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How can evidence of lived experience make food policy more effective and equitable in addressing major food system challenges?

Report of the City Food Symposium 2018

Centre for Food Policy

Educating, researching, influencing for integrated and inclusive food policy

IFSTAL
Interdisciplinary Food Systems Teaching And Learning

Food Research Collaboration

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1 The 2018 City Food Symposium

On April 25 2018, the Centre for Food Policy hosted the seventh annual City Food Symposium. Entitled ***Connecting People with Food Policy,*** the aim was to explore how gathering and translating evidence of lived experience of food-related problems can help make food policy more effective and equitable in addressing major food system challenges. The Symposium focused on this theme for the following three reasons:

- *There is a need to make food policy more effective and equitable to address 21st Century challenges.* Over past decades, the food system has proved remarkably successful in providing an extraordinary array of food to populations who can access it. Yet this success has had many downsides: there are gross inequities in access to food, and the food that is available increasingly encourages diets associated with ill-health; food production is culpable in climate change, water shortages, degradation of biodiversity and land; and workers in the food system experience hazards, exploitation and low pay. While the role of food policy in addressing these problems has gained traction over past years at a local, national and international level, the persistence of food-related problems and increasing pressures on the food system indicates that better policy is needed to effectively address these challenges.
- *Connecting with people is a pathway to making food policy more effective and equitable.* In this context, the 2016 City Food Symposium hosted a conversation about what was needed for 21st Century Food Policy, and there was resounding support from participants that "a greater range of people should be involved in food policy, and their experiences heard in their own words, in particular those who are often marginalised."
- *The Centre for Food Policy has made it a strategic priority to provide evidence in this area and support the growing community active in taking this approach.* Boosted by this feedback and building on its previous work, the Centre for Food Policy made it a strategic priority to provide the evidence needed to support the development, design and delivery of more inclusive policy in which peoples' voices are heard.[1] [2] However, we recognised that there are many remaining questions about how to gather evidence of lived experiences,

[1] Centre for Food Policy. Centre for Food Policy Outline Brief. London: Centre for Food Policy; 2017 [Accessed 2018 27 Sept]. 2 p. Available from: https://www.city.ac.uk/__data/assets/pdf_file/0008/367397/The-Centre-for-Food-Policy-brief-final-May-2017.pdf

[2] Centre for Food Policy. Centre for Food Policy Strategy 2017-21, London: Centre for Food Policy; 2018 [Accessed 2018 27 Sept]. 3 p. Available from: https://www.city.ac.uk/__data/assets/pdf_file/0014/423140/CFP-Strategy-2017-21-final.pdf

how to translate the gathered evidence into policy, and how engagement can be most effective in developing and designing solutions.

To take forward our mission of advancing this more inclusive approach to food policy, the 2018 City Food Symposium brought together 270 participants with experience of different sectors - research, advocacy and policy; different issues relating to the food system - food poverty, farmer livelihoods, obesity and diabetes, food price volatility and social isolation; and different geographies - the UK, Europe, Australia, North America, Latin America, Asia and Africa. We heard from speakers with experience of gathering and translating evidence of lived experiences and we discussed the opportunities and challenges of integrating lived experience as a source of evidence for food policy in workshops. The Symposium was structured as follows:

- An opening presentation by Professor Corinna Hawkes to set the scene and frame the question at hand[3].
- Twelve short talks from people with experiences of gathering evidence of lived experience. The first set were concerned with 'how we can listen;' the second set with actually involving people in generating solutions to the problems they face.
- Seven workshops to test out ideas for moving forward.
- A summary of the day by Dr Bill Vorley (International Institute for Environment and Development) and Dr Claire Marris (Centre for Food Policy).

This report shares the lessons learned about why and how gathering and translating evidence of lived experience could make a difference to developing effective policy – and the challenges of doing so. It ends with a set of principles that emerged about engaging with lived experience in research, advocacy and policy which we invite others to reflect on and consider. Each talk and workshop is briefly described in the Annex.

2 What we learned: why would evidence of lived experience make food policy more effective and equitable in addressing major food system challenges?

During the Symposium, the reasons why evidence of lived experience could make food policy more effective and equitable emerged across the spectrum of research, advocacy and policy. The overall message was clear: we won't get where we need to be if we fail to engage with people's realities. Why? Five main reasons emerged, alongside five core challenges (Box 1).

[3] Hawkes C. City Food Symposium 2018. Connecting People with Food Policy introductory presentation; 2018 [accessed 2018 18 Oct] Available from: https://www.city.ac.uk/arts-social-sciences/sociology/centre-for-food-policy#unit=events under 'Archived City Food Symposia'.

Box 1. Benefits and challenges of gathering and translating evidence of lived experience

Benefits

1. Evidence of lived experience provides a valuable source of knowledge not held by 'experts'
2. Gathering evidence from people with lived experience generates ideas for effective solutions
3. Involving people with lived experience can be empowering for those involved
4. Listening and involving enables people to advocate for themselves and for others
5. Engaging people with lived experience is part and parcel of 'systems leadership'

Challenges

1. The nature of the evidence of lived experience makes translating evidence to policy a complex task
2. Evidence of lived experience may be disempowering if not translated into meaningful change
3. Decision-makers and external 'experts' may not view lived experience as a legitimate form of knowledge – and may be unwilling to let it challenge the powers they hold
4. Evidence of lived experience may be used to distract from policy solutions designed to address underlying, systemic causes
5. Gathering and translating evidence of lived experience needs time, patience, investment and trust

2.1 Evidence of lived experience provides a source of knowledge not held by 'experts'

The first and strongest message to emerge was that gathering evidence of lived experience provides a source of knowledge essential to inform effective responses – knowledge that is not knowable by external 'experts'. This point was made succinctly by Professor Wendy Wills of the University of Hertfordshire in her presentation about young people: "How can we possibly know what it's like to have the life of a 13-year old?" she said. "We should never assume to know how others experience the world." Yet, as Professor Wills pointed out, most food policy is done 'to' people rather than with them. In short, it fails to capture what the initiative *Food Power*, which led an afternoon workshop, terms the 'expertise of experience.' As one participant put it "without witnesses to food poverty, we simply do not know what is going on".

A powerful video made for the Symposium by the *Witnesses to Hunger* programme in the United States brought this point home: Tianna Gaines-Turner, and Sherita Mouzon, two African American women with experience of hunger, emphasised that, however well-meaning, white academics without experience of food security simply could not talk about it in the same way.

Giving voice to people is also why the Government of Canada reached out to communities through community-led engagement in the ongoing process of developing their national food policy. We learned about this process in a video made specially for the Symposium by Raphael Sauve, Agriculture and Agrifoods Canada, Dr Hasan Hutchinson, Director General of Nutritional Policy and Programs, Health Canada, and Diana Bronson, Executive Director, Food Secure Canada. The NGO Food Secure Canada was strongly involved in ensuring the grassroots voices were heard, for example designing a toolkit and methodology to support community organisations to engage their members in the debate, organising community events in a range of places from universities to remote communities struggling to access food, and running webinars. The Canadian Government also worked closely with national indigenous organisations to identify culturally appropriate ways to engage, with three of these organisations choosing to conduct self-led engagement on the policy.[4] [5]

The morning talks featured many other methods used to gather evidence of experience, such as PhotoVoice, focus groups, interviews and Group Model Building. What united these various methods is that they were *qualitative* in nature and all used to gain an understanding of underlying reasons,

[4] Government of Canada. Consulting with Canadians - A Food Policy for Canada [updated 2018 Sept 5; accessed 2018 27 Sept];. Available from: https://www.canada.ca/en/campaign/food-policy/consulting-with-canadians.html

[5] Government of Canada, What we heard - consultations on a food policy for Canada; 2018 [accessed 2018 27 Sept] 41 p. Cat No A22-609/2018E-PDF. Available from: https://www.canada.ca/content/dam/aafc-aac/documents/20180904-en.pdf

opinions, and motivations behind the phenomenon being investigated. This type of evidence provides different and complementary insights relative to the *quantitative* analysis typically gathered and analysed by external experts studying food systems problems. Alexandra Wanjiku Kelbert told us about her experience as a researcher on the Institute of Development Studies project *Life in a Time of Food Price Volatility,* a study of the effects of the food price crisis in 2007-8, with a focus on Bangladesh, Bolivia, Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, Guatemala, Indonesia, Kenya, Pakistan, Vietnam, and Zambia. Through 'listening posts' set up to hear from people who had experienced the crisis, they learned that people had responded to food price rises by taking on work on whatever terms the market offered – leading to more unsafe, risky, and precarious work – and developed coping strategies, such as changing diets to more 'junk food'. These aspects of behaviour had not been captured by earlier economic analyses, which drew on quantitative data and estimated that the net median effects were often positive for the rural poor.[6]

Quantitative data is evidently a necessary source of knowledge in understanding the nature of food systems problems. As pointed out in the opening presentation, people's circumstances can be measured quantitatively in many ways – such as how much a farmer is paid for their crop, how many fast food stores there are and where they are located, and how much income someone has. Quantitative associations can indicate how people respond to these circumstances e.g. farmers produce crops for which they receive a higher price, people in certain areas eat more fast food. But, as put by Alexandra Wanjiku Kelbert "trends and macro effects often don't tell us much about what specific phenomena look like, feel like, or how and why people make the choices they do." What is missing from external expertise based on numbers alone is the in-depth understanding of why people respond to their circumstances in particular ways – responses that reflect practical aspects of life as well as feelings of powerlessness, anger, shame, stigma, vulnerability, exclusion, desire and hopefulness.

An example of how quantitative and qualitative data can be used in complement came from the afternoon workshop on visual methods run by Dr Manuel Franco and Julia Diez from the University of Alcalá, Madrid. Their use of PhotoVoice - where residents who volunteered were given a camera, some photography knowledge, and brief instructions on where to focus their sights, took photos and then discussed them as a group – provided complementary and contrasting insights to the quantitative data already

[6] E.g. Ravallion, M., & Chen, S. (2012). An Update to the World Bank's Estimates of Consumption Poverty in the Developing World. Mimeo. Washington DC: World Bank.; Ferreira, F.H.G, Chen, S., Dikhanov, Y., Hamadeh, N., Jolliffe, D., Narayan, A., Prydz, E.B., Revenga, A.L., Sangraula, P., Serajuddin, U. & Yoshida, N. (2015). A Global Count of the Extreme Poor in 2012: Data Issues, Methodology and Initial Results. *World Bank Policy Research Working Paper*, no. 7432; Headey, D. (2013). The Impact of the Global Food Crisis on Self-Assessed Food Security. *The World Bank Economic Review,* 27 (1), 1–27.

collected, such as on the social aspects of shopping and gathering around food.

Cities Changing Diabetes, a programme that works in a number of cities across the world also uses both quantitative and qualitative data. As explained by Dr Anna Maria Volkmann, the Programme starts by collecting quantitative data on the number of people living with diabetes; then conducts in-depth, semi-structured interviews to find out what actually matters to those living with diabetes (termed a 'Diabetes Vulnerability Assessment'); and then conducts a more in-depth assessment of the priorities, needs, and shared points of views around diabetes, health, and wellbeing among participants (termed a 'Diabetes Q-Assessment'). It brings these aspects together to design interventions tailored to different sub-groups with shared ideas, points of view, abilities and needs.

Shift Design – who hosted an afternoon workshop – also take an in-depth ethnographic approach in their UK project 'Everyday Takeaway'. As Chris Holmes of Shift explained, it involves spending time with mothers around the supermarket as they shop, accompanying them to their local takeaway, chatting in their kitchens at home as well as tagging people with GPS trackers to map their travel routes. This, he said, provided insights extending beyond purely quantitative research showing that takeaways are more prevalent in economically deprived areas. For example, parents said the attraction of these outlets are not just because they are cheap and convenient, but because they provide an affordable way of making their kids happy in the context of economic pressures. Moreover, young people consider them "safe spaces" untouched by gentrification where they could meet their friends (echoing Professor Wills learning from her research that children find external food outlets more appealing to spend time in than the school canteen).

These insights challenge perceptions of takeaways from being only negative transmitters of bad health to spaces that have positive meanings in peoples' lives - in turn with implications for proposals to address the problem. Banning them, in short, would mean removing something that provides the opportunity to help people who experience deprivation feel happier and more connected. This has led Shift to propose different solutions: making takeaway food healthier and investing in entrepreneurial competitors selling healthier food.

According to Michelle Patel of the Food Standards Agency, this all shows that "policy needs to be made not based on how we *wish* the world to be, but rather based on how it *is* - and on what people are *actually experiencing*." By first facing and understanding reality as it actually is, we can then imagine how things could be done differently. This was also articulated by Kelbert: "People's own analysis of their own realities should be respected and inform change" she said. "In doing this work we are reminded that it is important to be vigilant of short term policy fixes, and make sure that policies are grounded in an understanding of how people actually live, and what leads them to make the choices they make."

Collectively, as reported by one participant, this has important implications for how we work. “We must remain open to the unexpected and allow for exploratory study,” she said. As people, it is natural that we make assumptions about the world and other people’s lives. This reflects our own experiences of the world and the values we were raised with. While this is normal, this means we judge others based on how we think the world should be and how other people should behave and we do not seriously engage with those who challenge our view of the world. This in turn limits our ability to think differently about how to solve problems in different ways. In short, gathering evidence of lived experience provides knowledge that can challenge our own received wisdom and stimulate new ideas about what the problems really are and how to solve them.

2.2 Gathering evidence from people with lived experience generates ideas for effective solutions

Building on this, the next message was that designing solutions that work needs to go beyond listening to people to actually involving them in generating ideas about solutions. As put by one participant “the best ideas of solutions come from people who live the problem” – the reason being that they are based on a better understanding of what is *causing* the problem.

Francesca Sanders, Head of Service Design for the Soil Association’s Food for Life programme, gave a clear example from their Better Care programme for older people in Edinburgh, Scotland. The programme knew that people who received care at home did not eat well – surviving off biscuits and ready meals–and started with the idea that providing training to paid carers would be the solution. However, after spending two weeks speaking to older people at lunch clubs, coffee shops and day centres, their initial ideas about the solution quickly fell apart. They learned that paid carers had such limited time that they often were not able to cook a meal, that older people had a real desire to cook, and that they would be more motivated to eat if the meal was shared. So the Food for Life programme developed another idea – to provide slow cookers, have someone drop off ingredients in the morning, and have an informal carer, family member or volunteer come round to share an evening meal. They then tested this with what they termed ‘peer informants’ with direct experience of health and care services. This challenged their ideas once again, finding that people would rather eat a main meal at lunch time than dinner; there was nervousness about letting someone into their home; and more of a social element was needed. Their solution was to develop a community cafe concept where a group would prepare a meal and extras would be taken home to eat and share. Francesca’s main learning: don’t jump in with the answer but get to the cause of the problem and identify challenges early on by getting feedback on early ideas.

Road-testing interventions step-by-step with people involved - so-called 'co-creation' - is also a process used by Shift. Participants in the afternoon workshop with Chris Holmes of Shift were taken through this process. Starting with the question 'how might we' address the take-aways issue, participants were asked to identify 'opportunity spaces' rather than launching straight away into solutions. They came up with a longlist of solutions followed by a shortlist, which in real life would be tested on the target audience. When conducting this process in practice, Shift then select the strongest concept that would deliver the greatest social impact and also attract investment. This investment piece was important because it was designed to identify a viable financial model.

Janette Lowe, Executive Officer at Southern Grampians Glenelg Primary Care Partnership in Victoria, Australia, described via video link another approach to co-creation involving all relevant stakeholders in a community to address the problem of obesity. Termed 'Group Model Building,' it involved getting all stakeholders together in a room – from policy makers to members of the community to collectively generate a map of drivers of childhood obesity in their community. According to Janette this process produced an "aha moment" "where participants realized that the whole community needed to be involved in providing solutions in order to affect the many drivers on the map." Notably, she said "finger pointing and blame left the conversation and helped the individuals think about where they could make a difference." The next stage was to develop action ideas to address parts of the system. "There was nothing about writing a strategy and plan as the focus was on the community taking action and we did not want to create delays in this." Rather, after generating 51 action ideas, the community went off and took action.

To date, 150 actions have been implemented by community members. Canteen managers and hospitals, for example, removed sugary drinks. There has also been a high level of buy-in – what started with 160 active participants now has 1,200 participants. Janette believes the approach has had results: consumption of sugary drinks has gone down, average body mass index has gone down, vegetable and fruit intake has gone up and active travel has gone up.

We also heard from Elise Wach of Coventry University about a project in the UK, Senegal and Nicaragua. The project applied 'Participatory Action Research' methods in which small-scale farmers were placed at the centre of the inquiry about how to transition towards sustainable food systems. The methodology combined complex systems analysis with a deliberative process. Questions were developed by farmers, researched by farmer-led organisations, and findings were deliberated with other experts such as traditional storytellers, nutritionists, planning consultants, environmental lawyers and ethical bankers. Through this process, farmers built alliances and developed actionable strategies to change their food systems. For example, farmers in the UK have been engaged in a parliamentary process to revise planning policy and its interpretation to

improve access to land and infrastructure for agroecological farmers; farmers in Senegal have initiated cookery schools with local restaurants to incorporate more traditional foods into diets; and farmers in Nicaragua are collaborating with environmental organisations and municipal governments to better enforce environmental legislation. According to Elise, the research process enabled the identification of these leverage points for change because farmers felt empowered and sufficiently well-positioned to form such linkages with other stakeholders. This project thus demonstrated that involving 'everyday experts' such as farmers can generate new knowledge and also influence policies and practices to support transformation in food systems.

2.3 Involving people with lived experience can be empowering for those involved

The next message to emerge was that involving people with lived experience is not just about people's knowledge but about empowerment. Indeed, one of the afternoon workshops was dedicated to this topic. The workshop, led by Ben Pearson, focused on the *Food Power* initiative which 'aims to strengthen local communities' ability to reduce food poverty through solutions developed by them with the support of their peers from other communities across the UK. The idea is that by involving what they term 'experts by experience' individuals become community researchers themselves, and develop and advocate for solutions.

Ben started the workshop by asking: what do we mean by "empowerment"? A long list of diverse answers was produced which can be summarised as:

- Choice: the ability to choose
- Voice: having a voice – speaking for yourself – not just being listened to, but heard, valued and respected
- Change: the ability to change something, building capacity to act, and working together as communities to do so
- Challenge: the ability to challenge status quo and exercise one's rights
- Confidence: gaining confidence, believing in yourself, having a sense of control and independence, knowing that your own experience is valued

The next question was then: how do 'others' play a role in empowering people? Again, a long list of suggestions emerged from the workshop: providing a safe environment, connecting people, not judging people, letting people know they are not alone, showing compassion. Answers to this question also emerged from the different talks and workshops throughout the day. For example:

- *…by providing an opportunity for people to speak about their experiences*. The Witness to Hunger programme provided opportunities for people who experience hunger to be heard. Tianna said that after speaking at the government's budget committee,

having "informed them as much she could" she "felt empowered," and by being there she was able to hold them accountable.

- *…by providing a space for community conversation*. In Australia, the approach of bringing together all relevant stakeholders in one room was said to "empower the community to make changes that affect them." The community PhotoVoice workshops in Spain were also said to empower people to take a role in the crafting of policy solutions.
- *…by providing the opportunity for people to help and enable others.* Francesca of Better Care said one of the peer informants had said "the role had far exceeded her expectations; she feels very positive about her contribution to a national programme and the ability to improve services for others."
- *…. by providing an opportunity for sharing.* From the Photovoice workshop we also learned that the process of sharing is empowering – in this case sharing stories around photographs taken of shared spaces. The residents took pictures that showed that their realities were more similar than they knew, and the sessions allowed them to come together to learn from each other. The presentation to the public of the photographs they had shot meant they were recognised and given credit for sharing their knowledge.

All of these processes involved having *conversations*. Nevertheless, a key challenge to this task also emerged: how to *start* a conversation? This challenge emerged in the context of the experience of food poverty. Here, issues of shame and stigma make it a difficult issue for people to talk about. The proposed answer: ask people to talk about what food means to them. This was the next part of the *Food Power* workshop – people got into small groups to discuss the question: what does food mean to us and what is our relationship to food? This, according to one participant, was very telling:

> "Most telling was that all our stories expressed some emotion, some value, moral, or cultural relevance about each particular food, whether it be chocolate, a tin of mushy peas or an apple. The apple – displaying a wholesome nature, evoked a story of wisdom, generational values and hidden secrets. The Pot Noodle –an icon of cheap (not so nourishing) speedy meals inspiring a tale of plenty, reminiscent of the folktale of the ever-flowing porridge pot, feeding the masses. The emotion of a birthday cake with its key ingredients of parental worry, cost, shame, pride and love. These stories conjured up so many different perspectives yet all of them relatable. Getting people to talk about food in this way is so easy that it is not surprising that this is clearly a valuable exercise which expressed so much more than the food itself."

The workshop also included two 'experts by experience' – both young people – and their words illustrated the power of this method - and the steps that follow it. Charlotte, a young 'expert of experience' spoke clearly of how talking about her experience of and relationship with food has enabled her to recognise and articulate how food poverty affects her and the people around her. More importantly, though, it was her training in how to run workshops such as these for young adults like herself that has had the biggest impact on empowering her.

2.4 Listening and involving enables people to advocate for themselves and for others

This next message to emerge was that when people feel empowered, they have a greater ability to advocate for themselves and others. This is the goal of the NCD Alliance programme, *Our Views, Our Voices*, which Cristina Parsons Perez, Capacity Development Director at the NCD Alliance presented in the morning session. The programme was developed because despite recent major advances in global policies on non-communicable diseases (NCDs), the people most directly affected by these diseases have been notably absent from policy discussions. In that context, *Our Views, Our Voices* aims to increase the meaningful involvement of people living with NCDs in the NCD response. The programme started in 2016 by developing *The Advocacy Agenda of People Living with NCDs*. Cristina told us how it involved consulting nearly 2,000 people living with NCDs from 76 countries including through 'Community Conversations'[7] as a method to consult with individuals. In these guided moderated dialogues individuals discussed the challenges they face and made recommendations for decision makers. Quotes from the community conversations have since been compiled in a public searchable dashboard.[8]

By bringing first hand lived experience of an issue, *The Advocacy Agenda* aims to strengthen advocacy messages and is being used as the basis of building both a public narrative and capacity for spokespeople to call for change. Launched in December 2017, the finalised *Advocacy Agenda* states "We have come together to claim our voice and to ensure that we are listened to. Together, we can ensure that nobody is ignored. We seek to amplify the voices of millions, leaving nobody behind – especially those who are too sick, too old, too young, too poor, or too vulnerable to take a stand."[9]

[7] NCD Alliance. Community Conversations [accessed: 2018 Oct 3] Available from: https://ncdalliance.org/what-we-do/capacity-development/our-views-our-voices/community-conversations

[8] Tableau Public. Out Views, Our Voices – community conversations. [updated 2018 Mar 17, accessed: 2018 Oct 3] Available from: https://public.tableau.com/profile/william.guicheney#!/vizhome/OurViewsOurVoicesCommunityConversationExplorerV_1/DemographicAlternative

[9] NCD Alliance. Advocacy Agenda of People Living With NCDs. Geneva: NCD Alliance; 2017 Nov [accessed 2018 Sept 27]. 20 p. Available from: https://ncdalliance.org/sites/default/files/resource_files/AdovacyAgenda_FINAL_WEB.pdf

In quite a different way, the International Institute for Environment and Development's (IIED) Sustainable Diets programme explicitly aims to enable participants to "create their own advocacy agenda armed with their own data" as we learned from Dr Alejandro Guarin and Natalie Lartey, Senior Researcher and Communications and Advocacy Officer with the programme. Their project, conducted in collaboration with the Dutch NGO Hivos, and the Kabarole Research and Resource Center (KRC) in Uganda, explicitly built data collection into the process of empowering people to become their own advocates. The aim is that people who collect the data can advocate for food systems change with their own data.

The project began when the KRC, which has been advocating for diverse diets in Western Uganda for many years, invited IIED to help them develop a project with citizen-generated evidence: involving rural and urban communities in and around Fort Portal to collect their own data on food consumption and working with them to interpret it. KRC trained community facilitators who in turn trained women in over 200 households to collect the data through 'Food Diaries.' During seven days, women in every household collected detailed information on the food they ate, as well as where it came from and (if applicable) how much it cost. The data was systematized and coded by KRC, and then brought back to a sub-sample of the households for an in-depth conversation aimed at understanding the nuances of dietary choices.

Results showed that household diets are more diverse than usually assumed, but that real obstacles to dietary diversity remain. The most important one? Cash scarcity. Farmers often have to sell the diverse crops they produce in order to get cash for schools and healthcare. Through this process, though, they realised that the process of data collection was not just about the results, but about the use and sharing of that data by the people who generated it. As a result, "citizens got to set advocacy agendas, have access to decision makers and political change processes and spaces."

2.5 Engaging people with lived experience is part and parcel of 'systems leadership'

The final key message to emerge was that engaging with lived experience is part and parcel of 'systems leadership,' an approach that recognises that leadership is not vested in people solely through their authority or position;. Rather, it involves sharing leadership with others, coming together on the basis of a shared ambition and working together towards solutions.[10]-

This was a theme to emerge from the afternoon workshop on 'systems leadership'

[10] Vize R. The Revolution will be improvised. London, Leadership Centre; 2016. [accessed 2018 Sept 27] 14 p. Available from: https://www.leadershipcentre.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/12/Revolution-will-be-improvised-publication-v3.pdf

led by John Jarvis and Di Neale of *The Leadership Centre*. The Leadership Centre explicitly champions 'systems leadership' in its work developing leadership capacity in the public sector and embeds co-design, movement building, living systems and participative approaches into its work. Their presentation at the beginning of the workshop summarised the importance of lived experience in 'systems leadership' with a quote from C. West Churchman, who published the book *The Systems Approach* in 1968:

> "The systems approach begins when first you see the world through the eyes of another."

Participants were asked to come to the workshop with a "wicked problem" in the food system. Participants got into groups and shared these problems around the tables, exploring the nature of the issues and their shared characteristics. They were then tasked with generating three maps, each designed to isolate and bring out a different systemic component of the problem: a map of the actors involved in the system, a pictorial representation of the issue, and, most pertinent to the above quote, an 'empathy map.' This is an approach of trying to 'step into others shoes.' The idea is to understand more deeply how the people we are hoping to help experience the situation they are in. For example, by asking the question: "what does s/he really think and feel?" Having constructed such a map during the workshop, one participant commented that:

> "I was struck by how useful it was to have to think through how other people in the system, especially those actors that are perceived to be the reason why problems get 'stuck' (e.g. bureaucrats) may view a problem and why they might react in the way that they do to a situation. It was a good chance to get to know a range of different angles from which to interrogate a problem."

Even though the problems discussed were highly diverse, it also became apparent that "many of the challenges that we were all trying to tackle, were often quite similar and linked – irrespective of geography or sector" with many of them going back to poverty and inequality.

John Jarvis pointed out that the tools used at the workshop aim to surface useful insights, but in themselves they are not sufficient to generate change – for that to happen leadership throughout the system needs to be *done* differently.

Matthew Thomson, CEO of the Cornwall Food Foundation, spoke about his experience of trying to do so - applying the 'systems leadership' approach in practice – in Cornwall. The goal was to identify how food could help improve public health outcomes, to get regional leadership buy-in to positive food system change, and to galvanise a networked

'community of practice.' The process started by gathering what Matthew termed *stories* of lived experience of food poverty and insecurity through workshops, video, performance and ethnographic methods such as participatory interviews.

Why this focus on people's *stories* as a means of galvanising leadership across the system? Matthew gave us four reasons. First of all, to embed people affected by the problem in the change process and to build a movement. Second, to reveal actionable insights and expose systemic issues and barriers where change is needed. Third, to bring these issues to life, a process that has great potential to engage and influence people elsewhere in the system able effect change. Fourth, the process of gathering and refining stories builds empathy, a key network leadership skill (as reflected by the process of developing an empathy map). The effect of the process was, Matthew said "hundreds of little changes in tens of organisations that demonstrated a heightening self-awareness of a local food system within linked networks of practitioners." It also enabled some shared understanding to emerge around food justice.

3 What are the challenges?

Five main challenges of gathering and translating evidence of lived experience emerged throughout the day. The first one was by far the most dominant, and also the basis of the subsequent challenges.

3.1 Challenge 1: The nature of the evidence of lived experience makes translating evidence to policy a complex task

One of the benefits we heard about through the day is that listening to evidence of lived experience "captures the diversity of people and their background and experiences." Yet it also emerged that interpreting this diversity in ways that can be integrated into policy and practice is a complex task. In the visual methods workshop, for example, the question emerged: what photos to choose to make a point when there is such a diversity of photographs? And who should choose them? The researcher? Or the participant photographer? If the researcher, what if it reflects their own biases? If the photographer, what if it only represents their world, and not that of their neighbours?

Thus emerges the major challenge of how to *translate* evidence of lived experience. A single photo, a single story is just that: even neighbours may have very different experiences of the same space depending on household circumstances. Moreover, the diversity is not just diversity of circumstance but diversity of how people respond to their circumstances. There are different ways of trying to make sense of the world. For example, the way we experience our circumstances may be influenced by learned prejudices that are offensive to others. Or it may reflect a social or psychological need for something which 'external' expertise defines as unhealthy, anti-social or against our own

interests. How do we deal with this? As put by Chris Holmes of Shift: “It does not all come out neatly packaged.”

There are different ways of dealing with this. The way Shift address this issue is through a “high amount of post-processing” to bring together the diversity and make sense of it, and breaking the complexity of the problem into more manageable chunks through identifying what they term ‘opportunity spaces.’[11] However, this raises a question - *who* does the processing (i.e. interpreting): the researchers/policymakers/advocate or the participants themselves? There is, after all, a difference between people speaking for themselves directly and others interpreting what people say and developing their own conclusions. As raised by one participant: “Should we simply let people speak and ensure the raw insight is disseminated or let the data be interpreted, analysed and framed in a particular way?” She continued:

> “there is a risk in unequal power in how data is interpreted in relation to who is interpreting it and from what worldview. We all have our biases which influence the way we frame and analyse issues. There is huge responsibility in analysing or summarising what has been shared in engagement, and people in this position need to be aware of their own biases and worldviews. Who makes the decision of what is legitimate or more important?”

Part of the answer, she suggested, was simply to recognise the difference. But whatever way, some type of interpretation cannot be avoided if messages are to be translated into policy and action. As put by Pete Ritchie of Nourish Scotland who co-led the afternoon workshop on *Guidelines for respectful collaboration between people with lived experience of food poverty and advocates and researchers* with Caroline Mockford: “moving from individual 'stories' and experiences to a collective account of the social situation of people living in food poverty *requires* 'framing.' He gave the examples of the #metoo hashtag and the social model of disability as ‘frames’ created by people with lived experience which had enabled others to make sense of a collective experience in an empowering way.

From an advocacy perspective, he said, a collective voice is needed if a movement is to be built for change. Currently there is no movement ‘of’ people experiencing food poverty, only a movement ‘for’.

But this leads to a related challenge that precedes the question of who interprets - who speaks? And who are they representing? Can the diversity of lived experience be represented since not everyone has a voice? This leads to fundamental questions about the nature of engaging with people with lived experience. Alejandro Guarin and Natalie

[11] SHIFT define an opportunity space as a “broad set of problems and unmet user needs that provide a way into tackling a large issue commonly used as a ‘springboard’ in the design process to help develop new ideas and concepts.”

SHIFT Design. *Families and Food: How the environment influences what families eat*. London, 2018.

Lartey of IIED said, for example, that experience of their project meant they were now struggling with what 'citizen-generated evidence' really means. "Whose agency are we talking about?" they asked themselves. "Is it that of our partners? Or of the people they purport to represent?"

The workshop led by Caroline Mockford and Pete Ritchie also explored this question. Caroline, who has herself lived experience of food poverty, spoke about how she is often called upon to "represent food poverty" in Scotland (she is, for example, part of the Poverty Truth Commission). She was often called on to speak, she said, simply because she is willing to do it. In contrast, she said, many others feel ashamed to talk about their own experiences. People like her become, as others said in the workshop, a "rare commodity." Caroline also noted that, "people will not always know how to articulate their own crisis narrative," or they will express resilience "since they want to hold onto their dignity." Further, "people who are willing to share their experiences may only be seen as 'real' only if they appear to be on their knees, skinny, malnourished … people who do speak who are 'fat' are not seen as 'real.'"

This comes back to the question of: who is doing the *listening*? Assumptions listeners make about the nature of other people's lives influence who they are willing to listen to, and what they hear. They may not listen to the diversity of experience, and instead focus on what they want to hear. This is the also problem of the 'single story' that emerged from the workshop: listeners may reduce people to a "one dimensional" story about their lives, forgetting that, like everyone else, there are many different aspects to their lives.

3.2 Challenge 2. Evidence of lived experience may be disempowering if not translated into meaningful change

The challenges of translation emerged strongly in the afternoon workshop on public engagement on food policy Brexit. Run by Lynne Davis of the RSA (Royal Society of Arts) Food Farming and Countryside Commission in collaboration with the Centre for Food Policy's Food Research Collaboration, it started by asking participants: "Is the aim of public engagement to mobilise people to exercise their own judgement? Or persuade them to share yours?"

Critically, another question posed in this workshop was: how can we ensure that listening to evidence of lived experience actually makes a *meaningful* difference to policy and practice? Indeed, the title of the workshop was *Engaging in Brexit: How can we meaningfully involve the British public in developing a fairer vision for food and farming in post-Brexit UK*. One point that emerged was that while feeling listened to can be empowering, it becomes *disempowering* if the listening makes no meaningful difference. The problem, as noted by Cristina Parsons Perez of the NCD Alliance, is that listening is rendered meaningless if it simply involves somebody listening, claiming to have listened – but then

then ignoring what was said. Or, even worse, if the 'listener' uses what was heard to confirm existing beliefs but discards them as 'not representative' if they do not fit their pre-existing beliefs. Such a process becomes a tick box exercise benefitting the kudos of the listener (for having bothered to engage) – but an entirely meaningless (and disempowering) process. This is why the NCD Alliance call their programme *Meaningful* Engagement with people with NCDs. These concerns reflect earlier work recognising that involving people can end up being tokenism – and this is very, very different from meaningful engagement.[12]

What's the answer to this? Lynne Davis made the point that it is critical to be transparent with processes and explain why specific decisions are made and how they have been influenced by evidence from lived experiences. Clarifying the motives behind the process of gathering evidence of lived experience and ensuring that these are shared by all involved is therefore crucial.

3.3 Challenge 3: Decision-makers and external 'experts' may not view lived experience as a legitimate form of knowledge – and may be unwilling to let it challenge the powers they hold

The point was made early on in the day that qualitative evidence generated from lived experience is needed alongside traditional quantitative data to inform policy (see Section 2.1). However, for all the reasons explained in Challenge 1, policymakers and other stakeholders may view this evidence as 'anecdotal' rather than 'objective.' A key challenge in making the process meaningful in policy and practice is thus to ensure this evidence is given weight alongside other forms of evidence. As Bill Vorley pointed out in his final remarks "we need a behaviour and cultural change among policymakers towards a policymaking environment where community evidence from lived experience is seen as valid, legitimate and valuable for the policy process."

What emerged from the discussion is that it is crucial not to claim that lived experience is the *only* valid form of knowledge. Rather, a *diversity* of insights and types of evidence are needed from people with expertise of experience combined with expertise gained through other sources, such as people who understand the nature of the underlying system, or have experience of policymaking. It's about triangulating the different sources, seeing evidence gained from people with lived experience as one of many tools we need to use to address multi-faceted problems. "We need synthesis of insights," said Matthew Thomson "not just analysis of data."

This implies, as put by one participant, that "we need everyone working together on this… a healthy diversity of researchers, community

[12] Hart RA. Children's participation – from tokenism to citizenship. Florence: UNICEF International Child Development Centre; 1992 March [accessed 2018 Sept 27]. 41 p. Available from: https://www.unicef-irc.org/publications/pdf/childrens_participation.pdf

organisations, global institutions, citizens, policy makers, and experts can bring different aspects together to find inclusive solutions. We need to stay open and commit to a continuous process, in which needs and solutions are always changing and need to be reflected on a regular basis." This indeed was said to be key to the Group Model Building process in Australia.

But it also emerged that the reason why evidence of lived experience may not be taken seriously is because it challenges traditional forms of power. Gathering evidence of lived experience shifts the power balance from professional experts in policy, research, and advocacy towards people with lived experience: it challenges the assumption that people in senior professional positions have more legitimate knowledge. It means that those involved in gathering lived experiences must be prepared to have their prior assumptions about 'ordinary people' challenged, rather than just seeking a better way to influence their behaviours in ways that they have already determined are the correct ones.

Shifting the power balance towards partners and citizens was said to create discomfort among policy makers and programme leaders – indeed to anyone in power. As put by Janette Lowe: "Giving power to communities can make people in institutions feel uncomfortable (including myself). Empowering the community means giving control to the community, meaning the role of best evidence is questioned." As put by Alejandro Guarin and Natalie Lartey from IIED "the idea of devolving power to partners and citizens has created some discomfort within the programme, and presented challenges that required significant dialogue and exploration."

Part of engaging with lived experience thus involves shifting the power balance; it means giving up a degree of 'expert' status – appreciating that you likely to learn a lot from others. It means that there is a need to synthesise knowledge from different sources, with evidence of lived experience as one source. In so doing, the challenge of integrating knowledge from lived experience into the policy and advocacy discourse becomes not just a technical one of 'how to interpret' – but a profoundly political project.

3.4 Challenge 4: Evidence of lived experience may be used to distract from policy solutions designed to address underlying systemic causes

In the opening presentation[13], Corinna Hawkes suggested that understanding lived experience could be a starting point for systems change. "Obtaining evidence of this 'lived experience'" she said "is a starting point for exploring systemic issues that lie beneath people's perspective on their own realities." The proposal was that by identifying how people feel about their circumstances and

[13] Hawkes C. City Food Symposium 2018. Connecting People with Food Policy introductory presentation; 2018 [accessed 2018 18 Oct] Available from: https://www.city.ac.uk/arts-social-sciences/sociology/centre-for-food-policy#unit=events under 'Archived City Food Symposia'.

how they respond to them, evidence of lived experience could be used as a starting point for understanding how these circumstances and responses have been shaped by the systems that influence them. Gathering evidence of lived experience thereby emerges not as a process that leads to solely individualised or community responses– but actions at the national and global level action to address systemic issues. Alexandra Wanjiku Kelbert put it this way: "allow the local to speak, the national to influence and the global to learn."

Nevertheless, an important challenge to emerge was the risk that focusing on how individuals experience problems distracts from more systemic solutions. Listening to lived experience may lead to more effective programmes that meet people where they are – but may do little to change systemic causes, such as the political economy of food systems or poverty. For example, one participant at the Shift workshop reflected that the process of engaging with people's realities raised hard questions about how fundamental the solutions should be: should we accept the "reality that people buy takeaways and thus work to tweak the product formula or meals served? Or be more fundamental in empowering people to cook for themselves? "

The concern here was that that evidence of lived experience ends up being used as an excuse to individualise the solutions which are 'do-able' rather than a starting points to effect more fundamental change.

3.5 Challenge 5: Gathering and translating evidence of lived experience needs time, patience, investment and trust

The final core challenge to emerge was that, as a result of the challenges already discussed, gathering and translating evidence of lived experience requires time, patience, trust and investment. The fact that decision-makers and advocates often need evidence fast makes this it even more challenging to justify the use of evidence that takes time to process. The message was: gathering and translating evidence of lived experience is slow, and requires time, patience and financial investment.

This point was also made by IIED who told us:

> "we have learnt the importance of learning about citizen agency. The main tension is between the programme's need to deliver results within the timeframe of the project, and the need to involve citizens in a meaningful way—a slow and time-consuming process. If we aim to incorporate this approach as a standard for collecting evidence and making policy, more time and financial resources need to be allocated to engage effectively."

The issue of the time and patience required emerged not just because the subject matter is complex, but also because of the emotional response that people have to that unexpected complexity. This was a major finding of the UK Food Standards Agency programme

"Our Food Future" in 2016 which we heard about from their Head of Social Science, Michelle Patel. The project focused on understanding public hopes, fears and aspirations about what the future could look like; exploring people's priorities and needs; and their initial expectations about what should be done, and by whom. One interesting finding of this work and subsequent Food Standards Agency studies is that taking the time to work through the issues with people through deliberative conversation builds perceptions of trustworthiness.[14]

4 Principles for moving forward

The Symposium showed there is a wealth of opportunities to make food policy more effective and equitable by engaging with evidence of lived experiences. While there are many challenges associated with the complexity of the task, the very fact that gathering evidence of lived experience inherently embraces complexity was seen as a benefit. As reflected by one participant:

> "Effective solutions in food policy will only be found by embracing complexity and things that challenge our view of the world and engaging with it, rather than resisting it. We all need to be open, empathetic and let peoples' realities challenge the status quo. We need to provide space to understand people with different views and face the complexity that this entails. We all need a voice and need to listen and learn from each other, really listen, and then find solutions while taking into account the complexity of this task."

There remains a long way to go to incorporate evidence of lived experience into policy and practice. On the basis of what has been learned from the Symposium, the following principles emerged as a guide for moving forward. The Centre for Food Policy will endeavour to follow these principles and we invite others to consider and reflect on them in their work researching, advocating and making-decisions about food policy (Box 2):

[14] The Food Standards Agency. Our Food Future; 2016 Feb [accessed 2018 Sept 27]. 52 p. Available from: https://www.food.gov.uk/sites/default/files/media/document/our-food-future-full-report.pdf

Box 2. Principles for gathering and translating evidence of lived experience

I. We believe food systems challenges will be addressed more effectively and equitably if we engage with people's lived experiences of these challenges.

II. We consider people's perspectives on their own realities an important and legitimate source of evidence to inform food policy and practice, as part of a diversity of sources of evidence.

III. We recognise that the process of listening and giving people a voice is empowering in and of itself – but not respecting the views expressed, or using them only to serve the prior goals of the listener, can be profoundly disempowering.

IV. We know that when we listen, we may hear things that make us feel uncomfortable and challenge our views, so we will allow ourselves to be challenged and use this to imagine how things could be done differently.

V. We will embrace the complexity of what we hear and be careful how we interpret it.

VI. We recognise that really listening in a meaningful way will require us to give up some of the power we have.

VII. We are willing to invest the time and patience needed to build trust and to gather and translate evidence of lived experience into effective policy and practice.

VIII. We recognise we need to work harder to better understand what difference gathering and translating evidence of lived experience really makes to the effectiveness and equity of food policy and practice.

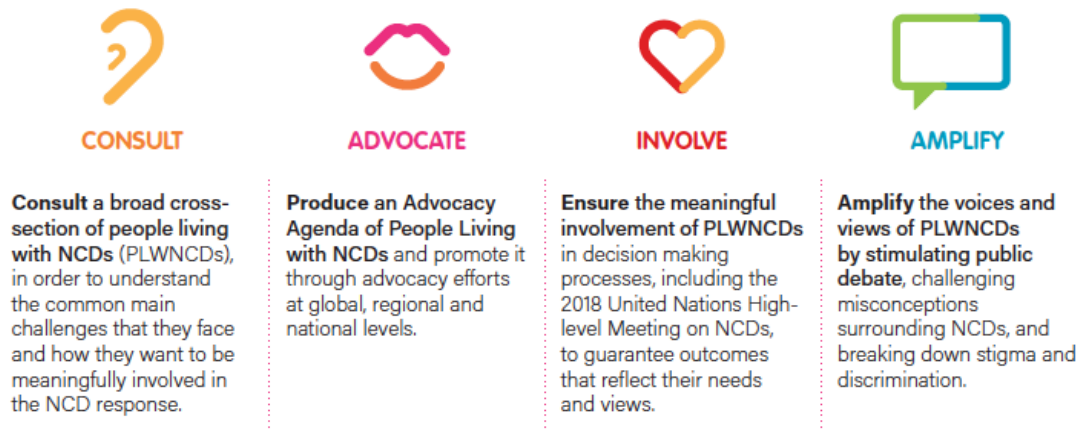
5 Annex: Summary of talks and workshops at the 2018 City Food Symposium

SHORT TALKS

Focus groups for advocacy: listening to the experience of diet-related noncommunicable diseases in Mexico.

Cristina Parsons Perez, Capacity Development Director of the NCD Alliance shared experiences of 'Our Views, Our Voices', [15]an initiative which has gathered evidence of lived experience through in-person "community conversations" across the world and an online survey to produce Advocacy Agenda of People Living with NCDs.[16]

Aim of Our Views, Our Voices, an initiative of The NCD Alliance



Source: https://ncdalliance.org/what-we-do/capacity-development/our-views-our-voices

[15]NCD Alliance. Our Views, Our Voices. [Accessed 2018 Oct 3] Available from: https://ncdalliance.org/what-we-do/capacity-development/our-views-our-voices

[16] NCD Alliance. Advocacy Agenda of People Living With NCDs. Geneva: NCD Alliance; 2017 Nov [accessed 2018 Sept 27]. 20 p. Available from: https://ncdalliance.org/sites/default/files/resource_files/AdovacyAgenda_FINAL_WEB.pdf

Engaging with consumers to inform policy: listening to the public's views on food systems in the UK.

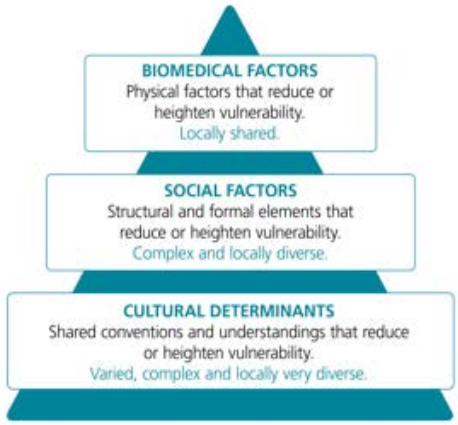


Michelle Patel, Head of Social Science at the Food Standards Agency talked about the FSA's programme of work that allows people's lived experiences to inform policy decisions to maintain a trustworthy food system with a trusted regulator. The process included iterative focus groups and public dialogues to explore citizens beliefs, barriers and drivers of their trust in food.

Assessing vulnerability and risk for intervention design in diabetes: insights from research in Houston, Mexico City, Vancouver and other global cities.

Dr Anna-Maria Volkmann, University College London and Director of Research and Training with the Cities Changing Diabetes Programme, described it's work to enable the complex experiences of people living with diabetes to be heard at the policy making level. These processes included a Diabetes Vulnerability Assessment and a Diabetes Q-Assessment.

Cities Changing Diabetes 'Diabetes Vulnerability Assessment'



Source: http://www.citieschangingdiabetes.com/content/Global/AFFILIATE/cities-changing-diabetes/english/toolbox.html

Engaging Canadians to inform a national food policy: ways of listening to thousands.

Raphael Sauve, Agriculture and Agrifoods Canada, *Dr Hasan Hutchinson*, Director General of Nutritional Policy and Programs, Health Canada and *Diana Bronson*, Executive Director, Food Secure Canada prepared a video for the Symposium in which they described their large scale process for engaging Canadians to inform A Food Policy for Canada - the first of its kind for a federal government - and the achievements of a holistic whole government approach and working with the NGO Food Secure Canada to ensure grassroots voices were heard. [17]





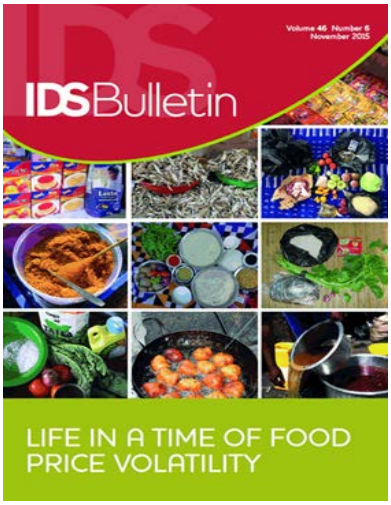
Interviewing young people for research: listening to teenagers voices on what influences food purchases in and out of schools in Scotland and England.

Professor Wendy Wills, Professor of Food and Public Health, University of Hertfordshire, shared experiences from the 'Beyond the School Gate' project, which involved 600 13-15 year olds to explore why many young people go 'beyond the school gate' at lunchtime to buy food and drin The aim of the project was to listen to young people and find out what they want from their food and drink at school and what motivates them when making choices about what they eat. [18]

[17]Government of Canada. A Food Policy for Canada [updated 2017 Jun 2; accessed 2018 Oct 3]. Available from: https://www.canada.ca/en/campaign/food-policy.html

[18]University of Hertfordshire, Centre for Research in Public Health and Community Care. Buying Food and Drink Beyond the School Gate. [Accessed 2018 Oct 11] Available from: https://www.beyondtheschoolgate.com/

‘Listening posts’ to inform activism and policy in development: the experience of high food prices in Asia, Latin America and Africa.



Alexandra Wanjiku Kelbert, Researcher, explored with us some of the results of the project *Life in a Time of Food Price Volatility*[19], a four-year collaboration between Oxfam, IDS and research partners in ten focus countries: Bangladesh, Bolivia, Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, Guatemala, Indonesia, Kenya, Pakistan, Vietnam. The project explored the everyday aspects of people's lives, as they responded to food price volatility during the global food price crisis of 2008-11.

Lessons from Witnesses to Hunger: how to disrupt the status quo through action research and photovoice in the United States.

Tianna Gaines-Turner and Sherita Mouzon, *Witnesses to Hunger and* ***Mariana Chilton,*** *Professor, Health Management and Policy Director, Center for Hunger-Free Communities, School of Public Health, Drexel University, Philadelphia, USA* spoke to us via video about their experience of the Witnesses to Hunger programme based in Philadelphia, US. Through their photographs and stories, Witnesses become dynamic advocates for their own families and others, and they work towards creating lasting changes on a local, state and national level.[20]

Witnesses to Hunger: An outline of the programme



[19] Institute of Development Studies. Life in a Time of Food Price Volatility. [Accessed 2018 Oct 3] Available from https://www.ids.ac.uk/project/life-in-a-time-of-food-price-volatility

[20] Witness to Hunger. Voices of the true experts on hunger. [Accessed 2018 Oct 3] Available from: https://witnessestohunger.blog/

Learning lessons from the experience of food poverty

Matthew Thomson, Chief Executive, of Cornwall Food Foundation described the 'systems leadership' approach to creating food wealth in Cornwall. The process involved working with 'experts by experience' to gather stories of 'lived experience' of food poverty and insecurity through workshops, video, performance and ethnographic methods.

Cornwall Food Foundation's Food for Change participants at a FoodWorks cooking course sharing food they have made together



Deliberative processes for analysing research findings: involving small farmers in transforming food systems in Nicaragua and the UK.

Elise Wach, Research Advisor, Institute of Development Studies, Brighton, UK; Doctoral Researcher, Centre for Agroecology, Water and Resilience, Coventry University talked about the project she has been involved in for the last two years working with farmers across the global north and south - to examine potential pathways for transitioning to more sustainable food systems. The project developed participatory processes to enable small scale farmers – the 'everyday experts' to analyse their own experiences of living within these food systems and to map and analyse constraints to agroecological food systems in Nicaragua, Senegal and the UK.[21]

[21] Institute for Development Studies. Transitions to Agroecological Food Systems. [Accessed 2018 Oct 3] Available from: https://www.ids.ac.uk/projects/transitions-to-agroecological-food-systems/

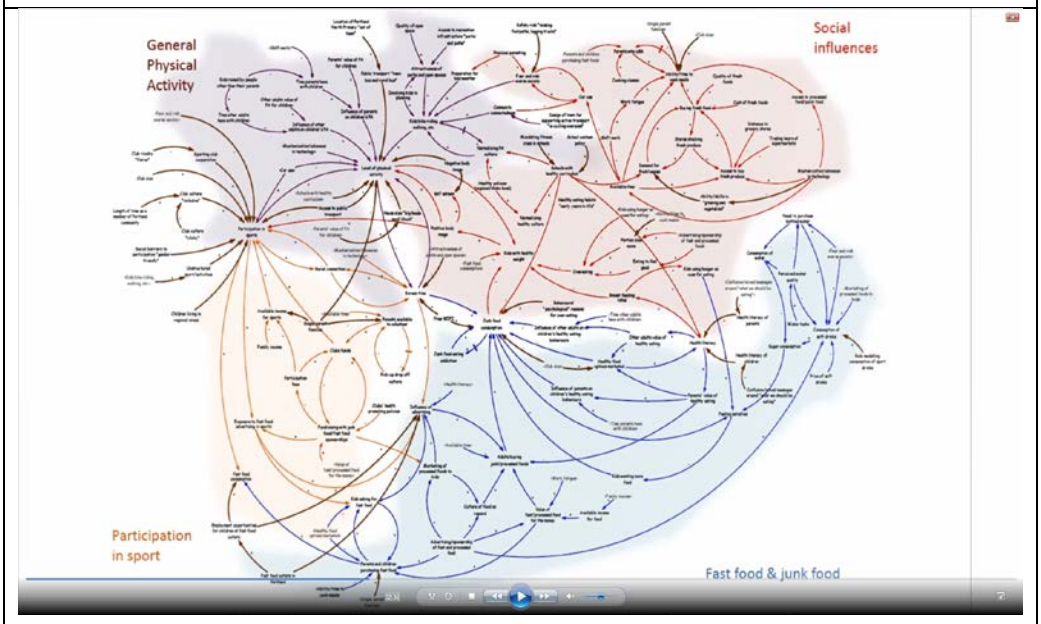
Co-designing user-centered services: involving older people in the UK's Food for Life programme.

Francesca Sanders, Head of Service Design, Food for Life shared their learnings from involving older people with lived experience in the development of the Better Care programme.[22] She showcased their work in Edinburgh as an example of the way co-design is informing the development of the programme and the positive impact this can have.[23]

Group model building for local solutions: involving communities in obesity prevention in rural Australia.

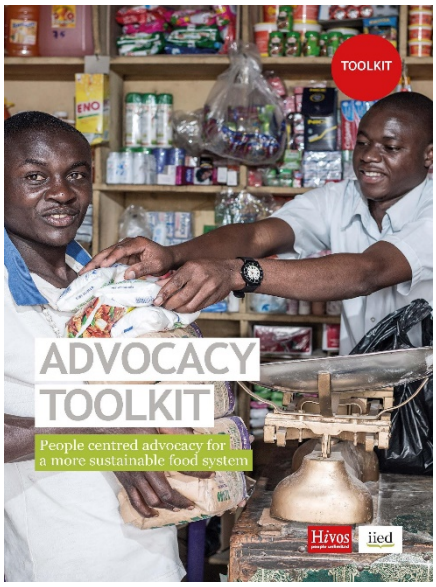
Janette Lowe, Executive Officer, Southern Grampians Glenelg Primary Care Partnership, Victoria, Australia shared her experience by video of working with two communities in rural Australia to address the issue of childhood obesity. The process involved community workshops coming together in a 'Group Model Building' process to develop a visual map of factors that influenced the weight status of children locally and how these factors connected. Participants worked together to develop actions owned by the community and has led to at least 150 known actions being implemented.

Visual map of factors influencing weight status of children locally



[22] Food For Life, Soil Association. Developing a good food culture to support health and wellbeing. [Accessed 2018 Oct 3] Available from: https://www.foodforlife.org.uk/older-people

[23] Food for Life, Soil Association. Working with older people with lived experience as part of Better Care. [Accessed 2018 Oct 3] Available from: https://www.foodforlife.org.uk/whats-happening/schools/news-and-blogs/ffl-blog-0000/Working-with-older-people-with-lived-experience-as-part-of-Better-Care-7f25876b48d64ccdace477e9eada8840



Food Diaries as citizen-generated evidence: bottom up advocacy for dietary diversity in Western Uganda.

Alejandro Guarin, Senior Researcher, and *Natalie Lartey,* Advocacy and Communications Officer, International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED) presented the work they have been doing with Ugandan partner, Kabarole Research and Research Centre (KRC) on citizen-generated evidence. The project involved citizens to collect their own data on food consumption and working with them to interpret it. [24] [25] [26]

WORKSHOPS

Food Power - involving experts by experience

Ben Pearson, Empowerment Programme Officer of Food Power hosted a workshop on involving 'experts by experience.' Food Power is a four year programme funded by the Big Lottery Fund and led by Sustain and Church Action on Poverty, aiming to strengthen local communities' ability to reduce food poverty through solutions developed by them with the support of their peers from other communities across the UK.[27]

[24] International Institute for Environment and Development. How people are providing evidence, and influencing to get food policies that work for them. [Accessed 2018 Oct 3] Available from: https://www.iied.org/how-people-are-providing-evidence-influencing-get-food-policies-work-for-them

[25] Vorley B., IIED. 2018 April. [Accessed 2018 Oct 3] Available from http://pubs.iied.org/G04300/

[26] De Toma C. People centred advocacy for a more sustainable food system. IIED. 2018 April [Accessed 2018 Oct 3] Available from: http://pubs.iied.org/G04301/

[27] Food Power. Tackling food poverty through people-powered change. [Accessed 2018 Oct 3] Available from: https://www.sustainweb.org/foodpower/about/

Better Everyday Takeaway

Chris Holmes, MD of the Healthy Food Programme at Shift led a workshop based around the Better Everyday Takeaway project, a programme led by Shift using methods of co-creation to explore redesigning the fast food environment to make everyday takeaways healthier. [28]

Engaging in Brexit: How can we meaningfully involve the British public in developing a fairer vision for food and farming in post-Brexit UK.

Lynne Davis, RSA Food Farming and Countryside Commission, *Sinead Fenton*, Food Research Collaboration, Centre for Food Policy, City, University of London and *Dr Rosalind Sharpe*, Centre for Food Policy, City, University of London led a workshop designed to explore how to maximise 'meaningful engagement' during the public engagement process being rolled out by the RSA Food Farming and Countryside Commission. Launched in November 2017 the aim is to build a widely shared public mandate for the future of food, farming and the countryside in post-Brexit UK. [29]

Co-production: guidelines for respectful collaboration between people with lived experience and campaigners/researchers.

Led by *Caroline Mockford*, Food Justice Campaigner, and *Pete Ritchie*, Director of Nourish Scotland this workshop explored some of the realities and tensions of what it means to speak on behalf of people with food poverty. It focused on best practice in co-production looking at how researchers and campaigners should work alongside people with lived experience - respectfully and coherently.

[28] Shift. Making affordable, delicious and healthier takeaways a possibility for young families on a budget [Accessed 2018 Oct 3] Available from: http://shiftdesign.org.uk/portfolio/better-everyday-takeaway/

[29]The RSA. Food Farming and Countryside Commission. [Accessed 2018 Oct 3] Available from: https://www.thersa.org/action-and-research/rsa-projects/public-services-and-communities-folder/food-farming-and-countryside-commission

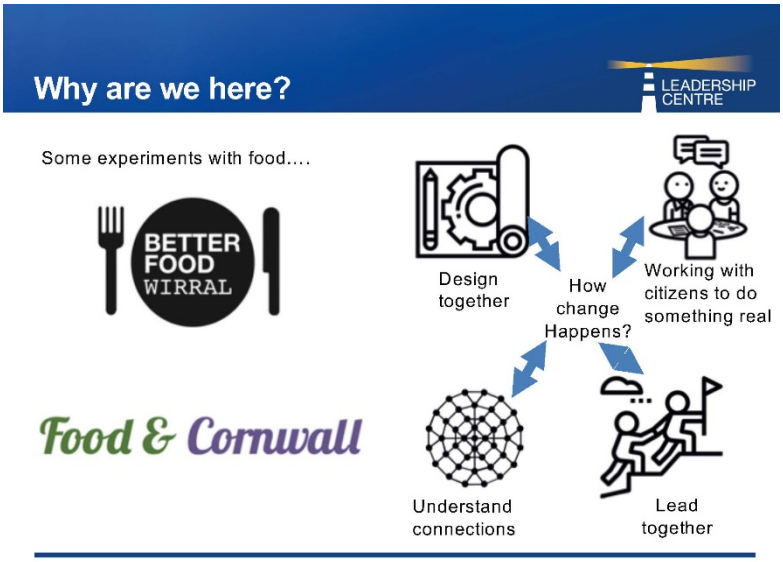


Visual methods for gathering evidence of lived food experiences.

Manuel Franco MD, PhD, School of Medicine, University of Alcalá, Madrid, Spain and Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health, Dept Epidemiology and *Julia Diez* B.A. Biology, MPH. School of Medicine, University of Alcalá, Madrid, Spain shared their experience of a participatory research study about food and diet in Villaverde, Madrid. The workshop explored the variety of visual methodologies available to gather evidence of lived experience, including PhotoVoice, interactive cartographies, mapping tools, photography and video, and discussed the value of applying these methods to understand food-related problems.[30] [31]

Systems Leadership & Food: a complex problem requiring new ways of leading, thinking, feeling and doing.

The 'systems leadership' theme was revisited during a workshop led by *John Jarvis,* and *Di Neale* of the Leadership Centre - an organisation focused on working with complex issues that have multiple causes - issues that can be improved or made worse but never completely resolved and therefore require a way of working that recognises their complexity and inherent messiness.



The workshop shared stories of those who have lived experience of issues with food and revealed what's hidden, the problems behind the problems, a powerful lens through which to examine the characteristics and nature of these types of problems, and how different forms of leadership can influence them. Workshop participants brought along their own food related challenge to use as a case in point throughout.

[30] Social and Cardiovascular Epidemiology, Universidad de Alcala. Photovoice Villaverde. [Accessed 2018 Oct 3] Available from: https://hhhproject.eu/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/160405_Photobook_web.pdf

[31] Social and Cardiovascular Epidemiology. Photovoice Villaverde. Youtube. [Accessed 2018 Oct 3] Available from: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VliFggKzVas

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