using **multiple analytical lenses** to understand the complexity and dynamism of local food systems transformation.

4.2 Key Initiatives and Challenges Identified

The initial part of each interview focused on identifying concrete initiatives already in place, as well as the main challenges encountered in implementing or sustaining them. To better illustrate the operational efforts and structural barriers faced by each municipality, the following table synthesizes the **key initiatives** and **challenges** identified through the interviews:

Table 12: Key Initiatives and Challenges Identified Through the Interviews

Municipality	Key Initiatives	Challenges Identified
Palermo (Italy)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Urban agriculture projects and shared gardens. • Promotion of KM 0 farmers' markets. • Collaboration with Fondazione Campagna Amica. • Implementation of the "Reddito Alimentare" program. • "Rimpiattino" campaign to reduce restaurant food waste. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring long-term sustainability of local food events. • Competition from large-scale retail chains. • Lack of updated, comprehensive food security data.
Nea Filadelfeia – Nea Chalkidona (Greece)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social Grocery and municipal food services. • Partnerships with organizations like "Mazi Boroume" and "Mazi Gia to Paidi". • School meal programs for children from low-income households. • Discount schemes with local shops for vulnerable groups. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Budgetary constraints and funding delays. • Absence of recent data on food insecurity. • Limited engagement from local producers in an urban setting.
Louvigny (France)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Projects to revitalize the local market to promote organic and small-scale producers. • Farm visits and educational programs for citizens and farmers. • Participation in the national Territorial Food Projects (PAT). • School procurement in line with France's EGALIM Law. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tensions between sourcing local vs. organic food. • Political divisions around environmental agendas. • Resistance from conventional agricultural unions

4.3 Main Policy Directions

To complement the identification of key initiatives and challenges, interviewees were also invited to share their **visions for future policy directions** and propose **potential responses to the barriers they currently face**. These forward-looking reflections aimed to capture emerging ideas, political aspirations, and practical strategies that could inform the evolution of local food security frameworks. By encouraging dialogue not only about what has been done, but also about what

could or should be done, the interviews provided valuable insight into the dynamic policy thinking taking place at the municipal level.

In **Palermo**, the municipality envisions a more structured approach to food waste reduction by strengthening collaborations with businesses, supermarkets, and civil society actors. Enhancing access to local markets and improving data collection methodologies are also central to their next steps. The adoption of digital platforms, such as *Too Good To Go*, is being explored as a complementary tool to connect consumers with surplus food and to further operationalize a circular approach to food governance.

For **Nea Filadelfeia – Nea Chalkidona**, future plans prioritize the expansion of cross-sector partnerships—particularly with food industries, supermarkets, and NGOs—to increase the reach and efficiency of food aid programs. The municipality also recognizes the importance of community engagement and evidence-based policy, and thus seeks to invest in ongoing research and targeted awareness campaigns to improve food accessibility and citizen participation.

In **Louvigny**, the municipality is advocating for a transformative model inspired by the concept of a *Social Security for Food*. This vision would provide all residents with a food allowance dedicated to purchasing sustainable products, aligning local initiatives with France’s broader solidarity-based food policy objectives. The ambition is to universalize access to healthy and ecologically responsible food, reinforcing both social justice and environmental sustainability at the municipal level.

The following points summarize the main future-oriented policy directions and proposals that emerged from the interviews, reflecting the diverse but converging priorities of the participating municipalities:

- **Strengthen partnerships with private sector actors**, particularly supermarkets and food industries, to enhance food redistribution and accessibility (Palermo, Nea Filadelfeia – Nea Chalkidona).
- **Improve data collection and monitoring systems** to better understand the scale and nature of food insecurity and inform evidence-based policymaking (Palermo, Nea Filadelfeia – Nea Chalkidona).
- **Adopt digital tools and platforms** (e.g., food surplus apps) to facilitate more efficient connections between surplus food and potential beneficiaries (Palermo).
- **Scale up and institutionalize school-based food programs** to ensure consistent access to healthy meals for children from low-income households (Nea Filadelfeia – Nea Chalkidona).
- **Expand public awareness and communication campaigns** to foster community engagement around food solidarity and reduce stigma associated with food assistance (Nea Filadelfeia – Nea Chalkidona).
- **Promote systemic policy reforms**, such as the development of a **Social Security for Food** model that would guarantee every citizen access to sustainable food through a dedicated allowance (Louvigny).
- **Advance universal access to nutritious and ecologically responsible food**, aligned with national solidarity-based food policy goals (Louvigny).

4.4 Comparative Value and Complementarity: Insights Across Case Studies and Interviews

While Sections 2 and 3 differ in method, geography, and analytical framing, they converge around several strategic insights that reinforce the core message of this document: that food security is increasingly being addressed through integrated, place-based, and forward-looking local strategies. The juxtaposition of comparative case documentation and qualitative municipal interviews provides a multi-layered understanding of both what cities are doing and how they think about what they do.

As summarized in the table below, three overarching areas of convergence from the analysis. First, there is a shared **systemic ambition** to move beyond emergency food aid toward more transformative models grounded in dignity, social justice, and long-term sustainability. This is not only evident in the operational design of the case studies, which include participatory food stores, urban agriculture projects, and educational programs, but also in the narratives of municipal officials, who increasingly frame food access as a public responsibility rather than a matter of charity.

Second, the analysis identifies a set of **shared enablers** that underpin successful implementation across contexts. Whether described through structured documentation or personal testimonies, initiatives rely on similar building blocks: cross-sectoral collaboration, active community engagement, well-managed logistical systems, and institutional coordination. These elements appear repeatedly across both sources as essential conditions for sustained impact.

Finally, both the case studies and interviews highlight a range of **structural constraints** that challenge the durability and scalability of local food efforts. These include fragmented or short-term funding streams, lack of reliable data, and policy fragmentation across departments and levels of government. The recurrence of these issues suggests that local innovation, while crucial, must be matched by more stable governance arrangements and long-term policy instruments.

Together, these findings underscore the value of combining empirical observation with political reflection. They offer a robust basis for the strategic levers and policy recommendations that follow—demonstrating that food security governance is not only about *what works*, but also about creating the institutional and cultural conditions that allow such efforts to take root and evolve.

Table 13: Insights Across Case Studies and Interviews

Category	Detail
Systemic Ambition Beyond Emergency Aid	Across both sections, municipalities are moving beyond reactive, charity-based food aid and toward systemic, dignity-based approaches that seek long-term transformation.
Shared Enablers	Successful initiatives—whether described in reports or articulated orally—tend to rely on several core enablers: strong cross-sectoral collaboration, community engagement, well-managed logistics, and institutional support.
Structural Constraints	At the same time, several structural limitations emerge across both forms of analysis. Recurring challenges include short-term or fragmented funding , which limits the continuity and scaling of promising models; insufficient or outdated data , which impedes planning and monitoring; and institutional fragmentation , where food policy remains siloed or lacks horizontal integration. These common constraints reinforce the case for building more stable governance ecosystems and investing in long-term policy tools.



5. Policy Recommendations for Sustainable and Inclusive Local Food Systems

5. POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SUSTAINABLE AND INCLUSIVE LOCAL FOOD SYSTEMS

5.1. Rationale and Organization of the Recommendations

Based on the empirical analysis developed in the previous sections, a set of action-oriented policy recommendations can be drawn for local actors. They have been developed to reflect the complexity and multidimensionality of local food security governance.

The recommendations are organized around a dual analytical logic. First, they are grouped by **key thematic areas**—such as circularity, dignity-based access, and education—that emerged as critical impact domains across the case studies and interviews analyzed. These themes represent the substantive arenas where local governments and stakeholders are already intervening to address food insecurity in inclusive and sustainable ways.

Second, and across all themes, the recommendations highlight **governance functions**—the mechanisms, processes, and institutional conditions that make policy implementation possible and effective. These include strategic integration, participatory design, interdepartmental coordination, and long-term institutional anchoring. This layered structure recognizes that effective food policy is not only about *what* cities do, but *how* they organize, legitimize, and sustain those actions.

While some governance strategies—such as interdepartmental coordination, participatory design, or institutionalization—appear multiple times across different thematic areas, this **repetition is both intentional and analytically meaningful**. It reflects an important insight from the empirical analysis: that the **same governance mechanisms are necessary across a wide range of food policy domains**.

Therefore, these recurring governance elements in the thematic recommendations signal **cross-cutting enablers**—they are **structural conditions** that underpin successful implementation across all themes. Their recurrence reinforces their strategic importance, while also demonstrating their adaptability to different policy challenges.

5.2 Key Thematic Areas of Policy Intervention in Food Security

Circularity

Aligning food security efforts with environmental sustainability is a major need in the current framework of climate change and environmental risks. Adopting a circular economy approach – where waste is minimized and resources are kept in use – can both improve food access and advance climate goals. The following recommendations focus on integrating circularity into local food policy:

- **Make food waste reduction a policy priority:** Incorporate clear waste-reduction targets and circular economy **principles** into municipal food strategies. Cities are encouraged to support initiatives that recover and reuse surplus food, promote composting, and generally “**close the loop**” in local food systems. Setting goals (for example, halving food waste by 2030) and aligning them with broader sustainability plans ensures that environmental impact is considered in every food security action.
- **Support food recovery and redistribution programs:** Strengthen the infrastructure for rescuing surplus food and redirecting it to those in need. This can involve bolstering food banks and food pantries, funding logistics for “last mile” delivery of excess food, or creating municipal programs to collect unsold goods from markets and restaurants. Several case studies operationalize this – for instance, community food hubs and “social fridges” that take in edible surplus and make it available to vulnerable residents. Municipal backing (through funding, facilities, or promotion) can amplify these efforts and ensure recovered food is safe and efficiently distributed.
- **Partner with private sector to minimize waste:** Collaborate with supermarkets, retailers, and the hospitality sector on waste-reduction initiatives. Measures can include formal agreements for regular donations of surplus, tax incentives for food donation, or joint campaigns (for example, restaurant “take-home” campaigns to reduce plate waste). By enlisting food industry players as allies, municipalities can significantly expand the reach of food recovery efforts.
- **Leverage digital tools for surplus management:** Embrace technology platforms (such as food-sharing apps or online marketplaces) that connect those with surplus food to those who need it. A municipality can facilitate or even integrate such tools into its services – for instance, by publicizing them, coordinating data, or providing technical support. Digital solutions can make real-time matching surplus supply and demand easier, preventing good food from going to waste.
- **Green public procurement and operations:** Use the city’s own procurement and facilities to drive circular practices. Cities can **pilot zero-waste policies in schools and municipal canteens** – for example, eliminating single-use packaging, composting food scraps on-site, or sourcing ingredients that come with minimal waste. Likewise, prioritizing local and seasonal food in public procurement cuts down on transport emissions and waste, supporting a circular ethos. By institutionalizing these practices, local governments not only reduce their environmental footprint but also model behavior for businesses and citizens.
- **Promote community composting and urban agriculture:** Enable at the community level the conversion of organic waste into a resource. Municipalities can support neighborhood composting programs (providing bins, training, or collection services) so that household food scraps turn into fertilizer for local use. Coupling this with urban

agriculture initiatives creates a closed-loop system: compost nourishes community gardens, which in turn yield fresh produce for local consumption. By integrating composting and gardening, cities reduce landfill waste while educating and engaging residents in circular practices.

- **Raise public awareness on food waste and recycling:** Alongside structural initiatives, conduct public education campaigns about reducing food waste at the individual and household level. This might include workshops on meal planning and food preservation, city-wide challenges or events (like “zero waste weeks”), and informational materials on how to separate and recycle food waste. Informed and motivated citizens are critical to a circular food system – they will be more likely to donate excess food, compost organics, and support local circular economy projects if they understand the impact and methods.

Figure 5: Key areas for Food Circularity



Dignity-Based Access

Many communities are **moving beyond traditional charity models toward approaches that empower recipients** and reduce stigma. Policy recommendations under this theme focus on making food assistance more dignified, inclusive, and user-centered:

- **Adopt choice-based distribution models:** Wherever possible, design food aid programs to offer choice and agency to participants. This can be done through **social grocery stores** or food pantries that operate like small supermarkets, where people “shop” using points or vouchers. Such models swap one-size-fits-all charity packages for a system where individuals choose the products they need and prefer, within nutritional guidelines. By allowing people to select what and when they eat, assistance respects personal dignity and dietary needs.

- **Normalize the food assistance experience:** Create food support environments that mirror ordinary social experiences, to avoid singling out or stigmatizing beneficiaries. For example, set up distribution points with a welcoming, market-like atmosphere, offer fresh and high-quality food, and integrate the service into community centers rather than isolated “relief” sites. Use **retail-style formats and healthy food selection** to make access feel routine and respectful. The more food aid feels like regular shopping or dining, the more it preserves recipients’ sense of normalcy and self-worth.
- **Embed user voice and co-design in programs:** Involve those who use food support in shaping how programs are run. This could mean establishing user advisory committees, holding regular feedback sessions, or even having beneficiaries help set the rules and menus of a service. Some practices highlighted in the guide include **beneficiaries co-writing rules and budgets** for food projects and participating in quick feedback surveys to adjust services. By treating recipients as partners and experts in their own right, policies can better respond to real needs and build a sense of ownership and empowerment among users.
- **Provide supportive, respectful assistance:** Ensure that staff and volunteers are trained to uphold dignity in every interaction. This involves practicing empathy, maintaining confidentiality, and offering help in a non-paternalistic way. For instance, “**supportive shopping**” volunteers who accompany users in community food hubs to assist with carrying groceries or making choices, while fully respecting the individual’s preferences. Such measures make sure that seeking help remains a positive experience, where people feel cared for rather than judged. In sum, everyone involved in delivering food aid should internalize that **dignity is non-negotiable**.
- **Fight stigma through public communication:** Proactively counteract the stigma associated with receiving food assistance. Cities can run campaigns and outreach that frame food support as a collective responsibility and a **right of all citizens**, akin to healthcare or education. By highlighting messages of solidarity (for example, “everyone needs help sometimes” or showcasing stories of residents who both give and receive help), municipalities can reshape public perceptions. Reducing stigma not only encourages those in need to seek support sooner, but also fosters broader community buy-in for food security programs.
- **Guarantee the right to food via policy innovation:** Consider adopting policies that treat access to food as a legal or social right, ensuring assistance is provided in a dignified, non-discriminatory way. One forward-looking idea is the concept of a “**Social Security for Food**” – a system where every individual receives a dedicated food allowance to spend on approved healthy and sustainable foods. This model would universalize food assistance, removing any charity stigma by making it a normal entitlement. While ambitious, such policy innovations at the local level can inspire national action and fundamentally shift the paradigm from emergency food aid to guaranteed food access.

- **Scale inclusive models that empower recipients:** Prioritize and replicate initiatives that blur the line between beneficiaries and contributors. People receiving food aid can also engage as volunteers, gardeners, cooks, or coordinators within those initiatives. Examples include community kitchens where users help prepare meals, or urban agriculture projects that involve low-income residents as growers. These approaches transform recipients into active participants, building skills and community ties. Local governments should support these hybrid models of aid that simultaneously promote inclusion, capacity-building, and dignity. They address immediate needs while also empowering individuals – turning food support into a pathway for social integration and personal development rather than a dead-end dependency.

Figure 6: Key Areas for Dignity-Based Access



Awareness-Raising and Education

Education, awareness, and capacity-building are critical enablers for sustainable food security. By educating citizens about nutrition, sustainability, and food skills, local authorities can tackle root causes of food insecurity and cultivate long-term resilience. The following recommendations focus on leveraging education and knowledge-sharing as tools in food policy:

- **Ensure transparency and iterative learning:** Embrace an open, learning-oriented approach to food policy. Publish results and **communicate wins** – for example, share annual impact reports or dashboard indicators with the public, and celebrate milestones like volunteer contributions. At the same time, solicit community feedback through forums or surveys to learn what is or isn't working. This ongoing dialogue builds public trust and allows policies to be adjusted in response to on-the-ground insights, embodying a responsive governance ethos.

- **Integrate food and nutrition education in schools:** Work with schools to embed food literacy from an early age. This can include adding nutrition and sustainable eating into the curriculum, organizing cooking classes and school garden programs, and ensuring school meal standards align with health and sustainability goals. For example, a city might implement farm-to-school initiatives, where **farm visits and educational programs** connect students with local farmers and food production. Such efforts not only improve children’s diets in the short term but also instill lifelong knowledge about food.
- **Use community centers as learning hubs:** Extend food education beyond schools by offering workshops and training in community spaces like libraries, adult education centers, and neighborhood kitchens. Many successful interventions pair food provision with educational components. For instance, a community food hub could host weekly sessions on cooking affordable healthy meals, or an urban garden might teach participants about organic cultivation and composting. These informal educational activities **develop practical skills and food literacy**, empowering people to make informed choices as eaters and even as future food producers. They also build social connections, as learning often happens in group settings that strengthen community bonds.
- **Implement vocational training in the food sector:** Link food security initiatives with job training and social inclusion programs. Improving access to vocational training (especially for youth, migrants, and low-skilled individuals) in areas like sustainable agriculture, culinary arts, or food enterprise can address unemployment and food insecurity together. Local governments should support training internships, apprenticeships, or cooperatives that equip marginalized groups with skills for “green” jobs in the food system. For example, an initiative might train unemployed residents to become urban gardeners or professional cooks for community kitchens, providing both livelihoods and community services. This approach turns food initiatives into springboards for economic empowerment and capacity-building.
- **Promote community gardening and agroecology education:** Support the establishment of community gardens, urban farms, and similar hands-on projects as educational platforms. These spaces serve as living classrooms where participants learn about ecology, agriculture, and nutrition by actively engaging in growing food. Urban gardening projects double as tools for environmental education and social inclusion, teaching concepts of biodiversity and sustainable farming while fostering community engagement. Municipalities can facilitate this by providing land, resources, or expert support for garden workshops. The result is a populace who is more knowledgeable about where food comes from, more invested in healthy eating, and more connected to nature and each other.
- **Conduct public awareness campaigns on healthy diets and sustainability:** Leverage media, public events, and communications to inform the wider public about food-related issues. Cities can organize awareness campaigns on topics such as reducing household food waste, eating seasonal and plant-rich diets, or understanding food labels

for better nutrition. Use festivals and local media to normalize conversations about food security and sustainability. For example, a city could host an annual “Food Week” with cooking demonstrations, talks on nutrition, and zero-waste cooking challenges. **Public awareness campaigns** not only disseminate knowledge but also shape cultural norms – making it fashionable to cook at home, value local produce, or share excess food with neighbors. Over time, an informed community is more likely to support and participate in food security initiatives, from volunteering at food hubs to adopting healthier personal habits.

- **Cultivate youth leadership and participation:** Encourage and equip young people to take active roles in creating solutions to food insecurity, and develop toolkits for **youth-led replication** of community food actions. Municipalities can form youth councils or clubs focused on food, provide small grants or challenges for student-led projects (like starting a school compost program or a campus food-sharing app), and include youth voices in policy discussions. By treating youth as partners, cities benefit from their creativity and energy, and younger generations gain leadership skills. This nurtures a new cadre of food system champions who can sustain and expand efforts in the future.

Figure 10: Key Areas for Awareness and Education



5.3 Governing Food Security: Institutional Drivers and Stakeholder Alliances

Democratic Governance Frameworks

Effective, participatory governance is the foundation for transformative local food policy. Municipalities can become catalysts and conveners, integrating food security into their institutional frameworks and working collaboratively across sectors. Key governance-focused recommendations include:

- **Establish participatory bodies and co-production spaces for food governance:** Create inclusive participatory structures—such as food policy councils or intersectoral committees—to ensure broad representation and deliberation in food-related decision-making. In parallel, municipalities can develop stable co-production spaces where municipal actors, civil society, producers, and other stakeholders share responsibility for the design, implementation, and evaluation of food strategies. This dual approach strengthens democratic legitimacy, aligns diverse knowledge and capacities, and fosters coordinated, durable responses to complex food system challenges.
- **Strengthen municipal capacity for facilitation and co-production:** To fulfill their convening role, municipalities should invest in internal skills and tools for facilitation, mediation, and collaborative policy design. This includes training staff in co-production methods, management of multistakeholders networks and conflict resolution. These capabilities ensure that participatory and co-production spaces are not symbolic, but actually influence strategy and operations.
- **Foster Multi-Stakeholder Partnerships and Strategic Alignment Across the Local Food System:** Strengthen collaboration between municipalities and a diverse range of actors involved in food security—including supermarkets, restaurants, food banks, schools, NGOs, farmers, and civil society organizations. Joint efforts can pool resources, expand reach, and ensure coherence across initiatives. For example, formal agreements with grocery chains to divert surpluses to food aid programs can be combined with partnerships with food banks for redistribution, or with schools for educational programming. Aligning strategies across these stakeholders ensures more coordinated action, reduces duplication, and reinforces systemic impact in tackling food insecurity.

Figure 11: Key Areas for Democratic Governance



Institutional Anchoring of Food Security

- **Integrate food security into local policy frameworks:** Affirm food security as a municipal priority by embedding explicit commitments in city strategic plans or public health agendas. For example, include access to healthy food in development plans and poverty reduction strategies. This ensures sustained political will and aligns food initiatives with broader municipal goals.
- **Foster cross-sector collaboration within the administration:** Break down silos by coordinating actions across municipal departments (social services, health, environment, education). For instance, aligning food aid with housing or healthcare services ensures a more coherent and efficient response to community needs.
- **Build and utilize a robust evidence base:** Invest in mapping local food assets and needs – for instance, cataloguing community gardens, food pantries, and waste streams – and conduct assessments of vulnerable populations and supply chains. Maintaining up-to-date data on the scale and nature of food insecurity (e.g. through household surveys or monitoring systems) is crucial for evidence-based policymaking. This information allows local authorities to target interventions where they are most needed and to track progress over time.
- **Mobilize resources and infrastructure:** Proactively allocate municipal resources and unlock physical spaces to support food initiatives. This could include small grant programs to incubate grassroots projects and making underutilized public land or facilities available for food-related activities. For example, a city can open vacant lots for community gardens or authorize the use of a municipal building as a food distribution hub. Earmarking funds and space in this way empowers community actors and seeds innovative solutions.

- **Lead by example through sustainable practices:** Set the tone by implementing model food practices within municipal operations. City authorities should apply healthy and sustainable food standards in schools, hospitals, and other public canteens (e.g. offering nutritious, culturally appropriate menus with local produce). They can also pilot **zero-waste** approaches in their procurement – for instance, requiring reusable packaging or sourcing surplus produce for city-run kitchens. Such initiatives demonstrate the viability of sustainable food policies and inspire wider adoption by other institutions and businesses.
- **Institutionalize successful pilots:** Transition effective food projects from temporary or ad-hoc status into permanent programs. If a school meal program or a “social grocery” pilot proves successful in reaching vulnerable groups, integrate it into the regular budget and policy structure of the city (rather than relying on short-term grants). This might involve creating a dedicated budget line or city department for food security. By scaling up and formalizing what works, municipalities ensure continuity and impact beyond political cycles or specific project funding.

Figure 127: Key Areas for Institutional Anchoring



The next table presents a comprehensive synthesis of the policy recommendations and corresponding key actions identified. It condenses the content of this section, translating its insights into a clear, accessible format. Organized by domain, the table links each strategic orientation with specific, actionable steps that municipalities and local actors can adopt or adapt to their context.

From circularity, dignity-based access and awareness raising to participatory governance and institutional anchoring, each recommendation is paired with practical actions to facilitate implementation.

The table is designed to function as a hands-on reference tool for policymakers, program managers, and practitioners working to strengthen local food systems through coherent and impactful interventions.

Table 14: Recommendations and Key Actions

Key Area	Recommendation	Key Actions (Bullet Points)
Circularity	Make food waste reduction a policy priority	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incorporate clear waste-reduction targets and circular economy principles into municipal food strategies • Support initiatives that recover and reuse surplus food • Promote composting • Align targets with broader sustainability plans (e.g., halving food waste by 2030).
	Support food recovery and redistribution programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthen infrastructure for food rescue (e.g., food banks, pantries) • Fund logistics for 'last mile' delivery • Create programs to collect unsold goods from markets/restaurants • Ensure recovered food is safe and efficiently distributed.
	Partner with private sector to minimize waste	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaborate with supermarkets, retailers, and the hospitality sector • Establish formal donation agreements • Offer tax incentives • Promote take-home campaigns to reduce plate waste.
	Leverage digital tools for surplus management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote use of food-sharing apps or online marketplaces • Publicize tools, coordinate data, and offer technical support • Enable real-time matching of surplus and need.
	Green public procurement and operations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pilot zero-waste policies in municipal facilities • Eliminate single-use packaging • Compost food scraps on-site • Prioritize local, seasonal food in procurement • Model sustainable practices.
	Promote community composting and urban agriculture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support neighborhood composting (bins, training, collection) • Couple composting with urban agriculture to create closed-loop systems • Reclaim urban spaces for food production and education.

	Raise public awareness on food waste and recycling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Run public campaigns on household waste reduction • Host workshops and city-wide events (e.g., zero-waste weeks) • Distribute information on food waste separation and recycling.
Dignity-Based Access	Adopt choice-based distribution models	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design food aid systems with choice (e.g., point-based grocery stores) • Replace one-size-fits-all packages with systems tailored to needs/preferences.
	Normalize the food assistance experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create food support environments with welcoming, market-like settings • Integrate services into community centers • Ensure access feels routine and respectful.
	Embed user voice and co-design in programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish user advisory committees and feedback sessions • Allow users to co-write rules, budgets, or menus • Adapt services based on user input.
	Provide supportive, respectful assistance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Train staff and volunteers in empathy, confidentiality, and respectful interaction • Support users without judgment (e.g., supportive shopping assistance).
Awareness and Education	Ensure transparency and iterative learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publish results and impact indicators • Celebrate milestones • Gather public feedback through forums and surveys to improve programs.
	Integrate food and nutrition education in schools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with schools to embed food education • Include nutrition education in curricula • Create cooking classes, gardens, and align meals with nutrition goals.
	Use community centers as learning hubs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use libraries and community centers to offer food workshops (e.g., cooking, composting) • Pair food provision with informal learning.
	Implement vocational training in the food sector	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offer vocational training in agriculture, culinary arts, or food business • Create internships or cooperatives for youth, migrants, and low-skilled workers.
	Promote community gardening and agroecology education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create and support educational gardens or farms • Provide land, tools, and training to foster ecological knowledge and food engagement.
	Conduct public awareness campaigns on	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Run campaigns on nutrition, sustainable eating, and food label literacy

	healthy diets and sustainability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use festivals or 'food weeks' to raise awareness and shift norms.
	Cultivate youth leadership and participation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish youth councils, offer grants for student-led initiatives (e.g., composting or food-sharing apps) • Include youth in food policy processes.
	Foster Multi-Stakeholder Partnerships and Strategic Alignment Across the Local Food System	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish formal collaborations with food-related stakeholders (e.g., supermarkets, ngos, schools) • Align strategies and share implementation roles.
Institutional Anchoring	Integrate food security into local policy frameworks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Embed food security in strategic city plans and public health agendas • Include food access in development and poverty strategies to ensure continuity.
	Foster cross-sector collaboration within the administration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordinate actions between departments (e.g., social services, health, education) • Integrate food aid with housing and healthcare services.
	Build and utilize a robust evidence base	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Map local food assets and needs • Assess vulnerable groups and supply chains • Maintain up-to-date data (e.g., via surveys or monitoring systems).
	Mobilize resources and infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allocate grants and open public spaces for food initiatives (e.g., gardens, food hubs) • Empower community actors with funding and physical infrastructure.
	Lead by example through sustainable practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement healthy and sustainable food practices in public canteens • Prioritize local sourcing and zero-waste approaches in procurement.
	Institutionalize successful pilots	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transition successful pilots into permanent programs • Integrate into municipal budgets • Create dedicated units or funding lines for food security.

6. Annexed case studies

1. **Prat Alimenta. El Prat de Llobregat Food Strategy**
2. **Alimenta (Barcelona)**
3. **Més amb Menys (Barcelona)**
4. **La Botiga (El Prat de Llobregat)**
5. **El Palet (Lleida)**
6. **Cuina de Barri (Barcelona)**
7. **Espai Alimenta (Barcelona)**
8. **Urban Beekeeping in Cascina Cuccagna (Milan)**
9. **Food Hub Cuccagna (Milan)**
10. **Radici di Comunità/Nuovo Vicolo Cuccagna (Milan)**
11. **Pianeta Cuccagna: Giovani, Cibo e Comunità (Milan)**
12. **Mangia & Cambia (Eat & Change) (Messina)**
13. **Villaggio del Contadino della Coldiretti (Italy)**
14. **In Cibo Civitas (Italy)**
15. **Terra Franca (Palermo)**
16. **Social Grocery Store (Koinoniko Pantopoleio) (Athens)**
17. **Caisse Alimentaire du 8ème Arrondissement (Paris)**

PRAT ALIMENTA. COMPREHENSIVE FOOD STRATEGY. EL PRAT DE LLOBREGAT

Project Overview

"Prat Alimenta" is an integrated food strategy initiated by the municipality of El Prat de Llobregat, aimed at promoting food security, sustainability, and community engagement. This comprehensive strategy addresses various aspects of the local food system, from production to consumption, and aims to create a resilient and sustainable food environment for the community.

Objectives

- promote local food production: support local farmers and producers to ensure a steady supply of fresh, local produce.
- enhance food security: ensure that all residents have access to healthy, nutritious food.
- reduce food waste: implement strategies to minimize food waste at all levels of the food supply chain.
- educate and engage the community: raise awareness about sustainable food practices and involve the community in food-related activities.

Key Features

- Support for Local Agriculture: The strategy includes initiatives to support local agriculture, such as providing resources and training for farmers, promoting the use of sustainable farming practices, and facilitating direct sales of local produce through farmers' markets and local shops.
- Food Distribution Programs: "Prat Alimenta" includes programs to distribute food to vulnerable populations. One example is "La Botiga," a social grocery store that provides food and other necessities to those in need, operating on a model of self-management and community empowerment.
- Educational Workshops: The strategy emphasizes education through workshops and seminars that teach residents about nutrition, cooking, and sustainable food practices. These activities are designed to empower individuals with the knowledge and skills needed to make healthy and sustainable food choices.
- Community Engagement: The strategy involves the community in various ways, from volunteer opportunities to participatory planning processes. This ensures that the food strategy is inclusive and reflective of the community's needs and aspirations.

Implementation and Operation

- Collaborations: The project is a collaborative effort involving the municipality, local businesses, non-profit organizations, and community groups. This multi-stakeholder approach ensures comprehensive support and sustainability.

- **Funding and Resources:** Funded by the local government and supported by various grants and donations, the strategy ensures the financial sustainability of its programs and initiatives.
- **Community Involvement:** Active participation from residents is encouraged through volunteer programs, educational activities, and feedback mechanisms that shape the ongoing development of the food strategy.

Impact and Outcomes

- **Increased Food Security:** The strategy has significantly improved access to healthy food for many residents, particularly those from vulnerable groups.
- **Support for Local Economy:** By promoting local agriculture and direct sales, "Prat Alimenta" supports local farmers and boosts the local economy.
- **Reduced Food Waste:** Initiatives to reduce food waste have led to more efficient food use and distribution, benefiting both the environment and the community.
- **Enhanced Community Engagement:** The strategy has fostered a sense of community and shared responsibility, with many residents actively participating in food-related activities and decision-making processes.

Challenges and Lessons Learned

- **Balancing Supply and Demand:** Ensuring a consistent supply of local produce while meeting the community's needs requires careful planning and coordination.
- **Maintaining Engagement:** Keeping the community continuously engaged and involved in the strategy's initiatives is essential for long-term success.

Future Directions

- **Expansion of Programs:** Plans to expand educational programs and support for local agriculture to reach more residents and increase impact.
- **Enhanced Collaboration:** Strengthening partnerships with additional stakeholders, including more local businesses and regional organizations, to enhance the strategy's reach and effectiveness.

Conclusion

- "Prat Alimenta" is a model of how local governments can develop comprehensive food strategies that promote sustainability, food security, and community engagement.
- By integrating support for local agriculture, food distribution, education, and community participation, the strategy not only addresses immediate food needs but also builds a resilient and sustainable food system for the future.
- For more detailed information, you can visit the [Prat Alimenta](#) website and [El Prat de Llobregat](#) municipal website.

ALIMENTA: COMPREHENSIVE FOOD STRATEGY. BARCELONA

Project Overview

"Alimenta" is a comprehensive food strategy initiative launched by the City Council of Barcelona to address food insecurity and promote healthy, sustainable food practices among vulnerable populations. This project forms part of Barcelona's broader efforts under the 2030 Healthy and Sustainable Food Strategy, which seeks to transform the city's food system through inclusive and community-focused approaches.

Objectives

- **Ensure Food Security:** Provide access to nutritious, sustainable food for people in vulnerable situations.
- **Promote Dignity and Autonomy:** Empower users by involving them in food-related activities, thereby reducing the stigma associated with receiving food aid.
- **Enhance Community Engagement:** Foster community ties through shared activities and educational workshops.
- **Reduce Food Waste:** Implement strategies to minimize food waste and promote the use of local, seasonal produce.

Key Features

- **Community Kitchens:** The project includes the establishment of community kitchens where residents can cook, share meals, and participate in food-related activities. These spaces aim to promote social interaction and reduce isolation while providing access to healthy food.
- **Educational Workshops:** "Alimenta" organizes workshops on nutrition, cooking, and sustainable food practices. These workshops are designed to empower participants with knowledge and skills to make healthier food choices and manage resources efficiently.
- **Collaborative Model:** The project involves collaboration between the City Council, social entities, and the local food industry. This public-social partnership ensures a comprehensive approach to addressing food insecurity.
- **Pilot Stage and Expansion:** Initially, the project launched with two community kitchens, with plans to open two more. The aim is to empower approximately 100 users, enhancing their autonomy and facilitating community and labor inclusion.

Implementation and Operation

- **Funding:** The project has an initial budget of 275,000 euros, which is used to set up and run the community kitchens and associated activities.
- **Partnerships:** The initiative is a collaborative effort involving the City Council, non-profit organizations, and the food industry. This partnership model helps pool resources and expertise to maximize impact.
- **Community Involvement:** Residents are encouraged to participate in various activities, from cooking and workshops to collective purchasing and food distribution.

Impact and Outcomes

- **Improved Food Security:** The initiative has significantly improved access to healthy food for vulnerable populations in Barcelona, especially during the socio-economic crisis exacerbated by COVID-19.
- **Community Empowerment:** By involving participants in food-related activities, the project has fostered a sense of autonomy and reduced the stigma associated with food aid.
- **Sustainable Practices:** "Alimenta" has promoted the use of local, seasonal produce and implemented food waste reduction strategies, contributing to environmental sustainability.

Challenges and Lessons Learned

- **Engagement and Participation:** Ensuring continuous community engagement requires innovative approaches and ongoing communication to keep participants motivated and involved.
- **Scalability:** Expanding the project to other neighborhoods and integrating more comprehensive support services will be crucial for its long-term success and broader impact.

Future Directions

- **Expansion Plans:** The City Council plans to replicate the "Alimenta" model in other parts of the city, increasing the number of community kitchens and outreach programs.
- **Enhanced Services:** Future initiatives may include more extensive educational programs, job training opportunities, and additional support services to further empower participants and promote self-sufficiency.

Conclusion

- "Alimenta" exemplifies how local governments can develop innovative food strategies to address food insecurity, promote healthy eating, and foster community engagement. By combining educational activities, collaborative efforts, and sustainable practices, the project not only meets immediate food needs but also builds a resilient and inclusive food system for the future.
- For more information, you can visit the Barcelona City Council's [Alimenta page](#) and Info Barcelona.

MÉS AMB MENYS. BARCELONA

Project Overview

"Més amb Menys" (More with Less) is a community-driven initiative in the Roquetes neighborhood of Barcelona.

Launched in 2011, the project aims to address basic needs, reduce social isolation, and promote sustainable living through communal activities such as cooking and sewing workshops. The initiative is part of a broader effort to foster solidarity and empowerment among residents.

Objectives

- Address Basic Needs: Provide resources and support to meet essential needs such as food and clothing.
- Reduce Social Isolation: Facilitate social connections and community bonds through shared activities.
- Empowerment: Enable participants to develop skills and knowledge for greater self-sufficiency.
- Sustainability: Encourage the efficient use of resources and reduce waste through practical workshops.

Key Features

- Healthy Cooking Workshops: These workshops aim to alleviate the economic burden of food, promote healthy eating, and teach creative ways to utilize available food resources. Participants include residents from Roquetes, Canyelles, and Trinitat Nova, especially those facing economic hardships or social vulnerability.
- Sewing Workshops: Designed to help participants learn tailoring and clothing repair skills, the sewing workshops also aim to enhance social ties and offer potential pathways to employment in the garment industry.
- Community Integration: Both workshops serve as platforms for community integration, where participants can share knowledge, support each other, and build networks.
- Economic and Environmental Benefits: By focusing on making the most of limited resources, the project supports both economic savings for participants and environmental sustainability.

Implementation and Operation

- Collaborations: The project is driven by a coalition of local entities including the Platform of Entities of Roquetes, local neighborhood associations, health services, and social services. Regular meetings and collaborative efforts ensure the project's alignment with community needs.

- **Volunteer and Professional Support:** A mix of volunteers and professionals, including dietitians, sewing experts, and community workers, lead the workshops and activities.
- **Phased Approach:** The project has developed in phases, starting with initial workshops and expanding into more structured and autonomous groups as participation and engagement grow.

Impact and Outcomes

- **Enhanced Food Security:** The cooking workshops have helped participants better manage their food resources, improving overall food security.
- **Skill Development:** Participants in the sewing workshops have gained valuable skills that increase their employment prospects and ability to repair and reuse clothing.
- **Strengthened Community Bonds:** The project has successfully reduced social isolation by creating spaces for residents to interact and support each other.
- **Sustainable Practices:** The emphasis on efficient resource use and waste reduction has fostered more sustainable living practices within the community.

Challenges and Lessons Learned

- **Maintaining Engagement:** Keeping participants consistently engaged requires ongoing innovation and responsiveness to their needs and interests.
- **Resource Management:** Efficiently managing limited resources to maximize impact is a continual challenge that necessitates careful planning and community involvement.

Future Directions

- **Program Expansion:** Plans to expand the range of workshops and activities offered, including potential new areas such as group entrepreneurship and housing support.
- **Enhanced Community Involvement:** Strengthening ties with additional local organizations and exploring new ways to involve a broader segment of the community.

Conclusion

- "Més amb Menys" exemplifies how community-driven initiatives can effectively address basic needs, reduce social isolation, and promote sustainability. By leveraging local resources and fostering community engagement, the project not only meets immediate needs but also builds a foundation for long-term resilience and empowerment.
- For more information, you can visit the project's page on the [Ajuntament de Barcelona website](#) and their [Instagram page](#)

"EL PALET" IN LLEIDA

Project Overview

- "El Palet" is an innovative project located in Lleida, initiated by the Banc dels Aliments de les Comarques de Lleida. This project aims to dignify access to food for individuals in precarious situations, promote healthy eating habits, and combat food waste.

Objectives

The primary objectives of "El Palet" are:

- **Improve Food Access:** Ensure that individuals and families facing food insecurity have consistent access to nutritious food.
- **Promote Dignity and Choice:** Provide a shopping experience that respects the dignity of users, allowing them to choose their food as they would in a conventional grocery store.
- **Support Local Economy:** Source products from local producers, thus supporting the local economy and promoting sustainability.
- **Educational Outreach:** Offer educational programs on nutrition, cooking, and food management to help users make healthier choices.

Key Features

- **Food Distribution Point:** "El Palet" operates using a points system that allows users to select food based on nutritional criteria, household composition, and availability. This system offers a dignified and autonomous food access experience similar to shopping in a regular supermarket.
- **Nutritional Advice:** The project provides an integral and free nutritional advisory service, recognizing the close relationship between health and food insecurity. This service helps improve users' health by offering guidance on maintaining a balanced and healthy diet.
- **Social Store "El Palet de l'Horta":** This store is open to the community, allowing for responsible and social shopping. The profits generated by the store are directed towards maintaining the project, thus promoting a circular and sustainable economy.

Implementation and Operation

- **Partnerships:** The project involves collaboration between the local government, non-profit organizations, and local businesses. This multi-stakeholder approach ensures comprehensive support and sustainability.
- **Volunteer Involvement:** Volunteers play a crucial role in the daily operations of "El Palet," from stocking shelves to providing customer service and conducting workshops.
- **Funding and Sustainability:** The project is funded through a mix of public funding, private donations, and proceeds from the store. The model aims to be financially sustainable while maximizing social impact.

Impact and Outcomes

- **Community Engagement:** "El Palet" has successfully engaged the community, not only as beneficiaries but also as active participants and volunteers.
- **Food Security:** The project has significantly improved food security for many families in Lleida, ensuring they have access to healthy and nutritious food.
- **Educational Benefits:** Through its educational programs, the project has helped users gain valuable knowledge about nutrition and healthy living.
- **Economic Support:** By sourcing from local producers, the project supports the local economy and promotes sustainable agricultural practices.

Challenges and Lessons Learned

- **Stigma Reduction:** One of the challenges has been to reduce the stigma associated with receiving food aid. By creating a dignified shopping experience, "El Palet" has made strides in this area, but continuous efforts are needed.
- **Scalability:** Scaling the model to other regions requires careful planning and adaptation to local contexts. Sharing best practices and continuous improvement are essential for success.

Future Directions

- **Expansion:** There are plans to replicate the "El Palet" model in other municipalities to broaden its impact.
- **Enhanced Services:** The project aims to expand its range of services, including more comprehensive job training programs and additional social support services.

Conclusion

- "El Palet" in Lleida serves as an exemplary model of how local governments and communities can collaboratively address food insecurity
- For more detailed information, you can visit the project's page on Xarxa Solidària Lleida and FECATBAL (Xarxa Solidària Lleida) (FECATBAL)

"LA BOTIGA" IN EL PRAT DE LLOBREGAT

"La Botiga" is a pioneering social store located in El Prat de Llobregat, Spain, designed to address food insecurity while promoting community engagement and sustainability.

This project is part of a broader initiative to develop new food relief models that go beyond mere food distribution.

Objectives

The primary objectives of "La Botiga" are:

- **Improve Food Access:** Ensure that individuals and families facing food insecurity have consistent access to nutritious food.
- **Promote Dignity and Choice:** Provide a shopping experience that respects the dignity of users, allowing them to choose their food as they would in a conventional grocery store.
- **Support Local Economy:** Source products from local producers, thus supporting the local economy and promoting sustainability.
- **Educational Outreach:** Offer educational programs on nutrition, cooking, and food management to help users make healthier choices.

Key Features

- **Social Store Model:** "La Botiga" operates like a regular grocery store but with a unique social mission. It allows users to select food based on a points system, which gives them autonomy and dignity in their food choices.
- **Local Sourcing:** Emphasizes the purchase of local, seasonal products, reducing the environmental impact and supporting local farmers.
- **Nutritional Support:** Provides nutritional guidance and cooking workshops to help users improve their diet and health.
- **Integrated Services:** Beyond food, the store offers additional support services such as job training and social counseling to address broader aspects of poverty and social exclusion.

Implementation and Operation

- **Partnerships:** The project involves collaboration between the local government, non-profit organizations, and local businesses. This multi-stakeholder approach ensures comprehensive support and sustainability.
- **Volunteer Involvement:** Volunteers play a crucial role in the daily operations of "La Botiga," from stocking shelves to providing customer service and conducting workshops.

- **Funding and Sustainability:** The project is funded through a mix of public funding, private donations, and proceeds from the store. The model aims to be financially sustainable while maximizing social impact.

Impact and Outcomes

- **Community Engagement:** "La Botiga" has successfully engaged the community, not only as beneficiaries but also as active participants and volunteers.
- **Food Security:** The project has significantly improved food security for many families in El Prat de Llobregat, ensuring they have access to healthy and nutritious food.
- **Educational Benefits:** Through its educational programs, the project has helped users gain valuable knowledge about nutrition and healthy living.
- **Economic Support:** By sourcing from local producers, the project supports the local economy and promotes sustainable agricultural practices.

Challenges and Lessons Learned

- **Stigma Reduction:** One of the challenges has been to reduce the stigma associated with receiving food aid. By creating a dignified shopping experience, "La Botiga" has made strides in this area, but continuous efforts are needed.
- **Scalability:** Scaling the model to other regions requires careful planning and adaptation to local contexts. Sharing best practices and continuous improvement are essential for success.

Future Directions

- **Expansion:** There are plans to replicate the "La Botiga" model in other municipalities to broaden its impact.
- **Enhanced Services:** The project aims to expand its range of services, including more comprehensive job training programs and additional social support services.

For more detailed information, you can visit the [project's page](#)

CUINA DE BARRI. EL PRAT DE LLOBREGAT (SPAIN)

"Cuina de Barri" is an innovative community kitchen initiative located in El Prat de Llobregat, Spain.

This project is designed to address food insecurity by providing nutritious meals while promoting community engagement and sustainability.

The initiative is grounded in an efficient design that allows for the preparation of balanced meals using local and seasonal products.

Objectives

The primary objectives of "Cuina de Barri" are:

- **Improve food access:** Ensure that community members have consistent access to nutritious, balanced meals.
- **Promote Sustainability:** Use local, seasonal products to reduce environmental impact and support local producers.
- **Foster Community Engagement:** Create opportunities for community members to participate in meal preparation and other activities.
- **Economic Efficiency:** Provide meals at a low cost, reducing economic barriers to accessing healthy food.

Key Features

- **Innovative Cooking Design:** The project utilizes a marmite (large cooking pot) design that can prepare up to 100 portions of 400g each in just 40 minutes. This method is energy-efficient and cost-effective, minimizing CO2 emissions.
- **Local and Seasonal Products:** By sourcing ingredients locally and seasonally, "Cuina de Barri" supports local agriculture and reduces the environmental footprint associated with food transportation.
- **Community Savings:** The initiative promotes shared purchasing models and communal cooking, helping to lower costs for participants and reduce overall food waste.
- **Circular Economy Model:** The project integrates a circular economy approach, where resources are efficiently used and reused, enhancing community resilience and sustainability.

Implementation and Operation

- **Partnerships:** "Cuina de Barri" collaborates with local government, community organizations, and local producers. This multi-stakeholder approach ensures a comprehensive support system and sustainable operation.

- **Volunteer Involvement:** Volunteers play a critical role in the daily operations, from cooking to organizing events and educational workshops.
- **Funding and Sustainability:** The project is funded through a mix of public funding, private donations, and proceeds from community events. It aims to be financially sustainable while maximizing social impact.

Impact and Outcomes

- **Community Engagement:** "Cuina de Barri" has successfully engaged the local community, not only as beneficiaries but also as active participants and volunteers.
- **Food Security:** The project has improved food security for many families in El Prat de Llobregat, ensuring they have access to nutritious and affordable meals.
- **Environmental Benefits:** By using local, seasonal products and promoting a circular economy model, the project has reduced its environmental impact.
- **Economic Savings:** The shared purchasing and communal cooking models have helped participants save money and reduce food waste.

Challenges and Lessons Learned

- **Scalability:** Scaling the model to other regions requires careful planning and adaptation to local contexts. Sharing best practices and continuous improvement are essential for success.
- **Volunteer Coordination:** Managing a large number of volunteers and ensuring effective coordination can be challenging but is crucial for the project's success.

Future Directions

- **Expansion:** There are plans to replicate the "Cuina de Barri" model in other municipalities to broaden its impact.
- **Enhanced Services:** The project aims to expand its range of services, including more comprehensive educational programs on nutrition and sustainability.

For more detailed information, you can visit the project's page on the [Comunalitat Benviure website](#). ([Comunalitat Benviure](#))

ESPAIS ALIMENTA. BARCELONA

Project Overview

"Espais Alimenta" is a community kitchen project launched by the Barcelona City Council. It is part of the broader Alimenta initiative aimed at ensuring access to healthy, sustainable, and dignified food for people in vulnerable situations. The project also promotes community engagement and personal autonomy through its diverse programs.

Objectives

The primary objectives of "Espais Alimenta" are:

- **Ensure Food Security:** Provide access to nutritious and sustainable food for individuals and families in need.
- **Promote Dignity and Autonomy:** Empower users by allowing them to participate actively in food-related activities and make autonomous choices regarding their food.
- **Foster Community Integration:** Enhance social inclusion and community ties through shared activities and collective food practices.
- **Combat Food Waste:** Implement strategies to reduce food waste and promote the consumption of local, seasonal produce.

Key Features

- **Community Kitchens:** These kitchens provide spaces for cooking and sharing meals, fostering a sense of community. They also serve as hubs for educational workshops on nutrition, cooking, and sustainable food practices.
- **Training Workshops:** The project offers workshops focused on food preparation, budgeting, and nutrition, aiming to improve the culinary skills and knowledge of participants.
- **Local and Seasonal Products:** By sourcing local and seasonal products, the project supports local agriculture and reduces the environmental impact of food transportation.
- **Collective Purchasing:** Promotes collective purchasing to reduce costs and empower users to make informed food choices, fostering self-organization and autonomy.

Implementation and Operation

- **Partnerships:** The project is a collaborative effort involving the Barcelona City Council, social entities, and local businesses. This multi-stakeholder approach ensures comprehensive support and sustainability.
- **Pilot Stage:** The project began with the opening of two community kitchens and plans to open two more, aiming to serve approximately 100 users initially.

Impact and Outcomes

- **Improved Food Security:** "Espais Alimenta" has significantly enhanced food security for vulnerable populations in Barcelona, providing access to healthy meals.
- **Community Engagement:** The project has successfully engaged community members, fostering social connections and reducing isolation.
- **Educational Benefits:** Through its workshops and activities, the project has improved participants' knowledge of nutrition and sustainable food practices.

Challenges and Lessons Learned

- **Scalability:** Scaling the model to other areas requires careful planning and adaptation to local contexts. Continuous improvement and sharing of best practices are essential.
- **Stigma Reduction:** Efforts to reduce the stigma associated with food aid are ongoing, with a focus on creating dignified and inclusive spaces.

Future Directions

- **Expansion:** There are plans to replicate the "Espais Alimenta" model in other neighborhoods to broaden its impact.
- **Enhanced Services:** The project aims to expand its range of services, including more comprehensive training programs and additional support services.

or more detailed information, you can visit the [project's page](#) on the Barcelona City Council website.

URBAN BEEKEEPING IN CASCINA CUCCAGNA, MILAN

Project Overview

Urban beekeeping at Cascina Cuccagna in Milan is a notable example of sustainable urban agriculture.

This initiative integrates beekeeping within the urban environment, promoting biodiversity, environmental education, and community engagement.

Objectives

- **Promote Biodiversity:** Increase the population of pollinators in the city to support urban flora.
- **Environmental Education:** Educate the public about the importance of bees and the benefits of urban beekeeping.
- **Community Engagement:** Involve local residents in beekeeping activities, fostering a sense of community and shared responsibility for the environment.
- **Sustainable Practices:** Implement and promote sustainable beekeeping practices within the urban setting.

Key Features

- **Beekeeping Workshops:** Regular workshops and training sessions are held to educate the community about beekeeping techniques, the ecological importance of bees, and how to maintain healthy hives.
- **Honey Production:** The project produces honey, which is then sold locally. This not only provides a source of revenue to sustain the project but also raises awareness about local food production.
- **Pollinator Gardens:** The creation of pollinator-friendly gardens around the beehives supports the health of the bee colonies and enhances urban biodiversity.
- **Community Involvement:** Local residents, schools, and volunteers are encouraged to participate in beekeeping activities, fostering a deeper connection with nature and the local environment.

Implementation and Operation

- **Location:** Cascina Cuccagna is an 18th-century farmhouse and community hub in Milan. The beekeeping project utilizes the space around the farmhouse for setting up beehives and pollinator gardens.
- **Partnerships:** The project collaborates with local environmental organizations, schools, and the municipality to ensure broad community involvement and support.

- **Training and Resources:** Provides training for volunteers and community members interested in beekeeping. Resources include protective gear, beekeeping equipment, and educational materials.

Impact and Outcomes

- **Increased Biodiversity:** The introduction of beehives has helped increase the population of pollinators in Milan, supporting urban flora and promoting ecological balance.
- **Educational Outreach:** Hundreds of community members, including children and school groups, have participated in educational workshops, increasing awareness about the importance of bees and sustainable urban agriculture.
- **Community Cohesion:** The project has brought together a diverse group of people, fostering community spirit and shared responsibility for local environmental stewardship.
- **Sustainable Practices:** By promoting and implementing sustainable beekeeping practices, the project serves as a model for other urban beekeeping initiatives.

Challenges and Lessons Learned

- **Urban Environment Adaptation:** Adapting beekeeping practices to the urban environment requires careful planning and continuous monitoring to ensure the health of the bee colonies.
- **Community Engagement:** Maintaining high levels of community engagement is essential. Continuous outreach and inclusive activities help sustain interest and participation.

Future Directions

- **Expansion:** Plans to expand the number of hives and increase the areas designated for pollinator gardens.
- **Enhanced Educational Programs:** Developing more comprehensive educational programs and materials to reach a broader audience, including online resources and virtual workshops.
- **Research Collaboration:** Partnering with universities and research institutions to study the impact of urban beekeeping on biodiversity and urban agriculture.

Conclusion

Urban beekeeping at Cascina Cuccagna in Milan exemplifies a successful integration of sustainable practices within an urban setting. By promoting biodiversity, providing environmental education, and fostering community engagement, the project not only supports local ecosystems but also strengthens community ties and educates the public on the importance of environmental stewardship.

For more information, you can visit the [Cascina Cuccagna website](#).

"FOOD HUB CUCCAGNA" IN MILAN

Project Overview

The "Food Hub Cuccagna" is part of Milan's innovative approach to tackling food waste and food insecurity.

This initiative is a cornerstone of the city's broader food policy, aiming to halve food waste by 2030 while providing nutritious food to those in need. The Food Hub Cuccagna, along with other neighborhood hubs, serves as a model for sustainable urban food management.

Objectives

- **Reduce Food Waste:** Minimize the amount of edible food that goes to waste by recovering surplus food from various sources.
- **Support Vulnerable Populations:** Distribute recovered food to non-profit organizations that assist economically fragile individuals and families.
- **Promote Environmental Sustainability:** Reduce the environmental impact associated with food waste, including greenhouse gas emissions.
- **Community Engagement:** Foster collaboration among local businesses, government entities, and non-profits to create a resilient food system.

Key Features

- **Food Recovery:** The hub collects surplus food from supermarkets, canteens, and markets. This includes fresh and packaged foods that would otherwise be discarded.
- **Logistics and Distribution:** Utilizes a streamlined logistics model where recovered food is stored at the hub and then distributed to non-profits that offer meal services or food parcels to those in need.
- **Public-Private Partnership:** The project is a collaboration between the Municipality of Milan, Associazione Consorzio Cantiere Cuccagna, and various local and regional partners, including Emergency Ong Onlus, Recup, and Fondazione ACRA.
- **Digital Integration:** Plans to improve management through digital tools that enhance tracking and distribution efficiency, optimizing the overall impact.

Implementation and Operation

- **Collaborative Efforts:** The project involves significant cooperation between public institutions, private companies, and non-profit organizations. This includes the active participation of local supermarkets and other food suppliers.
- **Funding and Support:** The Food Hub Cuccagna is supported by a mix of public funding, private donations, and partnerships with foundations such as Fondazione Cariplo and Fondazione Snam.

- **Community Involvement:** Local residents and volunteers play a crucial role in the daily operations, helping with food collection, sorting, and distribution.

Impact and Outcomes

- **Food Waste Reduction:** The hub has successfully recovered significant amounts of food waste, contributing to a substantial reduction in the city's overall food waste.
- **Support to Vulnerable Populations:** Thousands of meals have been provided to vulnerable populations, significantly improving food security in the community.
- **Environmental Benefits:** The initiative has led to reduced greenhouse gas emissions by diverting food waste from landfills.
- **Community Engagement:** The project has strengthened community ties by involving a wide range of stakeholders in a common cause.

Challenges and Lessons Learned

- **Operational Challenges:** Managing the logistics of food recovery and distribution in an urban setting requires continuous adaptation and improvement.
- **Engagement:** Ensuring sustained involvement from all partners and volunteers is critical for the project's success.

Future Directions

- **Expansion:** Plans to open additional hubs to further reduce food waste and expand food support services.
- **Technological Integration:** Implementing more advanced digital tools to enhance efficiency and track the impact of food recovery efforts.
- **Education and Awareness:** Increasing public awareness and educational activities to promote sustainable food practices.

Conclusion

The "Food Hub Cuccagna" exemplifies how urban areas can effectively address food waste and food insecurity through coordinated efforts and innovative solutions. By combining environmental sustainability with social responsibility, the hub not only provides immediate relief but also promotes long-term resilience and community well-being.

For more detailed information, you can visit the project's pages on [Comune di Milano](#), [Earthshot Prize](#) websites and [ACRA's website](#)

"RADICI DI COMUNITÀ" AT NUOVO VICOLO CUCCAGNA, MILAN

Project Overview

"Radici di Comunità" is an innovative project based in Nuovo Vicolo Cuccagna, Milan, aimed at urban regeneration and social inclusion. Initiated by Cascina Cuccagna in collaboration with La Mescolanza Impresa Sociale, and supported by foundations such as Fondazione Alia Falck, Fondazione Banca Popolare di Milano, and Fondazione AEM, this project transforms an abandoned urban space into a vibrant community hub.

Objectives

- **Urban Regeneration:** Revitalize and repurpose Nuovo Vicolo Cuccagna, transforming it into a lively, inclusive space for social, cultural, and educational activities.
- **Social Inclusion:** Provide professional training and employment opportunities for vulnerable groups, particularly in gardening and maintenance.
- **Community Engagement:** Foster a sense of community and shared responsibility through active participation in the project.
- **Environmental Education:** Raise awareness about environmental issues and sustainable practices through workshops and activities.

Key Features

- **Professional Training:** The project offers on-the-job training in gardening and urban maintenance for vulnerable individuals, selected and supported by La Mescolanza Impresa Sociale. This training includes both technical skills and soft skills, preparing participants for future employment.
- **Collaborative Urban Space:** Nuovo Vicolo Cuccagna is designed as an open, welcoming space where the community can engage in various activities, including cultural events, workshops, and social gatherings.
- **Sustainability Focus:** The project emphasizes sustainable urban practices, including the maintenance of green spaces and the promotion of biodiversity.

Implementation and Operation

- **Partnerships:** The project is a collaboration between Cascina Cuccagna, La Mescolanza Impresa Sociale, and multiple foundations, alongside the support of the Municipality of Milan.
- **Community Involvement:** Local residents, schools, and volunteers are encouraged to participate in the project's activities, enhancing social cohesion and community spirit.
- **Funding and Sustainability:** The project is funded through public and private donations, including a successful crowdfunding campaign, ensuring long-term viability.

Impact and Outcomes

- **Social Integration:** "Radici di Comunità" has provided training and job opportunities for vulnerable individuals, helping them gain confidence and skills for the future.
- **Urban Renewal:** The transformation of Nuovo Vicolo Cuccagna has created a vibrant, green space that enhances the quality of life for local residents.
- **Educational Outreach:** Through workshops and events, the project has raised awareness about environmental issues and sustainable practices among the community.
- **Community Engagement:** The project has fostered a strong sense of community, with active participation from a diverse range of local residents.

Challenges and Lessons Learned

- **Sustained Engagement:** Maintaining high levels of community participation and volunteer involvement is essential for the project's success.
- **Adaptation and Flexibility:** The project needs to remain adaptable to address the evolving needs of the community and respond to new challenges.

Future Directions

- **Expansion:** Plans to replicate the "Radici di Comunità" model in other neighborhoods to broaden its impact.
- **Enhanced Programs:** Expanding the range of educational and social programs offered to include more comprehensive training and support services.

For more information, you can visit the project's page on the [Cascina Cuccagna website](#) and [Comune di Milano](#).

PIANETA CUCCAGNA: "GIOVANI, CIBO E COMUNITÀ" IN MILAN

Project Overview

"Pianeta Cuccagna: Giovani, Cibo e Comunità" is a dynamic project based at Cascina Cuccagna in Milan. This initiative, led by the Associazione Consorzio Cascina Cuccagna in collaboration with Està and Fondazione ACRA, and supported by the Fondazione di Comunità Milano, focuses on building a food community centered around sustainability and global citizenship education for young people.

Objectives

- **Promote Food Sustainability:** Educate young people about sustainable food practices and the impact of food production on the environment.
- **Foster Global Citizenship:** Encourage a sense of global responsibility and community involvement among youth.
- **Enhance Community Engagement:** Create a strong, active community around the themes of food and sustainability.

Key Features

- **Educational Activities:** Starting in February 2024, students aged 11 to 19 from the Municipio IV of Milan will participate in outdoor activities and workshops at Cascina Cuccagna. These activities include mapping and analyzing local food production, consumption, and cultural practices.
- **Civic Technology:** Utilize civic technology to highlight the economic, social, and environmental impacts of the local food system, engaging students and educators in a hands-on learning process.

Implementation and Operation

- **Partnerships:** The project involves collaboration between various local and regional stakeholders, including educational institutions and community organizations.
- **Community Involvement:** Teachers and educators undergo specialized training to effectively guide students through the project's activities.
- **Funding and Sustainability:** Funded by the Fondazione di Comunità Milano and supported by public and private donations, the project ensures long-term sustainability and broad community reach.

Impact and Outcomes

- **Youth Engagement:** "Pianeta Cuccagna" has engaged a significant number of young people, raising awareness about the importance of sustainability in food practices.
- **Educational Benefits:** Through direct involvement, students gain practical knowledge about the food system and its environmental impacts, promoting informed and responsible consumption.

- **Community Strengthening:** The project strengthens community bonds by involving local residents, students, and educators in a common goal of sustainability and food education.
- **Environmental Awareness:** By emphasizing sustainable food practices, the project helps reduce food waste and supports biodiversity and local ecosystems.

Challenges and Lessons Learned

- **Maintaining Engagement:** Ensuring continuous and active participation from students and community members is crucial.

Future Directions

- **Expansion:** Plans to extend the project to other neighborhoods and schools to increase its impact and reach more students.
- **Enhanced Educational Programs:** Developing more comprehensive educational materials and online resources to support ongoing learning and engagement.

Conclusion

- An exemplary model of how education and community engagement can promote sustainable food practices and environmental awareness among young people.
- For more detailed information, you can visit the project's page on the Cascina Cuccagna website (Cuccagna) (Lab24).

"MANGIA & CAMBIA" (EAT & CHANGE) IN MESSINA

Project Overview

"Mangia & Cambia" (Eat & Change) is an innovative initiative based in Messina (Sicily) , Italy, designed to address food security and promote sustainable food practices. This project is part of a broader movement (Slow food initiative across all Italy) to integrate food sustainability into the urban fabric, engaging the community in meaningful ways.

Objectives

- Promote Sustainable Food Practices: Educate the community on sustainable eating habits and the importance of local, seasonal food.
- Enhance Food Security: Raising-awareness level, old consumption of local product and how to activate local communities in a sustainable way, for example: fishing tourism.
- Foster Community Engagement: Engage local residents in food-related activities that build community ties and promote shared responsibility.
- Conscious consumption habits that can trigger substantive change and the future of our seas, and sustainable alternatives, those that already exist and those that are possible.

Key Features

- Educational Workshops: The initiative organizes workshops and seminars on sustainable food practices, nutrition, and the environmental impact of food choices. These workshops target a broad audience, including schools, families, and local organizations.
- Community Gardens: Establishing community gardens where residents can grow their own produce. These gardens serve as educational hubs and promote local food production.
- Public Events: Hosting public events such as food festivals, cooking demonstrations, and cultural activities centered around sustainable food. These events aim to raise awareness and engage the community in the project's goals.

Implementation and Operation

- Partnerships: The project collaborates with local businesses, non-profit organizations, and municipal authorities. Key partners include local food markets, restaurants, and environmental groups.
- Volunteer Support: Volunteers are crucial to the success of the project, assisting in the organization of events and workshops.

Impact and Outcomes

- Community Engagement: Mangia & Cambia has successfully engaged the local community, fostering a sense of shared responsibility and collective action towards food sustainability.
- Educational Benefits: Through its workshops and events, the initiative has increased awareness and knowledge about sustainable food practices among residents of all ages.

Challenges and Lessons Learned

- **Maintaining Engagement:** Keeping the community continuously engaged requires ongoing outreach and adaptation to meet the evolving interests and needs of residents, and proposing creative and interactive ways of raising awareness among the local communities of territory specific local issues

Future Directions

- **Expansion:** It is a Festival that has had already 2 successful editions (2023 and 2024).
- **Enhanced Programs:** Developing additional educational programs and expanding community garden initiatives to further integrate sustainable food practices into daily life.
- **Digital Tools:** Implementing digital platforms to improve coordination, track impact, and engage a broader audience through online resources and virtual events.

Conclusion

"Mangia & Cambia" in Messina exemplifies how raising awareness initiatives can effectively address the issue of food security from a local perspective and promote sustainable food practices. By leveraging local partnerships including public organizations as universities, secondary schools and the local city council, volunteer support, and public engagement, the project fosters long-term resilience and community cohesion, through the promotion of local sustainable business and initiatives and the involvement of citizens from all ages in the narrative of food security from a specific local perspective .

For more detailed information, you can visit the initiative's page on the [Mangia & Cambia website](#).

"VILLAGGIO DEL CONTADINO DELLA COLDIRETTI" (COLDIRETTI FARMER'S VILLAGE)

Project Overview

The "Villaggio del Contadino" (Farmer's Village) is an annual event organized by Coldiretti, Italy's national farmers' association.

This event aims to promote Italian agriculture, showcase local food products, and engage the public in discussions about sustainable food practices and agricultural policies. The village moves across various Italian cities, including Rome, Milan, Naples, and Palermo, transforming urban spaces into vibrant hubs of agricultural activity.

Objectives

- **Promote Italian Agriculture:** Highlight the importance and diversity of Italian agricultural products, emphasizing the value of local, sustainable farming.
- **Support Local Farmers:** Provide a platform for farmers to sell their products directly to consumers, fostering economic support and reducing intermediaries.
- **Educate the Public:** Raise awareness about sustainable agriculture, food security, and the risks of food waste and synthetic foods.
- **Enhance Community Engagement:** Create a festive environment that brings together urban residents, farmers, and policymakers.

Key Features

- **Direct Sales Market:** The largest zero-kilometer market in Italy, where consumers can buy fresh produce directly from farmers. This includes a wide variety of local specialties, organic products, and seasonal foods.
- **Educational Debates:** Hosts public debates and roundtables on topics such as climate change, food security, and sustainable farming practices. Debates and discussions with policymakers and experts organized to address current agricultural challenges and innovations.
- **Culinary Experiences:** Features cooking demonstrations by "agrichefs" who prepare traditional Italian dishes using locally sourced ingredients. Visitors can enjoy gourmet meals at a very affordable price, experiencing the rich culinary heritage of Italy.
- **Interactive Activities:** Includes a range of activities such as pet therapy sessions, sensory gardens, and workshops on olive oil and wine tasting. The village also promotes agricosemics and offers educational activities for children.
- **Solidarity Initiatives:** Initiatives like "Spesa sospesa" (suspended shopping) encourage visitors to donate food products to families in need, fostering a spirit of community and support.

Implementation and Operation

- **Partnerships:** The event is a collaboration between Coldiretti, local governments, and various sponsors and partners. This ensures a broad support base and successful implementation.
- **Logistics:** The village is set up in central urban locations, transforming public squares into bustling agricultural markets. Detailed planning ensures that the infrastructure supports both vendors and visitors efficiently.
- **Volunteer and Community Support:** Local volunteers assist in the operation of the “village”, from setting up stalls to managing visitor information desks.

Impact and Outcomes

- **Economic Support for Farmers:** Provides significant economic benefits to local farmers by giving them direct access to consumers, enhancing their income and market reach.
- **Increased Public Awareness:** Successfully raises awareness about the importance of sustainable agriculture and the benefits of consuming local products.
- **Community Building:** Fosters a sense of community by bringing together diverse groups, including farmers, urban residents, and policymakers, in a shared space dedicated to sustainability and food security.
- **Promotion of Italian Culinary Heritage:** Highlights the rich culinary traditions of Italy, promoting local recipes and cooking methods that use sustainable and locally sourced ingredients.

Challenges and Lessons Learned

- **Logistical Challenges:** Setting up a large-scale event in urban areas requires careful planning and coordination to ensure smooth operations and minimize disruption to the local community.
- **Sustaining Engagement:** Keeping the public engaged over multiple days necessitates a diverse range of activities and continuous promotion.

Future Directions

- **Expansion to More Cities:** Plans to extend the reach of the Villaggio del Contadino to more cities, increasing its impact and fostering greater national awareness.
- **Enhanced Digital Presence:** Developing digital platforms to engage a broader audience, including virtual tours, online workshops, and e-commerce opportunities for farmers.

Conclusion

- The "Villaggio del Contadino della Coldiretti" serves as an exemplary model of how to promote sustainable agriculture, support local farmers, and engage the public in meaningful discussions about food and the environment.

For more detailed information, you can visit the [Villaggio Coldiretti website](#) and the [event in Palermo](#) pages.

CIBO CIVITAS" IN ITALY

Project Overview

"In Cibo Civitas: Empowerment, Azioni, Territorio per una cittadinanza che nutre il futuro" is an initiative aimed at promoting sustainable food systems and active citizenship across four Italian regions: Piedmont, Emilia-Romagna, Tuscany, and Sicily. This project is led by the Associazione LVIA in collaboration with Slow Food Italia and various municipalities. In the province of Palermo, it has been implemented by the Municipality of Castelbuono (an Italian municipality of 8.000 inhabitants in the metropolitan city of Palermo).

Objectives

- Promote Sustainable Food Practices: Encourage behaviors that support sustainable food systems and environmental stewardship.
- Empower Youth: Provide training and professional opportunities for young people in food-related sectors.
- Engage Public Institutions: Foster collaboration among local governments, social organizations, and youth associations to develop food policies.
- Raise Public Awareness: Educate citizens on food sustainability, justice, and climate change.

Key Features

- Youth Training Programs: Customized training for 60 young individuals aged 18-32 to enhance their green skills in sustainable food practices and communication using digital technologies.
- Wide Outreach of diverse target groups: The partnership is composed of local authorities, research organisations and private social actors and the project envisages the involvement of approximately 6,000 students and 200 secondary school teachers, 3,000 young adults (18-30 years old) living in the areas involved and 1.5 million citizens throughout Italy.
- Public Engagement Events: Organize events and national campaigns to raise awareness about sustainable food systems, food sovereignty, and the circular economy.
- Food Policy Tables: Establish and strengthen local food policy tables involving municipalities and community groups to design and implement sustainable food activities.
- Community Initiatives: Support and reward projects proposed by young people aimed at raising awareness and promoting sustainable food practices within their communities.

Implementation and Operation

- Collaborations: The project involves a partnership between Associazione LVIA, Slow Food Italia, and various municipalities, supported by the Italian Agency for Development Cooperation.

- Educational Outreach: Conduct workshops, webinars, and public events to engage and educate the community on sustainable food practices.
- Resource Mapping: Identify and promote best practices in food waste valorization across the involved regions to inform and educate the youth.
- Online tools and resources: A free online training course focusing on Sustainable Food Systems aimed at teachers of 1st and 2nd grade secondary schools throughout Italy.

Impact and Outcomes

- Youth Empowerment: Strengthened the professional skills of young participants, enhancing their employability in sustainable food sectors.
- Increased Awareness: Successfully raised awareness about the importance of sustainable food systems and environmental responsibility among a broad audience.
- Community Engagement: Fostered strong community participation through events and campaigns, enhancing local food systems' sustainability.
- Circular City Selfie: In the four regions involved, the young people of the Slow Food Youth Network Italy identified companies, start-ups, associations and projects carrying out a circular economy for food initiatives and models. In collaboration with the University of Gastronomic Sciences and all the partners, municipalities and other networks in the project areas, a collection of 51 good circular economy practices has been published ([link](#)).

Challenges and Lessons Learned

- Sustained Engagement: Maintaining high levels of engagement from diverse stakeholders requires continuous effort and innovative outreach strategies.
- Adapting to Local Contexts: Tailoring activities to the specific cultural and territorial characteristics of each region is essential for effective implementation.

Future Directions

- Expansion: Plans to replicate and expand successful initiatives to other regions and communities.

Conclusion

"In Cibo Civitas" exemplifies how collaborative efforts can promote sustainable food systems and empower communities. By integrating education, policy development, and community engagement, the project not only addresses food sustainability but also fosters active citizenship and professional growth among young people.

For more information, you can visit the [In Cibo Civitas page](#)

"TERRA FRANCA" IN PALERMO

Project Overview

"Terra Franca" is an innovative community project located in the Cruillas district of Palermo, initiated by the Human Rights Youth Organization (HRYO). This initiative focuses on the socio-economic inclusion of disadvantaged groups by transforming land confiscated from the Mafia into a productive community garden and educational hub, offering non-formal educational activities and free-time activities in a disadvantaged neighbourhood

Objectives

- **Combat Mafia Influence:** Utilize confiscated Mafia property for community benefit, symbolizing resilience and reclaiming the land for public good.
- **Socio-Economic Inclusion:** Provide opportunities for vulnerable groups, including women, youth, elderly locals, and unaccompanied foreign minors.
- **Promote Sustainable Practices:** Foster environmental sustainability through urban agriculture, permaculture ethics and waste reduction.
- **Community Engagement:** Involve local residents and volunteers in the rehabilitation and maintenance of the garden, enhancing community ties.

Key Features

- **Community Garden:** The project includes a large garden where volunteers grow vegetables, herbs, and other plants. This garden is intended to serve both as a source of fresh produce and as an educational site, portraying permaculture in action.
- **Educational Programs:** Regular workshops and activities are organized to educate the community about sustainable agriculture, composting, and other environmental practices.
- **Volunteer Involvement:** The project heavily relies on volunteers from diverse backgrounds, including local residents and international participants through programs like the European Solidarity Corp (ESC).
- **Social Inclusion:** The garden provides a space for social activities and engagement, particularly benefiting marginalized groups by offering them a productive role in the community.

Implementation and Operation

- **Partnerships:** The Municipality of Palermo granted the land to HRYO, supporting the project with necessary legal and administrative backing. Collaboration with local schools, NGOs, and international volunteer programs further strengthens the initiative.
- **Volunteer Coordination:** Volunteers are integral to the project's success. They participate in cleaning, planting, and maintaining the garden, as well as organizing educational activities.

- Sustainability Efforts: The garden employs sustainable practices such as composting organic waste and using permaculture and agroecological gardening techniques.

Impact and Outcomes

- Community Development: "Terra Franca" has transformed an abandoned, crime-associated area into a vibrant community space, fostering a sense of pride and ownership among local residents.
- Education and Awareness: The project's educational programs have raised awareness about environmental sustainability and the importance of community-driven initiatives among different schools and educational levels in all the city of Palermo.
- Social Inclusion: By engaging diverse groups in productive activities, the project has enhanced social cohesion and provided meaningful opportunities for personal and professional development.

Challenges and Lessons Learned

- Sustained Engagement: Maintaining continuous volunteer involvement and community interest is challenging and requires ongoing outreach and engagement efforts.
- Resource Management: Efficiently managing the garden and ensuring the sustainability of crops and activities necessitate careful planning and resource allocation.
- Legal & Administrative issues: Since the legal status of confiscated land entails different processes, extreme and slow bureaucracy can negatively affect the project.
- Strengthen relations with local community: Citizens of the neighbourhood are still reluctant of the initiative, and they trust little "outsiders", also because of their experience of degradation of the neighbourhood due to institutional neglect of the maintenance and care of the area.

Future Directions

- Expansion: Plans to expand the garden's size and the range of activities offered, including more comprehensive educational programs and workshops.
- Enhanced Community Integration: Strengthening ties with local schools and organizations to increase participation and support.

Conclusion

"Terra Franca" exemplifies how confiscated Mafia properties can be repurposed for community benefit, promoting socio-economic inclusion and environmental sustainability. Through the dedicated efforts of volunteers and the local community, the project not only provides immediate benefits but also fosters long-term resilience and empowerment.

For more detailed information, you can visit the [project website](#) and the [Human Rights Youth Organization \(HRYO\) website](#) and follow their activities on their Facebook page (Human Rights Youth Organization).

CO2GETHER IN PATRAS

Co2gether in Patras is a community-driven organisation dedicated to supporting vulnerable groups in rural and remote areas of Western Greece. It focuses on healthy ageing, green and circular economy, and crisis intervention through personalized services such as home visits, a Food Bank, and a Bank of sanitary materials. The organization employs a bottom-up approach to assess individual needs and collaborates with 8 municipalities to ensure holistic care. Unique initiatives like the Mediterranean Diet Senior Box and ergonomic home interventions set it apart. Co2gether reduces food waste, enhances community well-being, and strives to leave no one behind.

Website: <https://co2gether.gr/en/>

Objectives

The main vision of Co2gether is to create a society where no one is left behind, particularly focusing on vulnerable groups in rural or remote areas of Western Greece. Its long-term goals include:

- Healthy and Active Ageing
- Green and Circular Economy
- Crisis Intervention

Key Features

Core Services:

- **Home Visits:** Ergonomic interventions in beneficiaries' homes, such as installing water heaters, painting walls, and creating safe, accessible spaces.
- **Food Bank of Western Greece:**
 - Monthly home delivery of food packages, especially for remote areas.
 - Partnerships with large supermarkets to reduce food waste and donate near-expiry products.
 - Offers specialized nutritional support through the "Mediterranean Diet Senior Box" for elderly individuals.
- **Bank of Sanitary Material and Equipment:** Providing essential supplies like mobility aids and sanitary materials.

Methodology:

- A **bottom-up approach** ensures an in-depth understanding of individual needs.
- Exclusive **Memoranda of Understanding (MoU)** with 8 municipalities in Western Greece for holistic care and increased societal awareness.

Differentiation:

- Personalized, home-based care and advisory services.

- Unique focus on reducing food waste through collaborations with major supermarkets and food safety education.

Impact and Outcomes

Co2gether operates in the countryside, so what they have to deal with is the difficulty of reaching people and the difficulty of cooperating and sharing goals with the local community. However, through our experience we achieve to support and network local authorities, non-profit organizations, private companies, research and educational institutions to provide services that return value to citizens. Impact in numbers includes:

- Completed **3,024 home interventions** for vulnerable citizens.
- Donates over **3 tonnes of food per month**, reducing food waste by **35%**.
- Distributed **15,600 sets of sanitary material** and **130 mobility aids**.
- Provides enhanced nutritional support to **80 elderly individuals monthly** via the Mediterranean Diet Senior Box.

Future Directions

- Expanding MoUs with additional municipalities to serve more beneficiaries.
- Growing the Food Bank network to distribute more food to economically disadvantaged individuals.
- Building new partnerships with local authorities, private companies, and research institutions to strengthen community impact.

Conclusion

Co2gether is a vital organization in Western Greece, addressing the needs of vulnerable groups through innovative and personalized care. Despite challenges like limited accessibility in rural areas, Co2gether continues to achieve its mission by fostering partnerships and expanding its services, contributing significantly to societal well-being.

"CAISSE ALIMENTAIRE DU 8ÈME ARRONDISSEMENT". PARIS

Project Overview

The "Caisse Alimentaire du 8ème Arrondissement" in Paris is an initiative managed by the Caisse des Écoles, focusing on providing nutritious meals to school children and reducing food waste. The project integrates sustainable practices and educational programs to promote healthy eating habits and environmental awareness among young students.

Objectives

- **Nutritional Support:** Provide balanced and nutritious meals to students in the 8th arrondissement of Paris.
- **Reduce Food Waste:** Implement strategies to minimize food waste in school cafeterias.
- **Educational Outreach:** Educate students about the importance of nutrition and sustainable food practices.
- **Community Engagement:** Involve parents and the community in efforts to improve food sustainability.

Key Features

- **Nutritional Menus:** The menus are carefully designed by a dietitian to ensure they meet nutritional standards and are balanced. Menus are available online and displayed at schools for parents and students to see.
- **Food Waste Reduction:** The project includes several actions to reduce food waste, such as adjusting portion sizes, offering smaller servings of bread, and encouraging children to take only what they need and request more if necessary.
- **Educational Workshops:** Since 2018, the dietitian has been conducting workshops with children from kindergarten and elementary schools to teach them about the importance of taste, diversity, and balanced nutrition.
- **Sustainable Practices:** The Caisse des Écoles uses organic products and has introduced vegetarian menus once a week as part of their commitment to sustainability and compliance with the French law EGALIM.

Implementation and Operation

- **Collaborations:** The project collaborates with local food suppliers and environmental organizations to source sustainable products and implement waste reduction strategies.
- **Community Involvement:** Parents are informed about the menus and the efforts to reduce waste, and they are encouraged to support these practices at home.

- **Funding:** The initiative is funded by the municipality of the 8th arrondissement and supported by the Caisse des Écoles' budget and various grants aimed at promoting sustainable food practices.

Impact and Outcomes

- **Enhanced Nutrition:** The project has significantly improved the nutritional quality of meals provided to students, ensuring they receive balanced and healthy food.
- **Waste Reduction:** There has been a noticeable reduction in food waste in the school cafeterias due to the implemented measures and educational efforts.
- **Increased Awareness:** Students have become more aware of the importance of nutrition and sustainability, which is reflected in their food choices both at school and at home.
- **Community Support:** The involvement of parents and the community has strengthened the initiative, creating a supportive environment for sustainable practices.

Challenges and Lessons Learned

- **Continuous Engagement:** Keeping students and parents continuously engaged requires ongoing efforts and innovative approaches to education and communication.
- **Resource Management:** Efficiently managing food resources to minimize waste while ensuring all children receive enough food has been a balancing act that requires careful planning.

Future Directions

- **Expansion of Educational Programs:** There are plans to expand the educational workshops to include more interactive and practical activities related to food sustainability.
- **Enhanced Digital Tools:** Implementing more advanced digital tools to monitor and manage food consumption and waste in real-time.

Conclusion

- The "Caisse Alimentaire du 8ème Arrondissement" demonstrates how a local initiative can effectively address nutritional needs and food waste in school settings. By integrating educational programs and sustainable practices, the project not only provides immediate benefits but also promotes long-term health and environmental stewardship among the younger generation.
- For more information, you can visit the Caisse des [Écoles website](#).



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