

# OFFICIAL FEEDBACK FORM



<b>DIALOGUE DATE</b>	Friday, 12 August 2022 17:00 GMT -07:00
<b>DIALOGUE TITLE</b>	Food Deserts: Challenges and Innovations
<b>CONVENED BY</b>	Riona Pampati (founder of The Giving Cupcakes)
<b>DIALOGUE EVENT PAGE</b>	<a href="https://goodfooddialogues.com/dialogue/51688/">https://goodfooddialogues.com/dialogue/51688/</a>

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

1

## PARTICIPATION BY AGE RANGE

4 0-18    2 19-30    0 31-50    1 51-65    0 66-80    0 80+

## PARTICIPATION BY GENDER

1 Male    6 Female    0 Non-binary    0 Prefer not to say or Other

## PARTICIPATION BY RACE

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

## PARTICIPATION BY ETHNICITY

1 Hispanic or Latino    6 Not Hispanic or Latino

## NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS IN EACH SECTOR

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

## NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS FROM EACH STAKEHOLDER GROUP

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

## 2. PRINCIPLES OF ENGAGEMENT

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

Our dialogue was grounded in embracing multi-stakeholder inclusivity. We understood the need for the local voices of our community to be brought to the table of this greater discussion. We recognized that smaller initiatives and grassroots organizations are critically underrepresented and unheard in policymaking decisions. After reading about the White House Conference goals in conjunction with the Principles of Engagement, my co-organizers and I found that they aligned deeply with the mission of The Giving Cupcakes nonprofit and decided to host a dialogue of our own. Most importantly, we knew that convening this dialogue with representatives from local organizations fighting hunger would bring a unique perspective into view.

### HOW DID YOUR DIALOGUE REFLECT SPECIFIC ASPECTS OF THE PRINCIPLES?

The foundation of our dialogue was respect, inclusivity, and urgency. We recognized that different people bring different perspectives to the table. Each person's thoughts and unique lens are important parts in changing the reality of food insecurity and therefore must be respected. An aura of inclusivity guided the dialogue, as we knew that local voices must be included in the greater conversations in order for policy change to affect every corner of the country. Lastly, there was a sense of urgency and importance as we conversed. The gravity of this crisis was taken into account as we aimed to come up with solutions and have purpose with our voices.

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

We recommend setting aside enough time for introductions and icebreakers to really facilitate a productive and organic discussion. Ample introduction time can ease away any awkwardness or silence that can sometimes be present in virtual settings. Additionally, allowing the participants to take the reins of the discussion and have it be an open forum rather than a Q&A panel can allow for a more free flow of thoughts to emerge. A dialogue where participants can openly ask and answer questions of their own is much more fruitful than a structured, robotic one.

# 3. METHOD

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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 focused on the specific theme of food deserts in the United States, covering the following topics that must be addressed by the White House:

1. Causes of Food Deserts to be Considered
  - a. Systematic inequality
  - b. Transportation inconveniences
  - c. Unaffordability of healthy food choices
  - d. Short shelf life of products
2. Unacceptable Effects of Food Deserts to be Combated
  - a. Hindering cycle of medical conditions
    - i. chronic diseases
    - ii. worsening mental health and day to day behavior
  - b. Cause more discrimination
3. What Organizations are Doing
  - a. Community gardens
  - b. Budgets for produce for families
  - c. Veggie prescriptions, medical codes
  - d. Free meals
  - e. Mobile kitchens
  - f. Temperature controlled trucks
  - g. Supplemental nutrition program
4. The Help They Need
  - a. Greater and extended funding
  - b. Fixing medical codes
  - c. Education

### WHITE HOUSE CONFERENCE PILLARS

- |                                     |   |
|-------------------------------------|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | 1. Improve food access and affordability                            |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | 2. Integrate nutrition and health                                   |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | 3. Empower all consumers to make and have access to healthy choices |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | 4. Support physical activity for all                                |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | 5. Enhance nutrition and food security research                     |

### KEYWORDS

- |                                     |                         |                                     |                      |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------------------|----------------------|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Nutrition               | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Food Security        |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Healthcare              | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Economic Empowerment |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | Technology              | <input type="checkbox"/>            | Data & Evidence      |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | Environment and Climate | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Finance              |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Human rights            | <input type="checkbox"/>            | Innovation           |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            |                         | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Policy               |

## MAIN FINDINGS

1. Chronic hunger prevents children from receiving a proper formal education and will cripple them later in life. Increase education revolving around healthy meal choices; empower a healthy start from the very beginning. With a lack of stress on the importance of fresh produce in everyday meals, young people can be led astray. Chronic hunger could lead to lower GPAs and a higher rate of students failing to complete their 4 year degrees. This starts a vicious cycle leading to student debt and an inability to find stable jobs. Financial instability will then continue to push them towards unhealthy, cheaper meal choices, further deepening the spiral perpetuated by food deserts. Students can learn to search for more affordable healthy options instead of relying so heavily on fast food only if they are aware of the importance of nutrition.
2. Recognize the underlying causes of systemic food discrimination. Communities that have been historically redlined in the past continue to be in terms of food insecurity as well. Food deserts are by design, meaning they are existing the way they were intended to. Zoning perpetuates the separation of neighborhoods. Grocery stores with healthy options are heavily concentrated in certain areas based on socioeconomic factors and race. Lower income neighborhoods have less access to these stores and less nutritious options, and therefore usually contain fast food restaurants which are cheaper to manage.
3. Make healthy food more accessible. There is a huge interconnectedness between healthier options and higher prices. From our viewpoint, it is important to regulate the ratio of food resources in a specific amount of space and make sure there are affordable options that are also healthy. From growing produce, to transporting it, to maintaining its quality in stores; these are the factors that must be taken into account while considering affordability.
4. Support local programs to allow them a wider field of outreach. Initiatives such as the Farmers to Family Food Box program only received a few years of funding which was not enough to sustain the program. Investing in more years of federal funding would open up avenues for grassroot organizations who do not have the expertise to write their own federal grants.
5. Fix healthcare insurance medical codes allowing veggie prescriptions. Integrating food into healthcare is a significant step in overcoming diet related issues such as cardiovascular disease, high blood pressure, and obesity. Medically supported food and nutrition refers to food-based interventions prescribed by a medical provider designed to manage certain health conditions. These prescriptions should be covered by healthcare, as food can be medicine. This can only be done when the government alters medical codes guiding these insurance coverages.

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### KEYWORDS

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

## OUTCOMES FOR EACH DISCUSSION TOPIC - 1/2

Initiatives and organizations fighting for equal food access

Participants want better and more extended funding and resources for their respective programs. One student reflected on the beauty of a community that is built through community gardens alongside the benefits they provide for the hungry. However, the garden could only reach so many people. One participant who was a part of Loaves & Fishes discussed how much help mobile kitchens could provide to his work. If fresh produce can be brought to people in need and if they are taught ways to use these ingredients to make delicious nutritious meals, it can easily improve their relationship with food. This is important because even in this day and age, a significant chunk of information is still spread by word of mouth. They can then continue to teach others. Trust can be built as well. Another participant works with SPUR, who provides CalFresh budgets and grocery store coupons to those in need. However, those who run the program can only give so much on their own. This is hopeful as there are many people who care about the issue and are working towards solving it. The government's support can further amplify their effect.

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### KEYWORDS

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|   |                         | ✓ | Policy               |

## OUTCOMES FOR EACH DISCUSSION TOPIC - 2/2

### Federal assistance

All participants agreed that the government needs to take action as a lot of smaller programs are doing as much as they can. The only reason they fail to do more is because they lack government support. Participants also share the view that the issue exposes and relates to other inequalities beyond food distribution inequality: institutional bias. Therefore, as the issue will only get worse as time goes on and disadvantages for certain groups build up, it is an urgent issue, practically a public emergency, requiring the government to make changes as soon as possible to eradicate food deserts and help fight food insecurity for the millions of Americans who suffer from it. Participants believe that there are extremely tangible and easy ways to make a huge difference, such as veggie prescriptions. Small groups of people are unable to change the limit on fast food stores in an area or the amount of funding programs receive; only the government is capable of doing so.

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|   |                         | ✓ | Policy               |



## AREAS OF DIVERGENCE

Areas of divergence that emerged during the Dialogue included one participant's heavy emphasis on solutions revolving around the current system of bringing food from farms to stores, for instance, temperature controlled delivery trucks. These changes require direct federal action and changes made by the government. This participant was searching for answers and looking at the issue on a systematic level. On the other hand, other participants were more concerned with ways small programs can combat hunger by offering charity and assistance to those in need. Areas that need further exploration included specific ways production costs could be lowered and shelf lives extended while retaining the health of food. For example, are there any ways of preservation that do not affect the quality of food and are affordable?

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