

OFFICIAL FEEDBACK FORM



DIALOGUE DATE	Monday, 11 July 2022 17:30 GMT -07:00
DIALOGUE TITLE	Youth. Fed Up.
CONVENED BY	Angelina Polselli (Event Planner at Manny's Civic Event Space, unBox Co-Lead) and Charlie Hoffs (Stanford student, unBox Co-Lead)
DIALOGUE EVENT PAGE	https://goodfooodialogues.com/dialogue/51482/

The outcomes from the Dialogues will be of use in developing the pathway to a healthier and hunger-free America. Each Dialogue will contribute in three distinct ways:

- Direct submission to the White House in advance of the Conference on Hunger, Nutrition, and Health (for events and feedback received prior to the July 15th deadline)
- Published as public facing and searchable documents on the Good Food Dialogues website
- Rolled into a final report that synthesizes the feedback, ideas, and challenges shared throughout all the Good Food Dialogues. This report will not only be submitted to the White House but will also be used to inform a movement for change well beyond the White House Conference.

1. PARTICIPATION

TOTAL NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS

14

PARTICIPATION BY AGE RANGE

1	0-18	11	19-30	0	31-50	2	51-65	0	66-80	0	80+
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PARTICIPATION BY GENDER

6	Male	8	Female	0	Non-binary	0	Prefer not to say or Other
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PARTICIPATION BY RACE

1	American Indian or Alaska Native	4	Asian
1	Black or African American	0	Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
8	White		

PARTICIPATION BY ETHNICITY

1	Hispanic or Latino	13	Not Hispanic or Latino
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NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS IN EACH SECTOR

0	Academia/education	0	Agriculture	0	Economic empowerment
3	Environment and ecology	0	Finance	0	Food consumer
1	Food distributor	0	Food production	0	Food processing
1	Food retail	2	Government	1	Healthcare
0	Health insurance	3	Hunger	0	Livestock
0	Nutrition	3	Public Policy	0	Other

NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS FROM EACH STAKEHOLDER GROUP

0	Academic/Expert	0	Advocate
2	Corporation	0	Community Organization
0	Direct Service Provider	1	Farmer/Food Producer
0	Financial Institution	3	Impacted Individual
1	Logistics provider	5	Non-Profit
1	Policy Maker (current/former)	0	Small business
6	Student	0	Supplier
0	Other		

2. PRINCIPLES OF ENGAGEMENT

HOW DID YOU ORGANIZE THE DIALOGUE SO THAT THE PRINCIPLES WERE INCORPORATED, REINFORCED AND ENHANCED?

Our Dialogue was grounded in urgency; our messaging and publicity around the event emphasized how young people are critically underrepresented and unheard in policymaking. We knew we had to capture this opportunity moment to have our voices heard in the halls of power. Respect is a core tenet of unBox's organizing philosophy, and we designed the call timing, format, atmosphere, and agenda around respectful, generative, safe exchange of stories and ideas. We publicized the event as widely as possible and in new channels, in order to reach new audiences that hadn't yet been involved in our unBox community, and who bring new dimensions of perspective to the conversation. Perhaps most importantly, we knew that planning a Dialogue that intentionally fostered trust would be the more effective in inviting meaningful feedback. We tried to build trust into every aspect of our planning process leading up to the event.

HOW DID YOUR DIALOGUE REFLECT SPECIFIC ASPECTS OF THE PRINCIPLES?

Our Dialogue reflected a healthy and productive air of urgency, because all of us were opting to spend, "sacrifice", our Monday evening to organize together around a catalytic and critically important issue: uplifting our own voices as youth. Respect was a core principle throughout the conversation. Participants bravely shared from their own lived experience, work and research expertise, and observations, and all thoughtfully and curiously expanded on the thoughts of the previous speaker. The meeting was authentically youth-driven, with the organizers and 85% of participants being young people, and diverse. Every policy proposal that each person shared was grounded in a story, and each story shared deepened the trust in the room.

DO YOU HAVE ADVICE FOR OTHER DIALOGUE CONVENORS ABOUT APPRECIATING THE PRINCIPLES OF ENGAGEMENT?

For virtual Dialogues, we recommend allowing ample time for people to get introduced to one another, to build familiarity and friendship. Intentional facilitation can counteract the ways that remote gatherings sometimes have a cold, awkward, contrived lack of connection. Choose a check-in question that invites people to share about what is important to them and their background, to demonstrate that this is a space to which their whole self is invited. Get creative about publicizing the event. Reach out to new channels to bring in new people who aren't yet members of your organization. Try different rhetoric/visual approaches and media to reach different audiences. Clearly explain the purpose of the event in the pre-event publicity and during the call. Participants should understand what will happen with the information they share, and feel invested in the change it will catalyze. Ask for everyone's consent before taking notes and screenshots. Have at least two facilitators so one can be taking notes and screenshots. Think in advance about how you can curate a space that invites friendship, vulnerability, even laughter.

3. METHOD

The outcomes of a Dialogue are influenced by the method that is used.

DID YOU USE THE SAME METHOD AS RECOMMENDED BY THE CONVENORS REFERENCE MANUAL?

Yes

No

4. DIALOGUE FOCUS & OUTCOMES

MAJOR FOCUS

Participants in our Dialogue identified the following problems in the US food system, which the White House should ensure are on the Conference agenda:

1. Food access and affordability:

- a. food apartheid
- c. inequitable opportunity to access healthy food
- d. structural inequalities leading to racial disparities
- e. inflation
- f. food insecurity and lack of food sovereignty in Native American communities
- g. rural disparities
- h. veteran food insecurity
- i. food insecurity for unhoused people

2. Health and nutrition:

- a. diet-related illness
- b. lack of incentives for farmers to grow healthy food
- c. underfunding for SNAP and WIC farmers market incentive programs
- e. lack of cultural relevance, condescension, stigma, and shaming within food and nutrition programs

3. Climate and sustainability:

- a. food waste
- b. environmental injustice
- d. air, water, and soil contamination
- e. climate change
- f. unstable, unsafe, unhealthy built environment
- g. lack of traceability in food supply chains

4. Economic justice

- a. labor injustice
- b. lack of economic opportunity
- c. poverty
- d. poorly designed and implemented foreign aid
- e. digital divide
- f. lack of resources, capital, and opportunity for young farmers
- g. barriers for BIPOC farmers

5. Current theories of change and practices in US food systems research and policy:

- a. lack of interdisciplinary collaboration
- b. failure to preserve knowledge across program implementation successes and failures, lack of implementation science
- c. failure to integrate traditional ecological knowledge
- d. community stakeholders rarely are meaningfully involved in, not to mention leading, food assistance and nutrition education programs and research
- e. when we talk about SNAP, WIC, and other government benefits, people wrongly assume there is prevalent fraud
- f. failure to involve youth

KEYWORDS

WHITE HOUSE CONFERENCE PILLARS

- ✓ 1. Improve food access and affordability
- ✓ 2. Integrate nutrition and health
- ✓ 3. Empower all consumers to make and have access to healthy choices
- 4. Support physical activity for all
- ✓ 5. Enhance nutrition and food security research

✓ Nutrition	✓ Food Security
✓ Healthcare	✓ Economic Empowerment
✓ Technology	✓ Data & Evidence
✓ Environment and Climate	Finance
Human rights	✓ Innovation
	✓ Policy

MAIN FINDINGS

During our Dialogue, participants translated the problems they identified into specific, actionable policy solutions:

1. The White House Conference must truly be a conference, not a lecture-style presentation. It is essential that the feedback collected during these listening sessions meaningfully inform the agenda of the Conference and the resulting policy action. Insights and policy proposals which gain momentum during and after the conference should influence the Farm Bill. The Conference should not explore one issue at the expense of another, nor view issues as trade-offs: physical activity vs. food security vs. nutrition vs. economic empowerment. It must consider these issues, and the boarder issues of poverty, income inequality, and health inequity as part inter-related systems of oppression. These connections should be explicitly acknowledged by the WH Conference by 1) the inclusion of a land acknowledgement, 2) inviting diverse, interdisciplinary speakers, 3) evaluating each proposal through the lens of justice (as a small example, transitioning from the word "food desert" to "food apartheid") and 4) engaging, without tokenizing, stakeholders with lived experience of hunger.
2. Dismantle structural racism in the food system. Remove barriers for BIPOC farmers. Ensure Native American food assistance programs such as FDPIR include traditional foods, and allow Tribes to administer their own programs through the 638 Authority. Invest in sustainable, regenerative agriculture that employs traditional ecological knowledge. End food apartheid by investing in public transportation, innovative grocery delivery and distribution pilots and SNAP online, supporting urban grocery cooperatives and nonprofit grocers, and urban farming.
3. Increase SNAP and WIC. Fund universal school meals. Invest in produce prescription programs and Double-Up incentives at farmers' markets.
4. Reduce liability for grocers, restaurants, and distributors who want to donate their food. Create competitive grants for innovative food recovery pilots such as California's SB1383.
5. Subsidize fruit and vegetable farming, invest in small farmers, and reduce subsidies for livestock feed monocrops.
6. Reduce the digital divide by investing in rural and Tribal free or low-cost device and Internet access programs, and digital literacy education at schools and libraries.
7. When devising the Farm Bill, prioritize constituent voices over corporate lobbying interests, be transparent about proposed policy developments and bill language drafts as they are debated over the coming months, and sponsor Farm Bill listening sessions and outreach events with diverse stakeholders.

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OUTCOMES FOR EACH DISCUSSION TOPIC - 1/4

To truly become just and sustainable, the US food system must deconstruct the aspects of itself that are systemically racist and colonialist:

One participant shared, "I'm Native American and Mexican. Our tribe is not recognized, so we don't have access to lots of resources that federally recognized tribes have. The Native side of my family grew up in poverty. I have a public health background in social determinants of health. There is a lot of talk about veganism which is great, but the diets of my community have always been high in protein. Many can't have access to those protein sources anymore because prices are so high. Sometimes we are even shamed [for our traditional foodways]. On the health and mental health level, you can see this all play out. We might have had one small market in our hometown, but now it's all processed junk food. There's no other option but fast food because that's how food systems have impacted us."

Another explained, "The issue of food insecurity, malnutrition, and hunger is deeply entrenched. My culture goes all the way back to the days when Black people didn't have the right to own land, read, or write—slavery, post-slavery, then Jim Crow. Black people have to make do because we didn't have access to higher education, to wealth. My family, the families I know, have to make do. The lifestyle does not allow for living a healthy life. Folks have to make do with food that is saturated with fat and sugar and is highly processed. If they can even afford anything healthy, they don't know how to sustain an entire family on something that is nutritious. Just a plain salad will not cut it in a Black family. We incorporate what we know into our lifestyle. There have been systems and policies and laws that have not allowed us to be healthy. We have to change those policies. It's so much deeper than food. Food is a reflection of everything deeper. COVID-19 revealed how bad it is, and I think there is hope to fix it. We need to fix the underlying problems. Until poverty and racist laws and structures are removed, there won't be hope."

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OUTCOMES FOR EACH DISCUSSION TOPIC - 2/4

Expanding food access means strengthening the social safety net, and ensuring no one falls through the cracks:

One participant who works in the Mecklenburg County government in Charlotte, NC spoke about his prior experience working as a SNAP caseworker for unhoused clients. He said, "During covid, their needs grew faster than other groups. SNAP still has gaps, especially in the homeless population. Folks who are homeless are already receiving the max allotment – yes, there's an increase, but it's still not enough. A map showing the disparities in food access overlays well with, say, access to public transport."

Another participant with decades of experience working in USDA and other branches of the federal government discussed how his career was influenced by his and his single mother's challenges with food access in his youth, and his time living with his grandparents in a rural Illinois farming community.

A leader of a nationwide anti-hunger advocacy nonprofit shared, "As a hunger-fighter every day, I see people who have to depend on SNAP food stamps, hundreds of millions of Americans. SNAP is now a whopping \$2.50 a meal. SNAP dwarfs US food assistance. People line up an hour or two before the SNAP agencies open. This is a country with so many billionaires, while other people are dying earlier because they don't have access to affordable, nutritious, available food. I was just in Mississippi and Alabama, which have the highest hunger rates because poverty is directly related to wealth. We all have the ability to change this and improve this dramatically by building a social movement."

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OUTCOMES FOR EACH DISCUSSION TOPIC - 3/4

It is critical that the White House Conference, and food systems research, policy and action in general, be holistic and interdisciplinary:

Meaningfully engaging young people and diverse stakeholders necessitates thinking creatively and at a systems level. One recent graduate working with the LA Food Equity Roundtable explained that is was the interdisciplinary nature of food systems work that drew her to it: "I'm interested in working around the food system because it is the nexus of works rights, environmental and human health, racial and class equity. It's a great opportunity to address all of these issues, to look at how we can achieve environmental sustainability and social equity while uplifting human health. Viewing these issues through a systems lens requires a holistic understanding."

Bold, innovative technology solutions can support effective food policy: "I would like to bridge the digital divide. Technology isn't going away. Not everyone has equitable access to technology. I worry we might say things like 'We shouldn't do this technical solution because it's inequitable.' No: we should raise it to the level where it's accessible to everyone. As we're making all these developments, we need to ensure technology is accessible to more vulnerable populations and smaller retailers."

Another participant was concerned that the WH Conference will fail if it is too narrowly focused and doesn't bring diverse voices to the table: "I worked in federal government for 30 years. I want to ensure the White House Conference focuses on real solutions that matter, real solutions that can get put in place. Not a lecture conference. I don't want a battle between food access and nutrition. Those who don't care for our nutrition programs will use that to divide and conquer."

Another agreed, "If we over-focus on physical activity in the White House Conference over poverty and lack of economic opportunity, that could be negative. With inflation sky-high, anyone doing that will be ridiculed".

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OUTCOMES FOR EACH DISCUSSION TOPIC - 4/4

Dialogue participants stressed the existential urgency of addressing the climate crisis through food systems transformation. As one law student emphasized, "Climate change and the intersection of food systems is critical."

A culinary student shared, "I want to see us change food systems in order to reduce the amount of food waste that we produce in the US and North America in general—agriculturally and in grocery stores. There are so many ways I have learned how to repurpose food; I've learned in culinary school how to increase product utilization, to reuse and repurpose ingredients. I have less research on the research and policy experience, but I'm in the kitchen 9 hours a day and understand food from a culinary and operational side of things. It's the people on the ground in the operational space who are actually executing policies. It's a different story for those folks... I want to see better policies supporting food recovery programs. There are many organizations working on food donation, bringing excess food from restaurants to shelters, but there needs to be more government action supporting that."

A recent graduate who studied public health and is now examining racial disparities in social determinants of health explained, "We need to start by helping communities fight for environmental justice: food, water, air, and a stable built environment. You need access to clean spaces to grow food or you risk contamination. This needs to be worked out logically. Improving the built environment and increasing green space in redlined communities, in communities cut off, isolated. Dirty air, dirty water—people can't even live."

Another participant simply summarized, "Our generation is much less connected than previous generations."

Participants emphasized the need for a food system that stewards the land, and helps us reconnect with the sources of our food and the hands that grow it.

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AREAS OF DIVERGENCE

All Dialogue participants agreed that the conference must holistically address issues of food security *and* nutrition, but disagreed about how best to do so. Some were concerned that an over-emphasis on nutrition would detract attention, support, funding, and independence away from food security programs. For example, WIC is denoted a nutrition program and includes specific guidelines around what products can and cannot be purchased with WIC. SNAP is a food security program, and has few restrictions on which items can be purchased. Reducing freedom and dignity of choice within SNAP with restrictions would, in some participant's views, be anti-productive.

Other participants agreed that centering dignity and choice is critical to improving both food security and nutrition. However, they viewed them as closely integrated: the disenfranchisement of small farmers, subsidies for only a handful of huge commodity crops, poverty, low wages, food apartheid, grocery consolidation, manipulative marketing, and poor access to healthcare are all related to food insecurity, hunger, diet-related illness, obesity, and more. One cannot address one issue without tackling the whole network of issues, because they are all embedded in structures of oppression which must be uprooted and reimagined. Therefore, every food security program must be a nutrition program and vice-versa; this approach, in their view, empowers dignity and choice.

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