Understanding participation in community food activities

A synthesis report on motivations, barriers and enablers

Coventry University

Research Centre for Agroecology, Water and Resilience

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Foreword

To build stronger communities that can stand up to some of the urgent health, climate and nature crises of our time, we need to get together.

The Soil Association, with funding from the National Lottery Community Fund, commissioned this research to support greater understanding around the barriers, motivations and enablers for people to get together through food in communities. I am thrilled to share with you the research findings by our partner, Coventry University's Research Centre for Agroecology, Water and Resilience. I hope that you will agree that this research is an important contribution of insight which both affirms some existing approaches to participation in food activities, and challenges facilitating organisations to go further to enable greater inclusion, equality and diversity in community food activities.

We want to see a world where everyone can be actively engaged in healthy & sustainable food-related issues and initiatives within and beyond their community. But as this report shows, barriers and motivations to participate in community food activities are diverse, and there is not one single approach that supports everyone to participate. This report provides a set of recommendations for facilitating organisations, and at the Soil Association we will be using this research to inform our approaches to alleviating barriers to participation and enabling more people to get involved and benefit from community food activities.

I invite readers of this report to consider what it tells **you** about your best role in supporting a transition to a food system that works for people and planet.

Sincerely

Helen Browning

CEO, Soil Association
November 2021

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Executive Summary

What motivates people to get together over community food growing, cooking, eating, and sharing of food activities? Why is participation in these activities uneven across geographical areas and social groups? What stops (some) people joining in? What can community organisers and larger organisations in particular do to support participation by diverse communities?

These questions are more important than ever with increasing food insecurity, social isolation and loneliness, and the resulting negative effects on peoples' health and well-being. At the same time, there is growing evidence from academic and practitioner research of the numerous positive social outcomes of participation in community food activities for both individuals and communities. However, our understanding of the drivers and barriers influencing community participation is limited, especially in relation to social groups experiencing different forms of social exclusion and marginalisation. Therefore, it is highly relevant - from both a research and a practice perspective - to enhance our understanding and identify effective ways for enabling participation in community food activities in order to benefit from their positive outcomes and, furthermore, to counter the additional social challenges currently presented by Covid-19.

Promoting community food activities is the focus of the Food for Life Get Togethers (FFLGT) programme delivered by the Soil Association. The programme supports community groups, charities, education and care settings and individuals to connect and organise their own 'Get Together activities' which bring people from different backgrounds together through growing, cooking or sharing food that's good for people and planet. The aim is to build strong, resilient, well-nourished and healthy communities and increase the involvement of people in their local food system across the United Kingdom.

This report summarises results from research commissioned by the Soil Association on the motivations, barriers and enablers for participation in community food activities in diverse communities. It is the third report in a series, which presents a synthesis of findings from a systematic literature review and an empirical study on the drivers and barriers to community food activities, before setting out recommendations for enabling inclusive participation in these activities.

Key insights:

- No single motivation or set of motivations is found to be most prominent. Instead, there are multiple motivations behind participation, which can be grouped into four types: for personal benefits; for social/community related reasons; ecological/environmental concerns; and as an expression of solidarity with larger social movements. Activities appealing to several motivational factors can attract a more diverse range of participants.
- Barriers are equally diverse and multiple and depend on the type of activity and its implementation, individual participants' circumstances and the local context. They can be of three broad categories: limited resources and infrastructure (e.g., knowledge, skills, funds, equipment, growing space/land); challenges with community engagement and communication; and challenges related to policies and institutional regulations.
- Enablers are context-specific and they correspond to a particular combination of motivations and barriers. They include broadly five types: access to key resources (funding, infrastructure, knowledge, skills, sufficient time); effective networking and supportive local partnerships; co-designing of activities; increased community capacity (knowledge, skills, volunteers, community champions); and institutional support.
- There is no one single lever to enable participation in community food activities applicable to all contexts. A holistic understanding of the drivers that enable and the factors that inhibit participation from a community centred, place-based approach is required.

In order to emphasise and unpack the interconnectedness between the motivations, barriers and enablers as influencing participation in a specific context, we adopted the multi-level social ecological approach (Bronfenbrenner, 1979; Stokols, 1996). This does not only acknowledge the importance of motivations and barriers at individual level, but also the influences at family, community, organisational, and institutional/policy levels, and the interaction of all these factors. In other words, these influences are highly context-specific and are experienced by different people in different ways: they are determined by the social, physical, organisational, and institutional environment within which the people live, work, and interact and the specific type of activity they aim to engage in. For example, a lack of resources and lack of social networking is more likely a barrier to participation for those in a deprived neighbourhood or for a specific social group (marginalised by race, culture, language, age, etc.). Similarly, the physical and social characteristics of an activity by themselves influence engagement and participation. Seen as social practices, community food activities are learned from and enacted with others, and as such, we consider it important that they are understood in the context of their wider environment and of the everyday experiences in which these practices take place.

Recommendations:

Drawing on 'good practices' identified from our research, we have proposed a set of recommendations presented in the six boxes below. These recommendations include actions that, taken together, can facilitate increased participation.

At the same time, they intentionally recognise and address the multiple levels of influences on participation. Since facilitating organisations like the Soil Association are working at the 'cross-roads' between multiple levels, they occupy a key role as civic enablers. That is, they exert influence on the opportunities people (individuals and families/households) and smaller community organisations have, and choices they make, over access to resources (e.g., knowledge, skills, funding) that – in turn – can aid people and smaller organisations to engage with community food activities. Guided by the multi-level approach, facilitating organisations have the opportunity to act upon enabling factors at multiple levels -- downstream (community, family and individual), upstream (wider policy level) and horizontally (with other facilitating organisations/networks/alliances) to increase diverse participation in community food activities.

Co-design activity with community

- *Involve community right from the planning stages*
- *Develop easily accessible resources*
- *Use open channels of communication, dialogue and exchange*
- *Be community-responsive and diversity-sensitive to allow adaptations to goals and actions*
- *Provide skills training and mentoring for adopting a co-design approach*

Enable access to key resources for community organisers

- *Consider ease of access to key resources (e.g., funds, equipment and infrastructure, information, knowledge, organisational and technical skills)*
- *Provide diverse types of financial grants*
- *Provide diversity-sensitive practical support to access resources*
- *Offer training opportunities that consider diverse communities' needs*

Support networking, local partnership building, and 'community champions'

- *Connect with community partners and organisations, and build relationships*
- *Strengthen existing networks and alliances*
- *Build capacity of 'community champions'*
- *Create a shared long-term vision for specific local communities*

Build a learning community

- *Create safe spaces for formal and informal learning*
- *Build-in regular reflective practices for organisational learning and adaptive management*
- *Build-in flexibility in projects and project funding that allows for adaptation to new insights based on reflective learning*
- *Utilise the opportunities qualitative evaluations (e.g., case studies) offer for reflective learning*
- *Allocate adequate time and resources to develop a learning culture*

Build an inclusive approach

- *Create a safe environment and build trust*
- *Skills training and mentoring on coproduction and collaboration*
- *Develop appropriate communication strategies*
- *Use participatory methods in engaging with communities*

Influence the institutional and policy environment to support community food activities

- *Create a shared long-term vision across the sector and develop working partnerships with local/national authorities*
- *Work with national funders to shape funding strategies*
- *Build evidence base of impact and outcomes of community food activities to influence planning at neighbourhood/local/national level*
- *Advocacy at public policy level to develop strategies that support community food activities*

This report is primarily aimed at facilitating organisations, such as charities or anchor organisations, and community organisers or other practitioners active in community-based food activities. We hope that it will also be relevant to local authorities, funders, policymakers, and generally those interested in enabling and supporting practical community action towards making a collective shift to food that's good for people and planet, cohesive and resilient communities, and food citizenship.

1. Introduction

Food is not just a substance we consume to sustain our bodies, instead, engaging with food through growing, preparing, cooking, sharing, and eating is also a fundamental part of individual, communal and societal well-being. However, food insecurity, food-related health issues and changes in eating behaviours, as well as adverse environmental impacts from the way we produce, distribute, consume, and waste food have increasingly become more widespread, with devastating consequences for people and the planet. Recent evidence from academic and practitioner research has shown several positive social and environmental outcomes for communities from re-establishing connections with 'good food' (good for the people and good for the planet) through engaging with community food activities. The specific focus of such community food activities can vary depending on the interest of involved actors, and might include the growing, cooking, eating, and sharing of food.

Promoting community food activities is the focus of the Food for Life Get Togethers (FFLGT) programme delivered by the Soil Association. The FFLGT programme is funded by the National Lottery Community Fund and supports a variety of community-based activities "... that connect people from all ages and backgrounds," leading to various positive social and environmental outcomes. However, community participation in these activities can be uneven across geographical areas and in the inclusion of diverse communities. The Soil Association has thus commissioned this research to investigate the following question:

> ***What motivates, supports or creates barriers to participation in social food citizenship activities, such as Food for Life Get Togethers activities, amongst diverse communities?***

Aiming to answer the above question, our research design included two components. First, we conducted a systematic review of literature to identify the motivations, barriers, and enablers for participation in social food citizenship activities. Second, we carried out an empirical study where we focused primarily on understanding the experiences of those organising and participating specifically in the FFLGT programme, but also learnt from other community organisers and organisations engaged in social food citizenship activities.

Detailed findings from the literature review are included in **Report 1**.[1] In the absence of a formal definition of social food citizenship in the literature, we focused on bottom-up community food activities with a social dimension, *i.e.*, activities where people come together for a food activity such as community food growing, cooking and eating, or sharing of good food (which is the focus of the FFLGT programme). We included various community settings such as schools, community kitchens, cooking clubs, housing associations, and neighbourhood community groups, which participated in, hosted, or organised such activities. **Report 2** provides an in-depth explanation of our findings from the empirical exploration of the research question.[2]

This **third report** is a synthesis of the literature review and the empirical study. It brings together the findings to answer the main research question and to suggest possible ways by which facilitating organisations (and programmes such as FFLGT) can more effectively motivate and enable participation in community food activities among diverse communities.

[1] See Saxena et al. 2021a [2] See Saxena et al. 2021b

2. Methodology

In this section, we briefly describe the systematic literature review and the empirical study that we carried out to answer the research question.

2.1 Systematic review of literature

Following a systematic review process,[3] we identified forty academic/research papers for our review that presented case studies on community food activities from across thirteen different countries. These case studies described and analysed project experiences across four main categories of activities. They include **cooking and/or eating** (e.g., community kitchens, cooking clubs, intergenerational lunches, social eating events); **food growing** (e.g., community/urban gardening, rural community gardens, community allotment gardening, and urban collective gardening); **food sharing** (e.g., food swaps, food waste sharing, and school holiday hunger projects); and **food experiences** (e.g., food discussions for wellbeing).

Across the case studies, participants were from a diverse range of backgrounds that varied across age, ethnic minority status, disability, religion or beliefs, refugee status, gender, socio-economic status, and level of food insecurity.

• 40 papers selected from 4 databases, using specific criteria • Included case studies across 13 countries: Australia, Austria, Canada, Denmark, France, Germany, Netherlands, Portugal, Republic of Ireland, South Africa, Sweden, United Kingdom, United States • Reports and other relevant documents from civil society organisations (CSOs)	**Types of activity described in the reviewed case studies**	**Types of participants referred to in the reviewed case studies**
	Cooking and/or Eating: community kitchens; cooking clubs; intergenerational lunches; social eating events	**Age:** children; elderly people; middle-aged people; middle-aged women; socioeconomically disadvantaged adolescents; University students; young people
	Food growing: community/urban gardening; rural community garden; community allotment gardening; urban collective gardening	**Disability:** people with mental or physical disability; people recovering from mental health issues; children with diverse learning needs
	Food sharing: food sharing initiatives; food swaps; food waste sharing; school holiday hunger projects	**Religion or belief:** faith-based volunteers
	Food experiences: food discussions for wellbeing	**Sex:** homeless/under-housed men; women
		Other: disadvantaged urban communities; ethnic minorities; food insecure people; low socio-economic groups; marginalised people; refugees, asylum seekers

Table 1: Snapshot of systematic review of literature

[3] For specific details, see Saxena et al. 2021a

2.2 Empirical study

We collected data through twenty-four semi-structured interviews with practitioners. One group of interviewees included nine staff and ten community organisers linked to the FFLGT programme. Their selection was done in consultation with the FFLGT leadership team. The community organisers interviewed were selected from across the four nations of the UK. In order to expand our learning beyond the FFLGT programme, we also interviewed key organisers at five additional community organisations active in organising community food activities in the UK. We also held two focus group discussions with fifteen individuals from diverse socio-economic and cultural backgrounds who are members of a community centre in Coventry that runs community food growing activities and hosts community meals.

While the literature review helped explore the diversity of motivations, barriers and enablers across different types of community food activities in different contexts, in the empirical study, we focused on experiences of organisers in the UK context. Most interviewees found the process of organising a community food activity enjoyable. However, it was also described as challenging, often because of factors beyond their control. The two focus groups allowed us to expand further our understanding of participation in community food activities from the perspective of participants who join such activities in the UK.

Drawing on our analyses of the published case studies and the empirical data, we identified overarching good practices that enable participation or offer the potential to increase participation in the various contexts. These form the basis for a set of recommendations on how facilitating organisations (and programmes like FFLGT) can be more effective in enabling diversity in participation and enable a greater reach within local communities. In order to test if our recommendations were functional and relatable to practitioners, we organised a series of three sessions with our research participants to discuss them. We incorporated their feedback which is reflected in the recommendations.

Interviews and Focus Groups *Distribution of participants*	
FFLGT Staff	9
Activity organisers	10
Other organisations	5
Total semi-structured interviews	**24**
2 Focus group sessions	15
Total interviewees	**39**

Activities described by empirical study participants

- School gardening
- School intergenerational cooking
- Community gardening
- Group cooking and eating
- Nutrition education
- Environmental and sustainability education
- Community kitchens
- Gleaning

Settings where community food activities were located

- Rural, inner city, and urban schools
- Community spaces
- Public land
- Care homes
- Farms
- Family hubs
- Online sessions

Table 2: Snapshot of empirical study

3. Key findings

In this section, before we present our key findings, we draw attention to the two concepts of 'food citizenship' and 'social food citizenship' that framed our research.

In academic literature, although food citizenship has received growing attention over the last couple of decades, it lacks empirical operationalisation, and it has been variously interpreted.[4] Similarly, we also did not find a clear or workable definition of social food citizenship. In our empirical study, most interviewees were either not familiar with the term 'food citizenship', or they were uncertain of its meaning, and did not necessarily feel that it was a particular helpful term for community engagement.[5] Also, none of the community food activities that we included in our study articulated their goals and activities explicitly as 'social food citizenship'.

In reality, the picture on the ground is mixed. Most community organisers in our empirical study described their engagement with food-related activities in terms of the 'social' dimension of community food activities, seeing it as an effective medium to bring people together. Only a small minority amongst the community organisers described their engagement as a response to failures in the food system or for challenging dominant food-related practices. It must be acknowledged that the enactment of *food citizenship* – understood as citizens having power and agency to actively shape the food system while going beyond the 'mindset' of passive consumerism to support or build an equitable, socially just and environmentally sustainable food system – is not that evident across many contexts. Nonetheless, it is striking that alongside food being used as an effective means of bringing people with different social and cultural backgrounds together, the diverse opportunities made available for people to participate in a social environment, and the various positive individual and collective outcomes therefrom, emphasise broader related societal goals, like the promotion of community development and social cohesion. As social practices that demonstrate 'meaningful' interaction for the participants centred around food, we use the term 'community food activities' (*i.e.*, community-based, social food activities that fall outside commercial and public sector) in this research.

[4] Section 2, Report 1. [5] Section 3.1, Report 2.

3.1 Community participation: a social ecological approach

Our literature review and empirical research revealed a wide and diverse range of motivations and barriers to participation that are context-dependent and often intertwined. It also showed that there is no single lever that enables participation in community food activities across all contexts. Importantly, it is also not useful to focus only on individuals themselves when considering their participation in collective social activities. Instead, this consideration demands a holistic understanding of the drivers that enable those factors that inhibit participation from a community centred, place-based approach.

In order to emphasise the interconnectedness between the motivations, barriers and enablers influencing participation in a specific context, we adopted the social ecological approach (Bronfenbrenner, 1979; Stokols, 1996). This approach underpins influential contemporary perspectives that stress multiple determinants at multiple levels in various contexts (e.g., health promotion and education). It is also an approach that deserves receiving attention within food studies.

An overview of the key findings – depicting motivations, barriers, and enablers that influence the process of community participation from a social ecological perspective – is shown in Figure 1.

The social ecological approach allows us to understand community participation both as a process and as an outcome of interactions. These interactions do not only take place between the three 'wedges' of motivations, barriers, and enablers (as shown in Figure 1), but also within each of these, *i.e.*, the interactions across the five levels of individual, family, community, organisation and policy. These five levels are represented by the five nested circles:

At the **individual** level (shown as blue circle in Figure 1) factors that might influence participation include knowledge, skills, attitudes, values, beliefs, expectations, perceptions, and demographic characteristics (e.g., income, age, gender, race/ethnicity, and education).

At the **family/household** level (shown in green in Figure 1), the important factors influencing participation include close relationships, such as with family members, friends, co-workers, and immediate social circle, as well as family norms, traditions and customs.

Community level (shown by the yellow circle in Figure 1) factors that might influence participation include the 'settings' (*i.e.*, schools, community centres, workplaces, care homes, community kitchens, cooking clubs); characteristics of the places where people live, work and engage (e.g., community cohesion, levels of deprivation, social inequities, community resources and infrastructure, geographical dis/advantages); social relationships and networks (formal, informal). Community in this framework, therefore, includes both the social-cultural and the physical environment in which people live, work, and interact. In the context of this research, we consider smaller, local organisations as embedded within the community and hence included in this level. The larger facilitating organisations (charities or anchor institutions), alliances and networks are included in the Organisation level as described next.

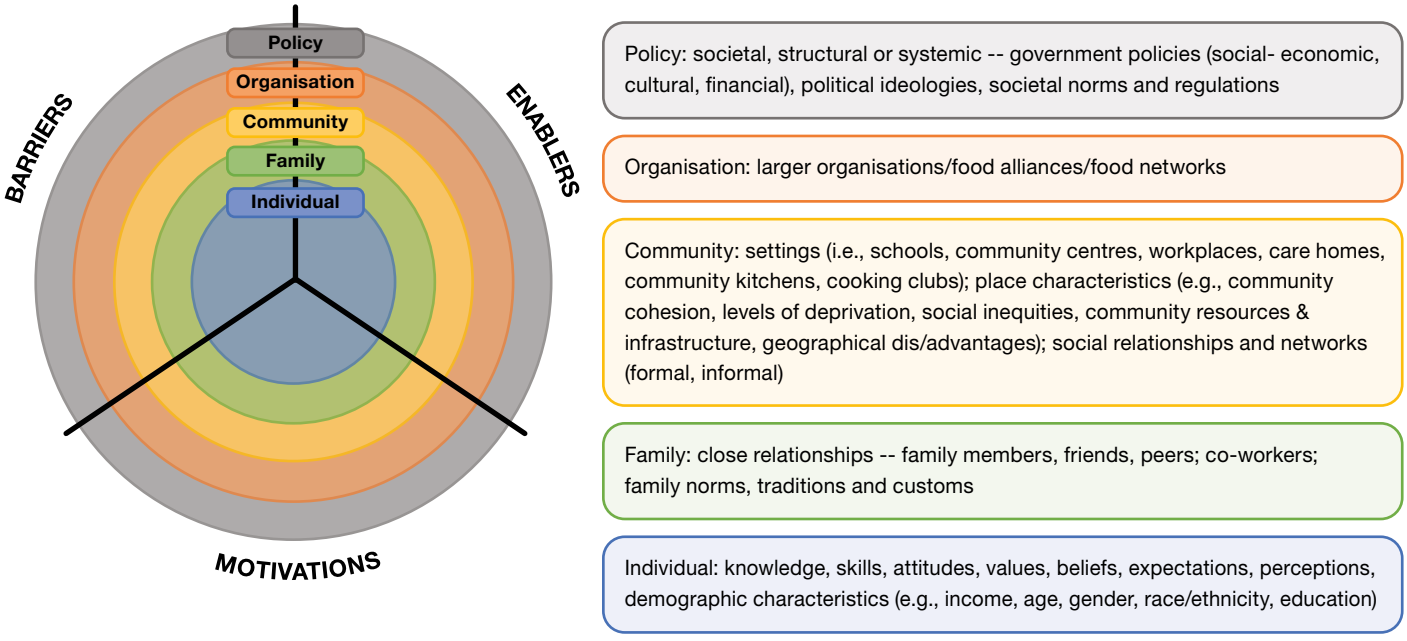


Figure 1: A social ecological approach to participation: multiple factors, multiple levels

Given our research focus on the facilitating role of larger third sector **organisations** for community food activities, we considered it important to place 'organisation' as a separate layer above the community level (shown by orange circle in Figure 1). This emphasises the influence larger organisations, food alliances and food networks have on local community participation, even though they may not be directly embedded in local communities.

The outermost circle (shown in grey in Figure 1) labelled as the **policy** level includes social-economic, cultural, and financial government policies, political ideologies, and wider societal values, norms and regulations. It emphasises the influence of structural or systemic factors on motivations and barriers.

Key insights

- The process of community participation in community food activities is complex and influenced by multiple factors at multiple, interacting levels.
- By providing a nuanced and systemic understanding of participation processes, the social ecological approach can help build the foundation for well-informed strategies which can help identify and act on context-specific key influences.
- To facilitate participation by diverse communities, it is not sufficient to 'simply' target one level of influence, such as individual-centred motivations or barriers, but it requires simultaneously supporting motivations while removing barriers arising from the family/household, community, organisation, and wider policy levels.
- Participants' motivations, their experiences of barriers, and enabling factors for engaging with activities influence their intention to act. This influences the relationships that they have at the interpersonal and community level. There is a dynamic, multidirectional relationship between the different levels.

3.2 Motivations

In this section, we describe the motivations for participation in community food activities by aligning them with the five different levels identified in the social ecological approach. We then summarise these motivations in Figure 2.

Individual/personal level

- Health and wellbeing (physical, mental, emotional)
- Develop skills and social connections
- Share knowledge and skills
- Social act of participation
- Socio-environmental injustices
- A sense of community

A common motivation for participants in community food activities relates to expected or experienced **health and wellbeing** benefits. Both the systematic review and empirical study identified that addressing personal physical, mental, and emotional health issues sparked initial interest in activities. This was often followed by actual engagement and participation in community food activities as they provided a means to alleviate some of these personal challenges.

For some, there was also a desire for personal development -- to **develop skills and social connections** (including opportunities to be signposted to additional community networks, support groups, resources or other activities). In other cases, participants were motivated to **share their knowledge and skills** (such as gardening techniques or cooking expertise) with fellow participants, an opportunity both for personal growth and for contributing to their wider community. This was a common motivation, especially in the case of participants who felt that they had knowledge/skills that would be useful to younger generations, as found often in the context of intergenerational activities, such as those in a school environment (e.g., school gardening, cooking and eating together).

Related to the processes of learning and sharing, but also going beyond was the **social act** of participation in itself. Pleasure and enjoyment, a lifestyle choice, a desire to volunteer, or the celebratory aspect of participation motivated these participants. Often, it was these 'other things' associated with community food activities which were equally or even more of a motivation. Certainly, motivations went frequently beyond a strictly personal nature.

There was an awareness of wider **socio-environmental injustices**, with individuals viewing community food activities and social networking as a way to work towards addressing these injustices. More broadly, individuals were motivated by a **sense of community**, often linked to a strong community self-identity.

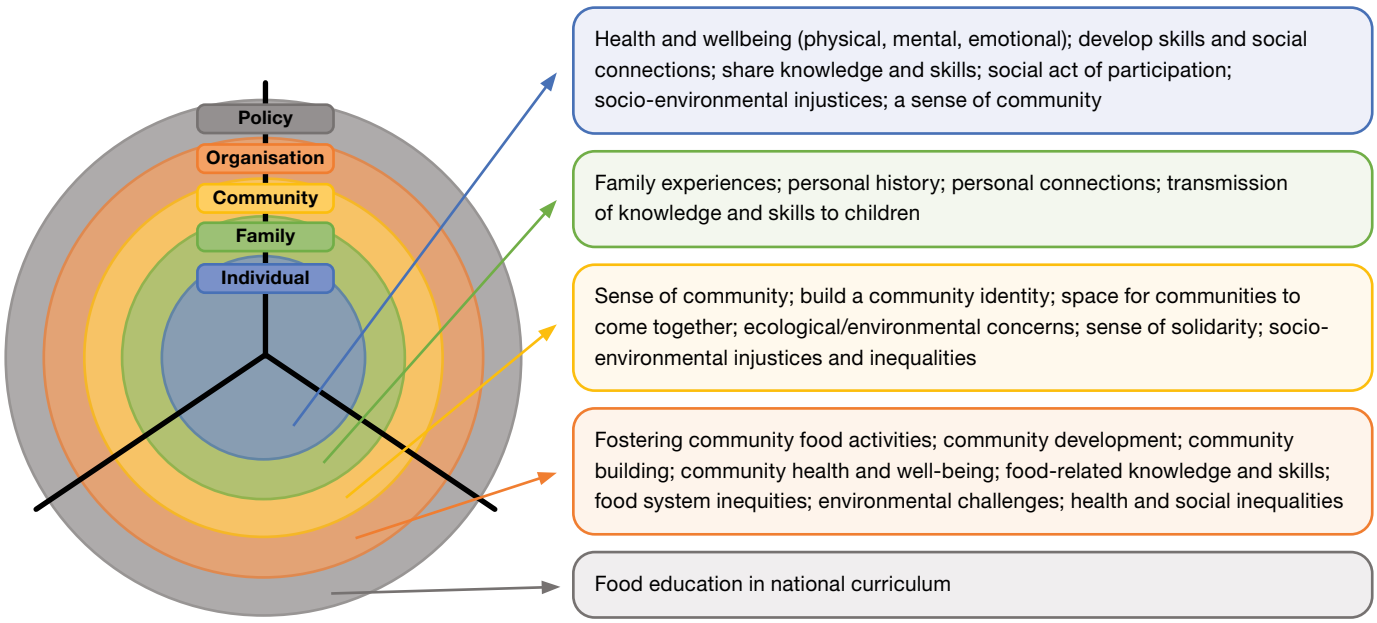


Figure 2: Motivations for participation in community food activities

It is also worth noting that motivations can change over time. For example, while the initial motivation of an individual may have been to develop new skills, once these were acquired, their positive experiences linked to the success of learning and active engagement supported a shift in personal motivations for staying involved, for example, due to a desire to share their own knowledge with others.

Family/household level

- Family experiences
- Personal history
- Personal connections
- Transmission of knowledge and skills

Motivations to participate can be related to past **family experiences** and **personal history**. For example, growing up in a household that was actively engaged in food-related activities like gardening, motivated some people to participate in community gardening in their adult life, either as participants or as activity organisers. This was due to their prior knowledge and positive experience of the activities.

Personal connections with family members or with friends already engaged in community food activities were also influential, as word-of-mouth was often a common communication pathway for initial engagement with activities.

Another family-centred motivation related to participants' expressing the desire not just to learn skills for themselves, but to pass on **knowledge and skills to their children and grandchildren** as part of a family or cultural identity. For example, where growing fresh, organic food or culturally specific food is seen as part of family identity and cultural traditions, community gardening space provided the opportunity to pass on the skills and knowledge to future generations.

Community level

- Sense of community
- Build a community identity
- Space for communities to come together
- Ecological/environmental concerns
- Sense of solidarity
- Social-environmental injustices and inequalities

Motivations are related to both the social and the physical environment in which people live, work and interact. A common motivation cited by organisers and local community organisations was the desire to develop stronger, more resilient communities. This is underpinned both by a strong **sense of community** as well as by the desire to **build a community identity** among disparate groups of people. Community food activities became opportunities or spaces to enable people from different backgrounds to come together. An example of this was the integration between younger and older community members in some projects, aimed at fostering stronger intergenerational relationships and practices.

We noted that community food activities are often driven by proactive community members (individuals or groups) who are concerned about the well-being of their communities and aim to make a difference. In some cases, such social motivations are interwoven with **ecological/environmental** concerns as for example in the case of converting overgrown or disused public land into community food growing sites.

Another set of motivations arose from a **sense of solidarity** with movements that address **social-environmental injustices and inequalities** at both the community and societal level, such as food poverty and environmental degradation. These concerns found expression in community food activities such as community food growing or cooking and eating together. Such activities provided opportunities for ensuring the provision of food for vulnerable and disadvantaged community members.

In most cases, **motivations overlap** between social/community and individual/personal factors (as described above), with boundaries often blurred. For example, in the case of a community organiser who ran an urban gardening project, their motivation included the personal health benefits from physical activity and access to locally grown produce, as well as a sense of satisfaction over improving their local community environment by creating an actively engaged community around the garden.

Organisation level

- Fostering community food activities
- Community development
- Community building
- Community health and well-being
- Food-related knowledge and skills
- Food system inequities
- Environmental challenges
- Health and social inequalities

Motivations of community organisers and organisations were frequently related to the organisational goals, capacities, and financial resources which, in turn, were guided towards specific priority areas, for example, by the facilitating organisations or by the outcomes of community engagement processes.

We identified a wide variety of organisational goals which could be achieved through community food activities. At one end, these include **directly fostering community food activities** (e.g., FFLGT programme) and other **community-level goals** like community development and community building, the improvement of community health and wellbeing, and the building of food-related knowledge and skills (i.e., encouraging healthy lifestyles). At the other, goals are linked to **wider societal issues**, such as overcoming food system inequities, addressing environmental challenges, and alleviating the impact of health and social inequalities.

The organisations differed greatly in relation to how they developed the food related activities and how they ensured participation by their targeted groups. This points to the broad agenda within which community food activities are developed.

Policy level

- Food education in national curriculum

A motivational factor (or enabling condition) in the school setting was the introduction of **food education in the national school curriculum**. School teachers found this had made it easier for them to access the necessary support including kitchen space, food equipment, and time to organise food-related activities with and for the students. The curriculum change made it mandatory for schools to "do something" about food education (whether it is food preparation, cooking skills or understanding nutrition) which points to the influence of structural and policy level factors on motivation.

Key insights

- No single motivation or set of motivations are found to be most important. Instead, there are **multiple** motivations behind participation, with specific reasons usually an interplay of the type of activity, influences at different levels, and the way in which an activity was initiated and organised in the first place.
- Motivations can be both **intrinsic** (driven by values, beliefs, and attitudes) and **extrinsic** (or instrumental, i.e., with a specific benefit in mind).
- The potential of an activity to address several needs is in itself a key motivation for participation in the activity. This was most evident in the case of community gardening, slightly less so for community kitchens, and food sharing initiatives.
- The wide range of motivations indicate the different **individual, community, and social meanings** attached to the various food-related practices that people and organisations participate in and suggest that motivations often go beyond the utilitarian aspect of food that might first bring them together.
- Not all motivations are made explicit, and they vary not just between individuals (even within a specific group) but also change over time, evolving over the life course of individuals and adapting to changing circumstances.
- Broadly, motivations can be categorised into **four groups**:
  - personal
  - social/community
  - ecological/environmental
  - solidarity with social movements

3.3 Barriers

We describe the identified barriers for participation in community food activities across the five different levels below. We have summarised the findings in Figure 3.

Individual/personal level

- Lack of time and competing priorities
- Difficulty of access (e.g., location, travel costs)
- Physical disabilities and/or health issues
- Lack of awareness
- Language and cultural barriers
- Differences in opinions/motivations
- Lack of representation and race-related barriers
- Negative past experiences
- Voluntary nature of participation
- Social expectations

Individuals frequently mentioned a number of interrelated barriers to community food activity participation, which included a **lack of time** and **competing priorities**. Challenges related to **accessing activities** (linked to **l**ocations, and/or costs incurred) were common across different contexts and types of activities. Such challenges occurred, for example, when travelling to a venue for a community meal in a neighbouring urban area or travelling further afield to a rural location (as in the case of gleaning). Barriers also arose from specific **physical disabilities** or **health issues**.

Another set of challenges were related to engagement and communication. These challenges can range from a **lack of awareness** of what kind of activities are available and what participation in those activities entails, to **language and cultural** barriers experienced by participants.

Once engaged with an activity, barriers sometimes arose due to **differences in opinions, motivations** and expectations between participants. In some contexts, some individuals felt they were **not represented** by the community groups or organisations organising community food activities. Others referred to **negative past experiences** (*i.e.*, racism, social exclusion) which made them unwilling to participate again.

For participants motivated by the desire to build friendships and strengthen social ties, their own **social expectations** could prove to be a barrier. For example, the fear or disappointment of not being able to build social connections reduced the likelihood of continued participation.

Some community organisers felt that the **voluntary** nature of participation in the community food activities sometimes acted as a barrier to planning and organising activities as that added an element of uncertainty in so far as the outcome of the activity could be anticipated.

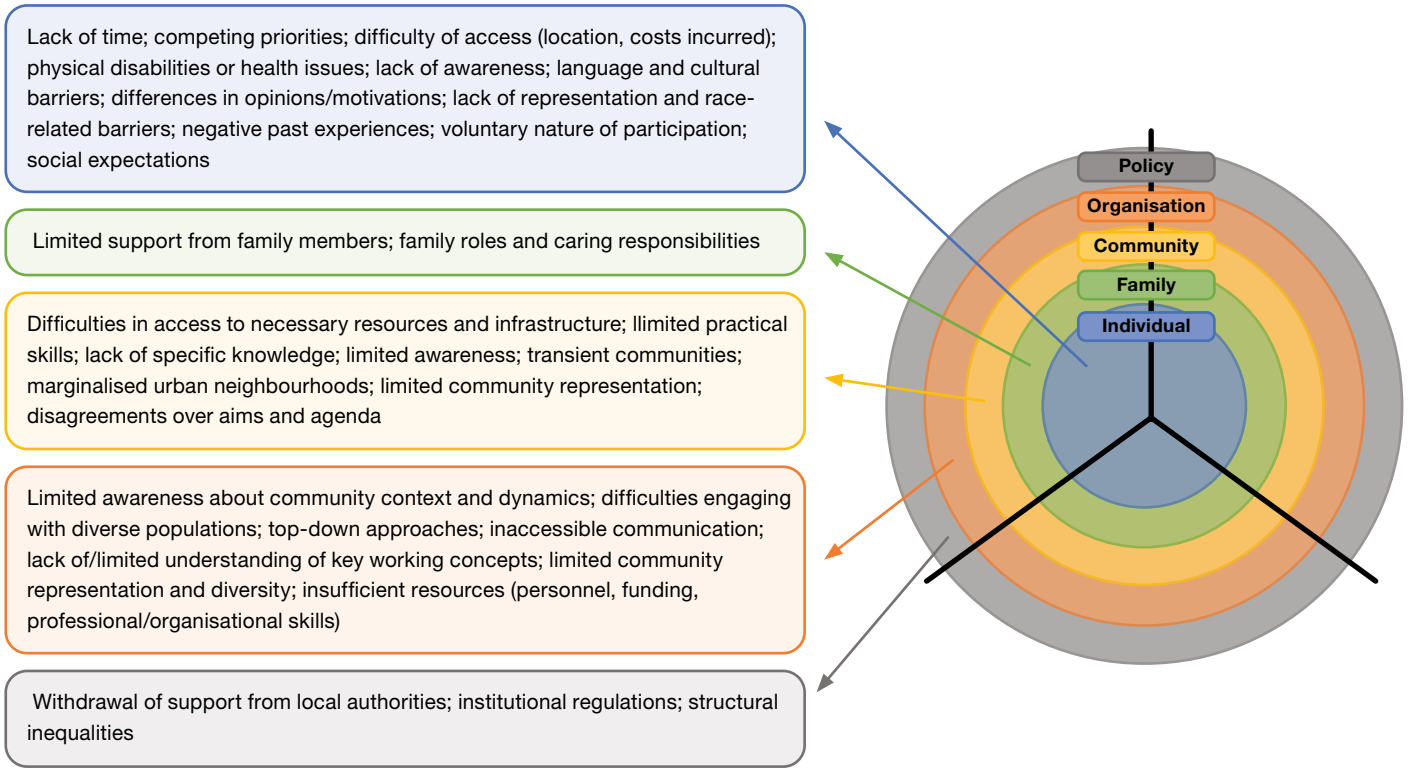


Figure 3: Barriers to participation in community food activities

Family/household level

- Limited support from family members
- Family roles and caring responsibilities

For some individuals, limited **support from family members** was a barrier. For example, in a school setting, some younger participants struggled to engage fully when activities included a take-home element. This created challenges when their family members were unable to support children's participation, for example, due to competing priorities, a general lack of time, or a lack of financial resources or required equipment.

Another barrier was related to **family roles** and caring responsibilities (e.g., as carer for young children or elderly family members) which impact on available time and energy and can hinder or limit the nature of engagement.

Community level

- Difficulties in accessing resources and infrastructure
- Limited practical skills
- Lack of specific knowledge
- Limited awareness
- Transient communities
- Marginalised urban neighbourhoods
- Limited community representation
- Disagreements over aims and agenda

Community organisers and organisations were sometimes limited in what they were able to achieve due to barriers in **accessing the necessary resources** and **infrastructure** (e.g., funding, kitchen equipment, suitable spaces, land for community use), **limited practical skills** (e.g., project management), and **a lack of specific knowledge** (e.g., institutional regulations).

For some organisers, a **limited awareness** of how to engage with diverse communities, especially during the initial stages of activity development, meant that they struggled to reach potential participants. Another barrier related to neighbourhoods with **transient communities**, that is, those with a highly mobile population (e.g., students). In such settings, the dynamic nature of the community can affect engagement and can cause a lack of regular and committed volunteers for community food activities.

Another form of place-specific disadvantages related to **marginalised urban neighbourhoods**. Although in-depth analyses of neighbourhood impacts on participation in community food-related activities are scarce, there is a consensus in the wider literature on the barriers to participation created by different forms of social exclusion and vulnerabilities prevalent in these neighbourhoods.

A related barrier is **limited community representation** in organisations. There was generally a lack of attention paid to certain social groups (e.g., disability, racial diversity, and LGBTQI). However, there was also the perception that organising activities designed for specific groups can unintentionally exclude others. Equally, aiming for very broad participation without a 'target group' might lead to a lack of consideration, especially when activities were designed 'for' participants and not 'with' them. Potential ignorance of specific needs and inability to create a conducive physical or social environment can unintentionally create obstacles for participation.

Another commonly identified barrier to participation related to **disagreements over the aims and agendas** of community food activities. Differing motivations/expectations resulted in a lack of strategic focus and limited participation in activities.

Organisation level

- Limited awareness about community context and dynamics
- Difficulties engaging with diverse populations
- Top-down approaches
- Inaccessible communication
- Lack of/limited shared understanding of key working concepts (e.g., good food, food citizenship)
- Limited community representation and diversity
- Insufficient resources (personnel, funding, professional/organisational skills)

At this level, a common barrier related to a **limited awareness** about community context and dynamics. Difficulties faced in engaging with **diverse populations** often interrelated with the ineffectiveness of **top-down approaches**, and **inaccessible communication** (*i.e.*, language barriers).

A **lack of familiarity and shared understanding of key working concepts** (e.g., good food, food citizenship) was also perceived as potentially inhibiting when engaging with communities on the ground. As an example, centralised communication using these concepts could sometimes be unhelpful, leading to misinterpretation.

At another level, mirroring barriers faced at the individual level, some community organisers observed **a lack of/limited community representation and diversity** in the structures

of facilitating organisations they were working with. This was linked to a potential undermining of trust at the community and individual level, affecting engagement.

Another set of barriers were related to **inadequate capacity** and **insufficient resources** (e.g., funding, personnel, professional and organisational skills) which made facilitating organisations less effective at engaging with communities, especially on a longer-term and sustained basis.

Policy level

- Withdrawal of support from local authorities
- Institutional regulations
- Structural inequalities

A common barrier related to the **withdrawal of support** (e.g., funding) from local authorities. As an example, in a specific community context, the local authority had previously supported organisations that ran community food activities with funding and worked with the community on the development of local food growing strategies, However, later on support was withdrawn, adversely impacting existing activities.

There were also barriers related to **institutional regulations**. For organisers and organisations, it was challenging to identify and navigate various regulations, even when local mechanisms for food governance were well developed. For example, gaining permanent access to public land is often a major barrier for community food growing projects due to stringent planning regulations.

Structural and systemic inequalities, both historical and current, faced by certain community groups, particularly black and minority ethnic groups, were found to be barriers in obtaining access to land and other resources for food-related activities. Another set of societal barriers to participation in community food activities relate to social and cultural norms, the values and role of paid work and food-related activities in people's lives as well as food and agricultural policies that support the production of cheap food commodities[6].

Key insights

- Barriers are **diverse and multiple** and depend on the type of activity, individual participants' circumstances and community environment. They are also linked to how the activity was organised (whether by individuals, charities, housing associations, and community groups, in their sole capacity or in collaboration with other stakeholders) as well as the discrepancies between activity agendas and the motivations of those engaged.
- Barriers reflect **social, cultural and political power relations and inequalities**. Although these were not often made explicit, they are critical for our understanding of how and why individuals and communities get and stay involved in community food activities. Even when opportunities exist, the uneven distribution of power, social networks, and other resources can broadly shape participation, while, simultaneously, the benefits from participation may not be equally felt.
- Barriers are often **inter-linked**, with individuals, communities, and organisations often experiencing multiple barriers arising across the different levels simultaneously.
- Broadly, barriers can be included in **three groups**:
  - limited resources and infrastructure (e.g., knowledge, skills, funds, kitchen equipment, space/land
  - challenges with community engagement and communication
  - challenges related to policies and institutional regulations

[6] See O'Kane 2016, Wilkins 2005

3.4 Enablers

The enablers presented here emerged from our analysis of motivations and barriers, in particular, from the experiences and recommendations of individual participants, community organisers and organisations, and from successful approaches described in the reviewed literature. We describe these enablers for each of the five levels, summarised in Figure 4.

Individual/personal level

- Affordability and accessibility (e.g., timing, location, transport costs)
- Practical and social support
- Appropriate and effective communication
- Inclusive approach (friendly and welcoming spaces, trustful relationships)
- Opportunity to volunteer

Given some of the access barriers to community food activities described earlier (Section 3.3), increasing the **affordability and accessibility** of these activities (e.g., in terms of their timing, location, availability of transport) are key factors enabling participation. As an example, in the case of a particular gleaning activitiy (the act of collecting surplus/leftover food from various sources, such as farms, orchards or farmers markets) lift sharing arrangements were organised to ensure individuals residing in urban areas could access the rural location.

Another enabling factor relates to the provision of **practical and social support**, especially for vulnerable and disadvantaged individuals. This may involve signposting them to other organisations (such as advice agencies, support and mentoring groups, family hubs) or activities (*i.e.*, language lessons, personal development programmes). Here, establishing **appropriate and effective communication**, for example, by utilising a variety of different mediums and multi-lingual resources can facilitate participation from diverse communities.

For fostering a long-term engagement with community food activities, an **inclusive approach** is considered as vital. This entails the building of friendly and welcoming spaces and trustful relationships between individual participants, community organisers, and other organisations.

Creating **opportunities to volunteer** in community food activities is another enabler of participation since volunteers can act as informal conduits for disseminating information about the activities in their networks. Thus, creating volunteering opportunities attractive to diverse community members will also enable community food activities to reach out to a more diverse group of communities.

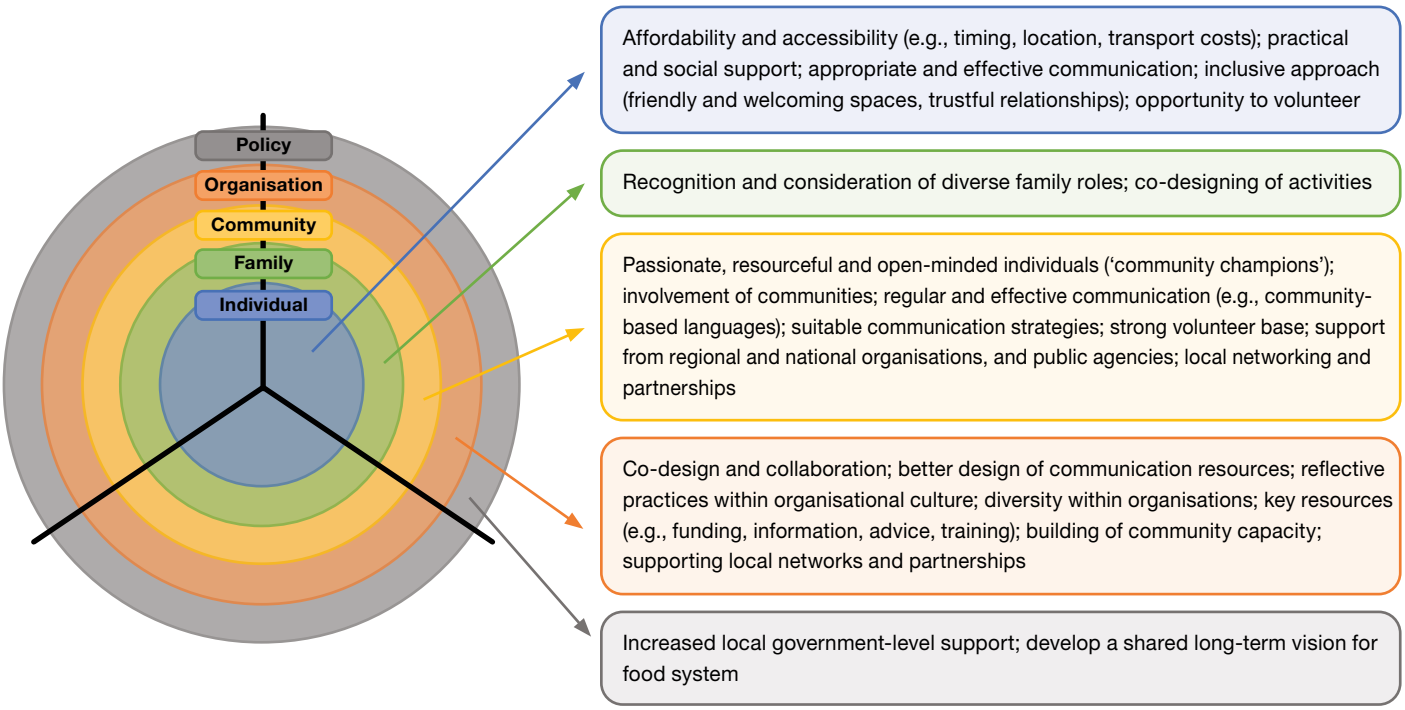


Figure 4: Enablers for participation in community food activities

Family/household level

- Recognition and consideration of diverse family roles
- Co-designing of activities

A key enabler at the family level is the explicit recognition and consideration of individuals' **diverse roles** (for example, as carers, as (single) parents), and how these might impact participation. This points to the importance of community organisers **co-designing** activities in dialogue with potential participants within the community. This allows for an appropriate adaptation to specific needs, for example, over timing of activities and competing priorities. Specifically, the importance of considering participation from a gendered dimension was noted in order to avoid the potential exclusion of women and men entrusted with childcare commitments or other caring responsibilities.

Community level

- Passionate, resourceful and open-minded individuals ('community champions')
- Involvement of communities
- Regular and effective communication
- Strong volunteer base
- Support from regional and national organisations, and public agencies
- Local networking and partnerships

Both the academic literature and our research participants stressed the importance of passionate, resourceful and open-minded individuals who play a key role in driving the organisation of community food activities, described in various contexts as **'community champions'**, or **'community leaders'**. They are individuals committed to their local area and with a strong sense of community, mostly organising activities on a voluntary basis. In some contexts, however, a formalised role was considered relevant, with financial support (e.g., salaries) for overcoming financial and time-related constraints. Relying on enthusiasm alone was not considered sufficient for meeting the high demands placed on facilitating and coordinating resources at the community level in a sustained manner.

The **involvement of communities** throughout the development and operation of activities, was considered important for successful engagement. Starting during the initial stages of activity development, **regular and effective communication** with participants enabled the latter to remain engaged. The use of simple messaging, and community-based languages, especially in a socio-culturally diverse context, and suitable communication strategies were considered as useful for a greater reach.

Building a **strong base of diverse volunteer**s was considered another key enabler across different contexts.

In order to reach a wider range of participants, more **support from regional and national organisations**, and **public agencies**, including local authorities, was considered important to increase the capacity of community organisers and organisations. This closely links to the significance attached to community organisers and organisations actively joining or even **building local networks** and **alliances** to share resources, skills, and knowledge to organise community food activities.

Organisation level

- Co-design and collaboration
- Better design of communication resources
- Reflective practices within organisational culture
- Diversity within organisations
- Key resources (e.g., funding, information, advice, training)
- Building of community capacity
- Supporting local networks and partnerships

From the perspective of organisations, collaborative ways of working with community organisers and local community groups were identified as key enablers. Collaboration was found to be an important strategy to overcome challenges around community engagement. The key premise here is that **co-design and collaboration** with locally embedded actors can enable the facilitating organisation to **r**ecognise existing power relations within communities, and to better understand participant, volunteer and organiser motivations and/or barriers. In broader terms, this enables a greater understanding of the community context. Such better understanding of local contexts, for example, enables a better **design of communication resources** since easily accessible and appropriate communication was identified as key to participation by diverse groups.

It was also recognised that building in **reflective practices in organisational culture**, to learn from what works and what does not, and to adapt when required, was important.

Increasing **diversity within organisations** was another enabler seen as key to alleviating perceptions and challenges experienced at the individual and community level (*i.e.*, feeling unrepresented; language and cultural issues).

The significant role played by facilitating organisations in providing or enabling access to **key resources** such as funds, information, advice, and training, and building community capacity is recognised as key to creating an enabling environment. A related enabling role linked to facilitating organisations was **building** and **supporting local networks and local partnerships** within and beyond communities to support a joined-up approach to fostering community food activities.

Policy level

- Increased local government-level support
- Develop a shared long-term vision for the food system

Increased engagement by local authorities in developing local planning regulations and policy strategies to support community food activities is seen as an important factor at the government level. Equally, **public policies** at national level supporting food-related activities (e.g., enabling access to public land for community growing) was considered key to enable wider participation. For this, it is important to develop a **shared long-term vision** among food citizenship actors working towards a just and sustainable transformation of the food system.

Key insights

- Enablers are context-specific in response to a particular combination of motivations and barriers.
- 'Reaching' and 'enabling' individual/group participation appear to be key processes underpinning participation by diverse communities. However, what works for one individual/group/community may not work for another.
- Nonetheless, there are several common factors which enable community food activities. They can be put into **five groups**:
  - Access to key resources
  - Effective networking
  - Co-design and collaborative approach
  - Increased community capacity
  - Institutional and public policy support

3.5 Summary and reflections

Participation in community food activities

Our research has shown that individuals can have a wide range of possible motivations and face different types of barriers across the five levels that influence their participation in community food activities. Equally, the specific **type of community food activity** also influences motivations and potential barriers that might be encountered across the different levels. While community gardening, for example, satisfies multiple goals and hence attracts participation from diverse groups, gleaning, in contrast, attracts participation from people with a specific set of values and skill sets. The **type of community setting** in which activities take place also influences the motivations and the potential barriers that are encountered. For example, the organisation of an intergenerational lunch by a motivated teacher in a school setting requires responding to a different set of barriers than those faced by organisers of a shared meal for older residents in care homes.

The research findings point to the significance of acknowledging the diversity of contexts within which different community food activities are carried out, and the diversity of experiences of individual participants, community organisers and organisations that are engaged in these activities. This suggests the **impossibility of having a single blueprint approach** for increasing participation amongst diverse communities, and one that may be easily applicable to all types of community food activities.

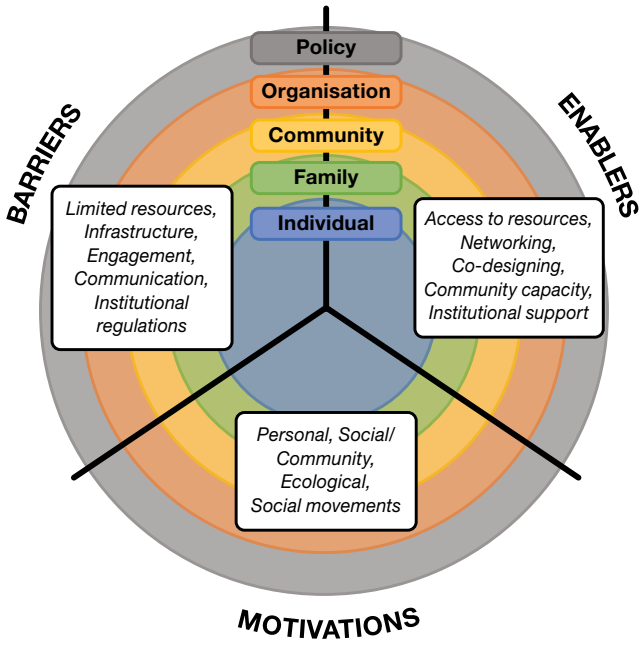


Figure 5: Participation in community food activities from a social ecological perspective

Nonetheless, the commonalities across the contexts and experiences of community organisers point to the significance of different types of structural and relational arrangements between organisers/organisations and individuals leading to different forms of interaction and different levels of commitment from participants. There are three key aspects here, at the individual, relational, and organisation level, which, when linked to the different levels of the social ecological approach can be posed as a set of **key questions** (as listed below). These questions can guide actions for increased participation in community food activities.

- Individual (and family) level: Are activities meaningful to individuals?
  - » *Do they have the motivation(s) and opportunity to participate?*
  - » *Do they have the resources to overcome barriers?*

- Community level: Are existing social and institutional relationships as well as physical environment encouraging participation?
  - » *How do individuals and community groups/organisations relate to each other?*
  - » *How do they relate to the advantages/disadvantages of the neighbourhood / locality?*
  - » *How supportive are existing social networks and partnerships?*

- Organisation level: In the context of reaching diverse communities, how are facilitating organisations engaged with the community?
  - » *What are existing processes of communication and engagement with the community?*
  - » *Which processes and network connections or relationships are missing?*
  - » *Who is involved and what are their potential /current motivations, capacities and resources?*
  - » *Who should be involved and what are their potential /current motivations, capacities and resources?*

Diversity in participation

From the perspective of practitioners, achieving 'diversity in participation' was interpreted in various ways. For some organisers, diverse participation meant bringing together people from heterogenous/diverse backgrounds (e.g., older and younger people from different socio-cultural groups), whereas others aimed to include 'everyone in the community'. For some, it is through targeted activities that diversity is achieved. This enables participation by one particular demographic group who might not often participate in community food activities,

but who, it was hoped, could particularly benefit from a specific community food activity (e.g., female refugees joining together over shared community meals). Thus, while some aimed for a **'targeted'** approach, others found an **'open'** approach useful to engage with individuals from diverse groups.

There was an awareness that organising activities designed for specific communities could unintentionally exclude others, especially when they were designed *'for'* participants and not *'with'* them. However, it is key to make it explicit what 'type of diversity in participation' is intended. Thinking about diversity explicitly can enable organisers to specifically consider people's diverse motivations, barriers, and enablers, and in turn, respond to **context- and community-specific** requirements. These considerations acquire particular significance in the context of marginalised urban neighbourhoods characterised by multiple forms of social exclusion and vulnerabilities. Furthermore, it is also relevant when considering 'types of diversity' that are currently not often explicitly given thought to. For example, there was very little mention of disability and participation, and the participation of some groups (e.g., LGBTQI) were not reflected in the literature nor the empirical study.

Intersectionality issues also did not come up explicitly in our research despite a growing body of research that recognises how social identities such as socio-economic status, race/ethnicity, gender, and location intersect to shape the barriers and opportunities in participation across various contexts, including in food studies[7].

[7] see Williams-Froson & Wilkerson 2011

4. Organisations as civic enablers for participation

Over the years, with increasing food insecurity and food system-linked environmental issues, organisations, networks and alliances (e.g., Soil Association, Feedback, Feeding Britain, Food Power, Sustain, and Sustainable Food Places) have increasingly turned to supporting community food initiatives. They constitute **a diverse and heterogeneous** group, having different management and organisational structures, and **organisational goals** (e.g., for health and wellbeing, overcoming social isolation, community development, ecological and environmental concerns, unsustainable food systems) within which they support community food activities, and which take various forms, including the ones considered in our study. Despite their growing relevance, our research reveals a dearth of studies that examine **third sector led participation processes** in sufficient detail in relation to community food activities. However, the few studies that focused on organisational aspects - and our own empirical research – point to the significance of varying arrangements between organisers and participants leading to different forms of interactions and diverse levels of commitment from participants.

In the social ecological framework, as noted earlier (section 3.1), facilitating organisations are working at the **'cross-roads' between multiple levels** (as illustrated by the orange circle in Figure 6). By their very nature, these organisations occupy a key role as **civic enabler**. That is, they exert influence over the choices people (individuals and family/households) and smaller community organisations make and over access to resources (e.g., knowledge, skills, funding) that aid people and smaller organisations in making those choices. In a similar vein, the smaller locally embedded community organisations play a civic enabler role at community level (the yellow circle in Figure 6).

Following the social ecological approach, we propose that in order to turn motivations and opportunities into engagement with community food activities, facilitating organisations are required to identify and act upon enabling factors at multiple levels -- downstream (community, family and individual), upstream (wider policy level) and horizontally (with other facilitating organisations/networks/alliances). In other words, it requires the adoption of a **multi-level approach** to increase diverse participation in community food activities. Further, by adopting a context-informed approach, there is the potential to identify **leverage points** (Meadows 1999, Abson et al. 2017) at each level, and those which cut across the levels. Such leverage points are aspects where relatively small changes could lead to a large shift in behaviour. In this context, some of the more tangible and relatively easy to conceive changes (such as access to key resources, monetary incentives) are vital. However, it is also recognised that bridging the intention-action gap will require a more complex intervening in the 'system design' (structure of information flows, rules, power structures etc.) and 'system intent' (*i.e.*, the goals, values and norms, say for a shared understanding of 'good food' and food citizenship) in order to influence social action. Within a social-ecological framing of participation, influencing the 'deeper' changes (as in norms, values, and power redistribution) can be considered as cross-cutting, ambitious and necessary, especially when pursuing a normative and transformative agenda. This is where the building of a shared long-term vision across the sector is paramount.

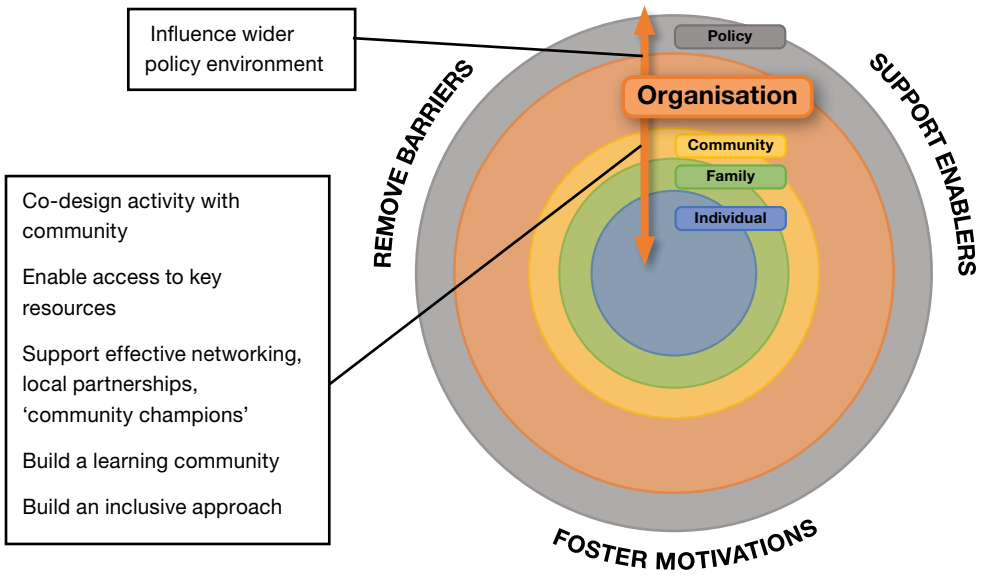


Figure 6: Organisation as civic enabler from a social ecological perspective

5. Recommendations

Drawing on our analyses of findings across the different contexts and the empirical study in our research, we have developed a set of recommendations for community organisers and facilitating organisations (and programmes like FFLGT) which can potentially enable inclusive community participation in diverse communities. These include:

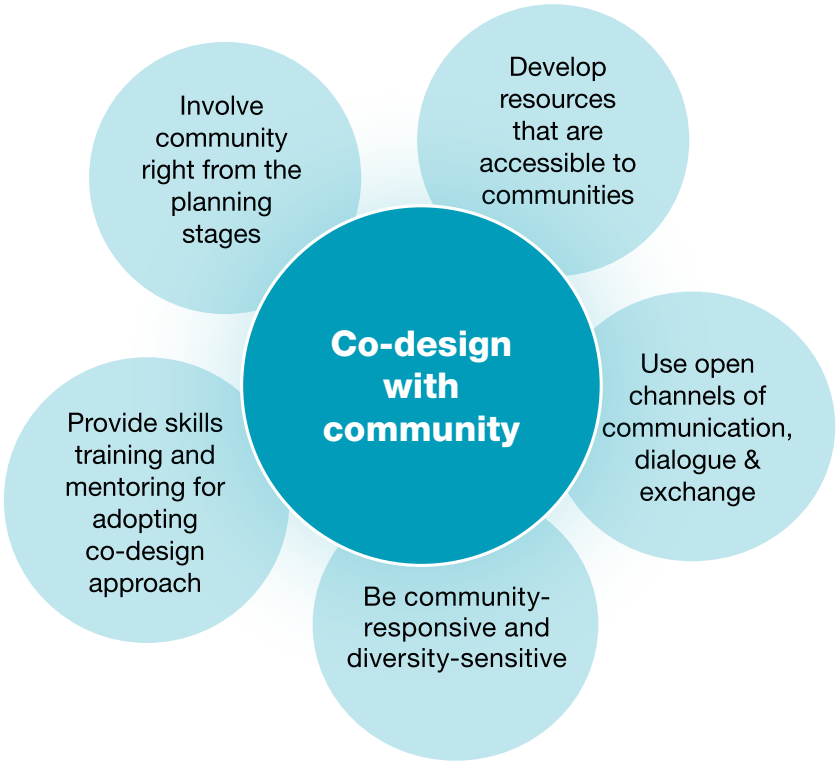
- **co-design activity with community**
- **enable access to key resources for community organisers**
- **support networking, local partnership building, and 'community champions'**
- **build a learning community**
- **build an inclusive approach**
- **influence the institutional and policy environment to support community food activities**

5.1 Co-design activity with community

Enabling the co-design of activities in a community-setting is a powerful tool since it allows activities to respond to the needs and interests (motivations) of people in the community and gives them the opportunity to actively shape what is taking place.

Acknowledging and responding to lived experiences of individuals in the community and the diverse knowledge that exists creates the chance for activities that are designed 'with' the community rather than 'for' them. This allows community members, groups, and organisations to be **actively engaged** with the process, thus building a sense of ownership.

It also allows to not only identify and focus on what motivates participation, but also to **co-develop** approaches to overcome any potential barriers. Areas where engagement with the community are key include, among others, the finding of solutions for potential barriers (e.g., language, skills); the development of appropriate communication techniques (*i.e.*, social media, word-of-mouth, flyers); and the co-development of learning resources that are accessible and effective. Using co-design approaches supports participation in community food activities at the community level in a holistic, **creative, participatory**, systematic, and sustained way.



While acknowledging that co-design as a process is relatively time consuming and may require more resources than the traditional top-down or bottom-up processes, its benefits for a community (fundamentally influencing the social and physical environment within which participation takes place) can be long lasting, outweighing the costs.

On a practical level, co-design requires **involving community** members and key stakeholders at the earliest possible stage. Here, it is important to intentionally consider community diversity and related diverse motivations and barriers. The scale and scope of this process, drawing on the social ecological framework as we have proposed, extends to acknowledging influences across multiple levels (individuals, family/households, community, and policy). It includes identifying context-specific areas of change and support needed for enabling participation at these different levels. It is important to acknowledge that a co-design process is an ongoing (never finished) process and requires different **resources and capabilities** than traditional top-down processes; it is a key process to enable greater diversity in participation of community based community food activities.

Guidelines

- *Involve community right from the planning stages*
- *Develop resources that are accessible to community*
- *Use open channels of communication, dialogue and exchange*
- *Be community-responsive and diversity-sensitive*
- *Provide skills training and mentoring for adopting co-design approach*

In a community gardening project working with disadvantaged communities in Hull, UK, volunteers described "how they felt they were active participants in shaping the project rather than responding to pre-determined goals and plans"

(Ramsden 2021: 294)

I think it's got to be near where you are, and you've got to be prepared to open up and let the community use you … You have got to be a generous nature... generous with your time, generous with your personality, in terms of wanting to help somebody else.

(Participant 5, individual volunteer)

...it's really about asking communities, what is it they want to happen in that area, and then providing those services... Some things can be very prescriptive, it's very specific, but that's come from needs from the community.

(Participant 8, facilitating organisation)

… I think we've always been community-led and -responsive. So even though we've had certain ideas, everything we discuss with the local community. And we've tried to deliver everything that the community asked for that's within our remit. So, we're in constant engagement, which is what the community meals provided...

(Participant 20, community organisation)

At a participatory garden in Southern Germany designed to raise awareness for sustainable and healthy food production, a series of events were planned together with refugees and parts of the city's immigrant population to give both sides the opportunity to interact and develop events.

(Hennchen & Pregernig 2020: 8)

Co-design approach: illustrative examples

5.2 Enable access to key resources for community organisers

Organising community food activities successfully requires not only dedicated and enthusiastic people, but also requires a whole range of **resources**, including those of a financial or material nature (e.g., funds, equipment and infrastructure) as well as 'knowledge capital'(*i.e.*, information, knowledge, organisational and technical skills). Such resources are necessary across various levels, from the individual participants and community organisers to the facilitating organisations.

By ensuring the provision of key resources for both individual participants and activity organisers, facilitating organisations can build **confidence**, improve accessibility, and support the development of a diverse range of community food activities. Hence, it is helpful to offer training opportunities that consider diverse communities' needs, specifically for community food activities (e.g., growing techniques, cooking skills, community awareness) and for broader, organisational and technical skills (*i.e.*, managing volunteers, accessing infrastructure/equipment). Furthermore, it is important to provide **diversity-sensitive practical support** to access financial, knowledge, and other resources, e.g., through grant writing support, knowledge hubs, local partnerships (see below) and to consider ease of access to resources (e.g., minimising demand put on community organisers for evidence, incorporating creative methods).

Having overall greater availability of total resources for community food activities is obviously important - an aspect where shaping and influencing political decision-making is relevant (see recommendation 5.6) – however, it is also important that resources provided meet the specific requirements of a diverse range of community organisers and community food activities. In this context, the provision of a **variety of financial grants** that support various stages of activity development (e.g., initial set-up, consolidation and sustaining of activities, project evaluations, staffing costs) was considered important; here, especially highlighted as positive were those that enable an adaptation to the specific activity requirements (which might change over time, see 'co-design' above).

In order to ensure that resource provision takes place in the most suitable form, it is recommended to incorporate co-design and collaborative practices. These can help build a greater understanding of individual and community needs.

In a sector where resources are already stretched, the provision and allocation of resources can be problematic. Despite this, enabling access to financial and other resources can both support organisers to run activities and to improve individual participation from diverse communities.

Guidelines

- *Consider ease of access to key resources*
- *Provide diverse types of financial grants*
- *Provide diversity-sensitive practical support to access resources*
- *Offer training opportunities that consider diverse communities' needs*

In the case of an after-school cooking club in Leeds, UK, which involved pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds, teachers had found that the provision of ingredients in class benefited the children by removing the barrier of ingredient costs for families.

(Gatenby et al. 2011: 111)

...it's one of the most open grants that I've ever seen, which was fantastic. So, we could fund grants for somebody to cook like, you know, as I said, buy the slow cookers, get compost, seeds, anything that will enable people to come together. Also, hire if people needed to pay for venue... so, anything at all. It was really open and really broad.

(Participant 3, facilitating organisation)

In a study on community kitchens, accessibility of the kitchen site, necessary equipment, and a socially comfortable environment was considered vital to the setting up and sustainability of community kitchens.

(Lee et al. 2010)

... with shorter funding, it's very much here's the project, this is what we need to do, let's go and do it. And it doesn't give us time to learn or adapt or change. When you first look at how X (programme) was ran at the beginning of the funding to how it was run at the end of the funding, the fundamentals were still the same, but there was a lot of changes made over the seven years, made it relevant and kept relevant as well.

(Participant 11, community organisation)

... we used to make kind of lift share arrangements and coordinate. So, if one person isn't able to get there, they might be able to get picked up on the way... Or, if we were specifically working in areas where we knew there was high deprivation, and we knew we wanted to work with a specific community, we might hire a minibus or arrange for transport to be made.

(Participant 12, community organisation)

Access to key resources: illustrative examples

5.3 Support networking, local partnership building, and 'community champions'

Building relationships within local communities is one of the expected outcomes of many community food activities. However, place-based relationship building between individuals and between organisations, *i.e.*, networking and partnership building, is also a key factor that enables the successful implementation of these activities through emerging synergies. These **synergies** can occur through an increase in opportunities for e.g., co-design (see 5.1), for accessing/sharing resources (5.2), and for learning from each other (5.4). In other words, through effective networking and local partnerships between a range of actors at different levels, positive effects can be achieved through **improved coordination**, a **multi-directional flow of information, capacity building** and, potentially, the **alignment of strategic directions** of different actors. If networking is done in a way that actively engages marginalised people, it can lead to positive results as part of an **inclusive approach** (5.5). In addition, networking across the sector, from a local and regional to (inter)national scale, also creates the synergies and opportunities for **collaboration**, while also creating the environment for influencing changes at policy level (see 5.6).

Successful networking can refer to more **informal**, often local, relationship building efforts between different organisers and organisations where actors within a specific locality or around a particular topic of interest reach out to each other, sharing knowledge, resources and experiences to work towards common aspirations. If such local relationships are nurtured by active engagement efforts (e.g., by pointing each other to emerging opportunities, sharing information and resources), they can **increase the reach** of specific community food activities within diverse communities, and can turn such activities into platforms that **increase awareness and participation** across multiple interrelated programmes.

By bringing together different actors through networking and relationship building (*i.e.*, by creating **bonding and bridging links** within the community and beyond) several barriers experienced across the levels can be alleviated. Additionally, networking and especially the more formalised creation of partnerships enable members to work towards food system-related goals more effectively, both at the micro- (*i.e.*, development of local food systems) and the macro-scale (*i.e.*, eradication of food poverty, transition to a sustainable food system).

Nonetheless, given existing barriers for those engaged in community food activities (e.g., competing priorities, diversity in interests, time constraints, resource limitations), it is not a straightforward process to build mutual relationships and bring a range of diverse actors together. Therefore, just as community food activities need to be accessible, so do resources that support networking. Here, given their strategic position between the individual, community, and policy levels, facilitating organisations can play a vital role in supporting networking and the building of local partnerships. This can take place by:

- Offering opportunities for training – while many community food activity organisers are natural 'connectors', others might appreciate the opportunity to learn more about networking and partnership building,
- Allocating specific time and resources within projects for networking and relationship building and appreciate/ protect/ support relationships that have already developed,
- Creating opportunities (e.g., focused networking events) and spaces (e.g., online platforms) that also explicitly consider the needs, capacities and contributions of diverse communities.
- Developing a shared long-term vision which provides the direction for change, while inspiring individuals and groups for collaborative action

Further, there is correlation between highly motivated, passionate and active individuals and the leadership required for organising community food activities. As such, there is a need to support these 'movers and shakers' or 'community champions' in a structured and institutional way so that they motivate and empower people to get involved, create groups to meet local needs, and pro-actively build links within the community and beyond. While acknowledging the significance of their 'natural' people skills, lived experiences, and in-depth knowledge of local context, community organisers benefit

from being supported further. This could be through building their confidence, self-efficacy, and skills (e.g., facilitation, organisational, administrative, reflexive learning), and through specific learning opportunities focused on participatory approaches useful for local engagement on diversity and inclusion. In a co-design approach (5.1), it is possible to see their role extending to collaborative partnership working with facilitating organisations for developing locally feasible and locally owned action-plans that address the needs of the community. Forms of such collaborative working could be really beneficial and are being tested by the Soil Association and their 'Experts by Experience' network. It has also been implemented in the context of the health care sector, through a network of community champions for the sharing of knowledge and experiences, with funding to cover their time and investment of their local expertise.

… we've always been networkers and apart from networking locally we have been networking, nationally, internationally… with community food groups… Land Workers Alliance, the Food Sovereignty Movement, Global Network for Food and Nutrition, the Global Solidarity Alliance… So, we've always been networked. We're also networked into allied struggles like housing, land justice. I think those are the two main ones. Increasingly more into climate justice networks.

(Participant 7, community organiser)

In a community kitchen in Victoria, Australia, the organiser reached out to other organisations to reduce their own costs in the running of the activity. Linking up the kitchen with food donation organisations and existing community gardens was found to minimise the financial cost of ingredients and ensure the sustainability of the activity.

(Lee et al. 2010)

Guidelines

- *Connect with community partners and organisations, and build relationships*
- *Strengthen existing networks and alliances*
- *Build capacity of 'community champions'*
- *Create a shared long-term vision for specific local communities*

… everything we've done, we've not done on our own. We've had partners helping us… like for the community garden, Centre A (another local partner) is helping us and equally we help them. It's a partnership working. So, I like it, because it's not them and us. And if you get away from 'them and us,' then you're likely to create a much cohesive partnership where your families know you're all working together…There was no competition. There was no kind of anybody's better than anybody.

(Participant 6, community organisation)

'Be Enriched' community kitchens and canteens across London were often hosted in the premises of other organisations. By networking with similar organisations, participants benefitted from access to multiple interrelated programmes.

(Marovelli 2019)

… we switched up our model to be one where… we're running a series of training webinars and advertising trying to try to find community organisations that might be interested in embedding kind of gleaning activities within their work. And yeah, that's been really successful so far. And we continue to seek funding to do that. So that we can hope that gleaning becomes a kind of decentralized open-source process.

(Participant 12, community organisation)

Networking and local partnerships: illustrative examples

5.4 Build a learning community

The notion of a 'learning community' links very closely with the recommendations described above that give importance to co-creation, to knowledge resources, and to networking. The basic premise of this recommendation focuses on the social nature of community food activities, that is, they are co-learned and enacted with others. People learn not only through and from their own experiences, but also by observing others' actions and their results. Participation in community food activities, therefore, can be seen as happening alongside other everyday activities that take place in family groups, schools, and community centres, and hence is linked to the context in which it occurs. Building a learning community means to support and create spaces which enable co-learning between individuals, organisers and organisations aligned around a shared goal. This shared or co-learning happens through interactions, conversation and active reflections on 'successes' and 'failures'. It enables the development of a continuously evolving, mutually shared understanding of what works for whom, why and where. Importantly, this learning and reflection also needs to lead to a timely adaptation of existing programmes and practices through such new insights, emphasising the importance given to 'real world' practitioners' and participants' experiences. This is especially relevant in tackling the complexity of participation processes in community food activities.

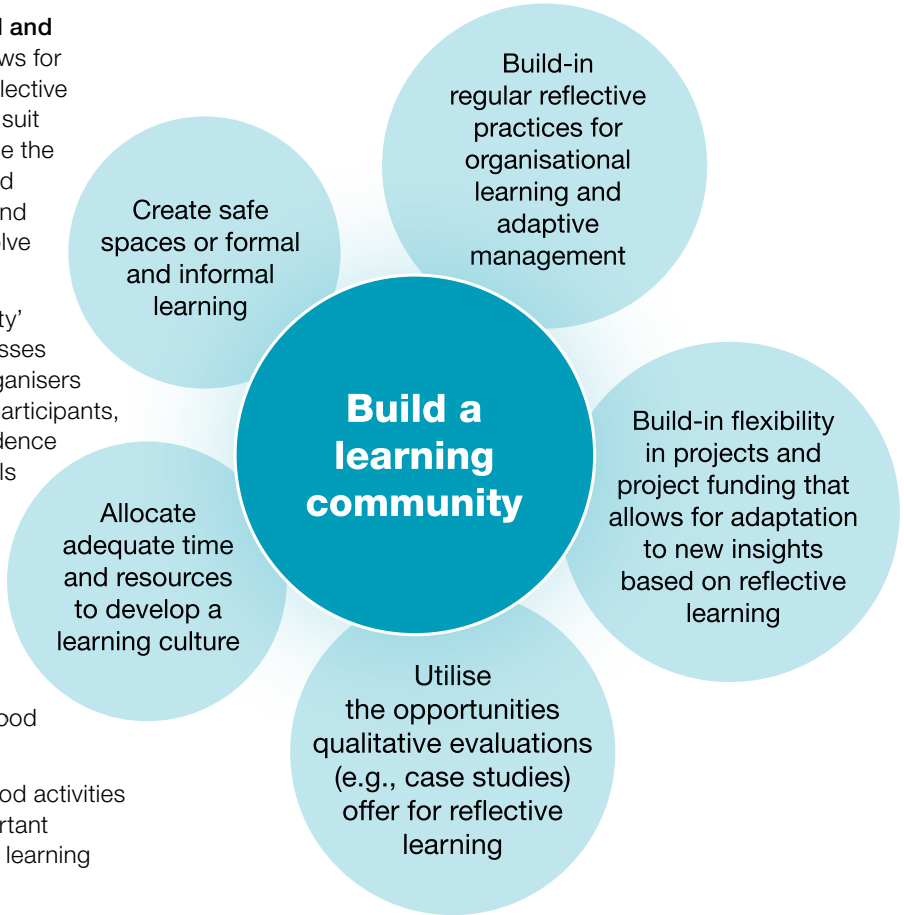
A 'learning community' can involve creating **formal and informal spaces** for experiential learning. This allows for the sharing and exchange of experiences, both collective and individual, to develop, adopt or adapt ideas to suit specific contexts. Here, it is important to emphasise the appreciation and valuing of diverse knowledges and experiences, which allows for individuals to grow and community food activities and organisations to evolve and thrive.

It is important that the idea of a 'learning community' is woven through the different levels and encompasses opportunities for individual participants, activity organisers as well as organisations. From the perspective of participants, an inbuilt focus on co-learning can build self-confidence (through e.g., success in sharing knowledge or skills with others) and 'self-efficacy' (*i.e.*, confidence in their ability to undertake action, and to persist in that action despite obstacles or challenges). Creating a positive environment for continuous **reflection and learning** – which can be built into ongoing practical activities – helps in building a sense of community, thus influencing motivations and attitudes towards participation in community food activities.

At the intersection between ongoing community food activities and facilitating organisations, there is also an important opportunity for **co-learning**. Here, project-relevant learning can lead to positive adaptation based on ongoing and post-programme evaluations. In order to facilitate such learning, however, it is paramount to complement evaluations that focus solely on outcomes with qualitative case studies that focus on process – hence offering the opportunities to learn about enabling factors for successful community food activities. Equally, **qualitative evaluation** approaches also offer the chance for reflections on barriers and obstacles to understand why certain goals were perhaps not achieved, and why certain community groups did not participate. Ongoing co-learning in a safe space hence allows organisations to address and **adapt** in response to motivations, barriers and enablers that can increase (diversity in) participation and programme success.

Within the organisational environment, co-learning involves integrating regular reflective practices into organisational learning. Reflective practice is about learning from reflection (experience-action) before, during and after action. Such practice, as in the other settings, needs to take place in safe spaces that allow open and honest reflections for both formal and informal learning.

Creating a learning community will enable organisations to reflect on their structures and processes and adopt strategies that foster effective community engagement. Here, learning



communities have been seen as critical components for building **'distributed leadership'** (Brown and Hosking 1986, Hosking 2007). This notion of leadership informed by contexts (local social-cultural-political) is a shift from understanding leadership in individualistic terms towards a leadership dispersed across groups, organisations and society (*i.e.*, focused on connections, interconnections and networking) which is relevant in the context of scaling up community food activities.

At the Mind Sprout community garden in inner-city Melbourne, it was the learning approach adopted by the organisation that included … "practices of 'guiding' and 'coaching' rather than 'directing' that created opportunities for authentic social inclusion".

(Whatley et al. 2015: 435)

… testing out new ideas and innovative ideas that we have with our end users to make sure they feel fit for purpose, to make sure that they meet the needs of people and that they're not already in existence, that they offered something new and exciting. And testing those out. And then bringing that insight back into the team and making sure that those recommendations are basically heard and then acted on... So, we're just seeing whether that's something they want, whether it's something they'd like to take part in again, and then how they would improve it to make it work for people that feel more like them or sort of others within the (project)…

(Participant 10, facilitating organisation)

The knowledge and actions produced during these processes enhance mutual understanding, and questions and solutions to problems are coproduced.

(Kindon et al. 2007; People's Knowledge Editorial Collective 2017; Wakeford and Sanchez Rodriguez2018)

Guidelines

- *Create safe spaces for formal and informal learning*
- *Build-in regular reflective practices for organisational learning and adaptive management*
- *Build-in flexibility in projects and project funding that allows for adaptation to new insights based on reflective learning*
- *Utilise the opportunities qualitative evaluations (e.g., case studies) offer for reflective learning*
- *Allocate adequate time and resources to develop a learning culture.*

… we listen to our participants. So pre-COVID, we used to hold regular focus groups, where we would invite past participants to come along, and just tell us what they thought. You know, to be open, be honest, if they thought it went well, if they didn't, and things like that. So, you know, we're always sort of trying to listen to the people that are taking part in the projects and the activities.

(Participant 11, community organisation)

Gardeners conceptualised community gardens as sites for neighbourhood activism, with the capacity for mobilising a microcosm of people in ways that imbued a sense of hope and self-efficacy among community members against government structures.

(Kingsley et al. 2019:9)

A learning community: illustrative examples

5.5 Build an inclusive approach

Inclusivity here refers to practices and policies that enable the effective and equal participation of individuals from all backgrounds, including those who often lack access to opportunities or resources due to having disabilities, being of older age, facing language barriers or racial discrimination, or belonging to other marginalised groups. Creating an inclusive approach for community food activities and the involved organisations means adopting an approach that - through specific policies and practices - proactively encourages and enables participation from diverse communities.

An inclusive approach starts, ideally, at the organisational level and includes the composition and structure of organisations, their operational processes, and the type of opportunities they create. Supporting an inclusive approach within organisations and for community organisers includes

- creating opportunities for inward and outward-facing diversity,
- creating a **safe environment and spaces** which allows for diverse voices to be heard,
- providing funding for training and mentoring on coproduction and collaborative ways of working,
- foregrounding and valuing diverse lived experiences,
- using **participatory methods** which include creative ways of engaging with diverse communities.

Some of these approaches can require a redirecting of existing resources; others require a change in organisational focus. However, using an inclusive approach is pivotal to enabling greater participation from diverse communities, while organisations benefit from an increased capability to connect with individuals, the integration of inter-cultural sensitivity and awareness of power inequities in their engagement processes. Putting inclusivity at the centre can lead to the building of **mutual trust and good relationships** that, in turn, facilitates participation and includes proactive thinking about diverse motivations, interests and enablers.

The adoption of an inclusive approach by organisations and activity organisers is also key to a greater level of confidence and trust which can motivate individuals to take that first initial step towards engaging with a community food activity or with a community organisation.

Diversity as we noted earlier (section 3.5) is interpreted differently depending on whose perspective it is and the reasons behind addressing it, which makes the understanding of diversity context-dependent and locally embedded. Nonetheless, our empirical research showed a consensus view that community food activities should be open to much wider sections of the UK population and that each specific activity should be as inclusive as possible.

Guidelines

- *Create a safe environment and build trust*
- *Skills training and mentoring on coproduction and collaboration*
- *Develop appropriate messaging and communication strategies*
- *Use participatory methods in engaging with communities*

… it's about respect, it's about recognizing that the way we do things, you know, my way is not necessarily the right way, what might seem perfectly normal to me, maybe a cultural thing. So, it's understanding different cultures. Now, that's a challenge because we deal with many different cultures, and trying to understand every one of those is, is a challenge.

(Participant 20, community organisation)

… across the whole food movement and community movement, there's an element of class, and it's more a middle class understanding, and that can be predominantly white.

(Participant 8, facilitating organisation)

'Skip Garden and Kitchen', which works predominantly with young people from disadvantaged backgrounds, developed programmes that connected young people with business and facilitated access to information and places that participants would not normally have access to. These approaches were multifaceted as they sought to "reduce social exclusion, but they also increase the resilience and the impact of the initiatives themselves".

(Marovelli 2019: 199)

… if we put a male member of staff in a female dominated group, then that sometimes can create a barrier straight away. We've in the past worked with agencies that have been working with female victims of domestic abuse and things like that. So, if a male walks into the room, they're probably not going to engage. Whereas if we put a female into that group, then they're more likely to, to engage.

(Participant 11, community organisation)

… I would say that there needs to be more diversity…I would like to see the website and messages to be more representative of the communities that they want to reach. If you want to reach these communities, then you need to present something that you can relate to and if people don't see themselves and what they are doing, then I think it's a lot harder for them to buy into your programme.

(Participant 8, facilitating organisation)

In the case of community allotment gardening by refugees in the UK, they described the critical support provided by the refugee organisations including information on horticulture and/or practical and social support, and signposting members to other courses, groups and organisations which was key to promoting social inclusion.

(Bishop & Purcell 2013)

An inclusive approach: illustrative examples

5.6 Influence the institutional and policy environment

Successful community food activities are driven by many project-internal factors, which include the ability of organisers and organisations to base their work on co-creation, sufficient and appropriate resources, strong networks and partnerships, as well as on a learning-centred and inclusive approach. However, the success of community food activities is also shaped by external factors that can support or hinder the very existence of such activities, and which can impact diversity in participation. Here, policies, laws and regulations from the local to the national level could play an important role; however, the attention that has been given to the needs of local food systems and community-based food activities is very context-specific and lacks broader national frameworks in most cases.

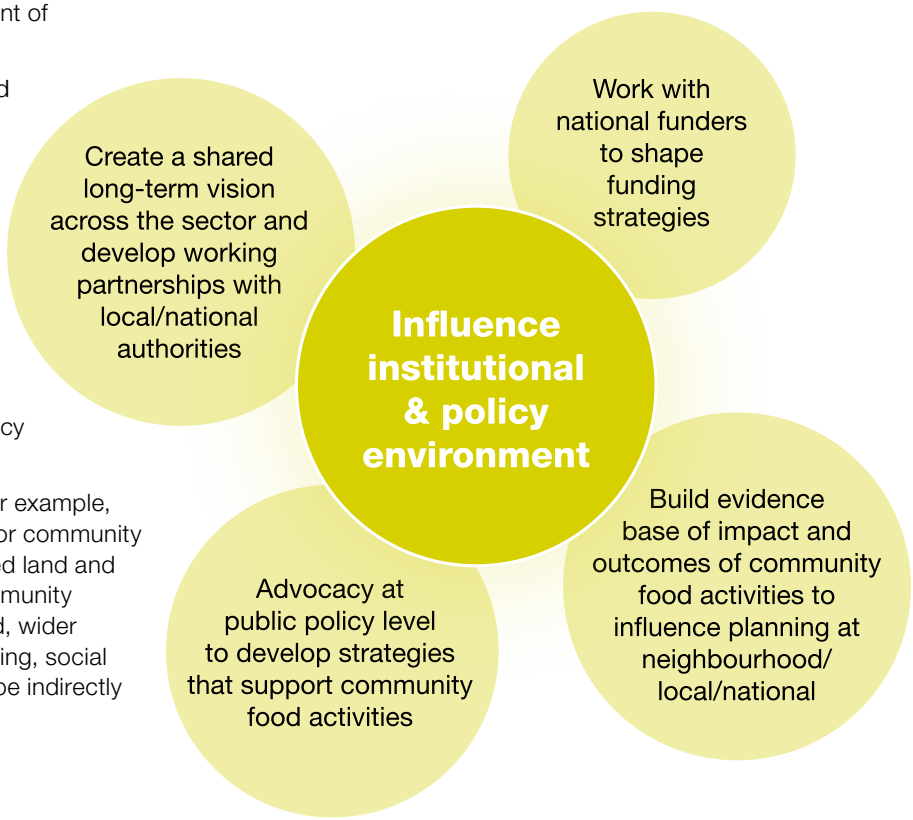
An example from our research where the restrictive impact of some government regulations on community food activities was evident, was regarding the availability of (unused) public land for community food growing. The lack of land as a barrier lies outside the control of the community, who then rely on organisations at the local, regional, or national level to challenge current regulations and/or policies. A key role here is played by facilitating organisations which - as we noted earlier (section 4) - hold power, resources, and the capacity to influence changes at the policy level. Such policy work relies on **policy engagement with local and national authorities** and advocacy for strategies that support community food activities. In this context, facilitating organisations can positively support disadvantaged social groups through the establishment of explicit expectations around the active engagement of such groups.

We see facilitating organisations playing a two-fold role. First, they can **collaborate and network** with similar food citizenship actors, *i.e.*, organisations, alliances, and interest groups that share common ground on food system transformations, to create a **shared long-term vision** of the food system and thus build a broader front to positively influence policy change. Secondly, they can financially or strategically support local actors (e.g., individual organisers and community organisations) in their efforts to create a supportive local or regional policy environment for community food activities.

Ultimately, strategic changes at the policy level (for example, higher priority given to community food growing for community development, legislation for easy access to unused land and to other key resources) can not only facilitate community food activities, but through them, it can be argued, wider social issues (e.g., inequities in health and well-being, social fragmentation, and environmental injustices) can be indirectly addressed.

More broadly, it is generally acknowledged that policy trends and legislative changes affect both the general environment in which organisations operate and specific aspects of their activities and services (e.g., the reach of their programmes, their target areas and/or groups) as well as their overall ethos. For example, this is evident in case of legislative changes in relation to equality and diversity, which can influence the organisational practices, both within and outside of organisations, in relation to reaching out and enabling participation by marginalised groups.

Policy changes have an additional impact through bringing changes in the nature and sources of funding available for communities. Hence, directly influencing the stability and capacity of organisations for supporting community projects (through infrastructure, services, and activities) and the potential to scale their reach and impact (such as through linking up with organisations sharing similar missions and building of networks and alliances). This requires organisations to also **work with funders** on establishing shared norms and expectations around community change projects. Such approaches could include, for example, norms that value active engagement of disadvantaged groups and building their capacity to do so; monitoring, reporting and evaluation processes that integrate reflexive learning, and value social impact and social outcomes; building synergies between different funding streams and/or different funders for aligned outcomes.



Further, there is increased understanding that effective community-based change efforts for **'systemic action'** requires the mobilisation of diverse stakeholders as agents of change, creating and implementing conditions for change within their respective spheres of influence (Foster-Fishman & Watson 2018). Extending this to our social ecological framing of participation in community food activities, this calls for **multi-actor engagement** to effectively influence interactions across the multiple levels for a **coordinated approach** to increasing community participation in food-related activities, specific to the context. This makes advocacy at public policy level key to creating synergies that are benefical for strategies supporting community food activities and building collective accountability for action.

Guidelines

- *Create a shared long-term vision across the sector and develop working partnerships with local/national authorities*
- *Work with national funders to shape funding strategies*
- *Build evidence base of impact and outcomes of community food activities to influence planning at neighbourhood/local/national level*
- *Advocacy at public policy level to develop strategies that support community food activities*

In a community garden situated in a disadvantaged urban area in northern England, at a strategic level, the elements of a long-term approach discussed included "effective joint working between the funder, the lead charity and its partners, volunteers, wider support networks and the local council"

(Ramsden 2021: 294)

… every neighbourhood needs some sort of initiative to encourage more food to be grown locally, whether that is allotments, land sharing scheme or something else. In the short-term, the Government should offer a large funding programme to encourage more of this activity. In the longer-term, the law should be changed so local authorities and parish councils have a legal duty to promote this kind of work as it is essential for our communities if they are to transition to sustainability.

(Participant 17, community organisation)

In a study of community gardening in Stockholm, those gardening projects which were successful were built on cooperation between informal gardening groups and other stakeholders, including the district administration.

(Bonow & Normark 2018)

… we've got support from public health, dieticians in the areas we work with. We work with other existing programmes such as the school holiday enrichment program, which is a food and fun kind of activity across [the region] and trying to get it linked in with the other programmes, things like Sustainable Food Places, Food Power campaigns. And just the general policy context in [the region] as well: how can we take what's happening in communities up to [regional] government through things like the Food Poverty Alliances … I attend a cross party food group at the [regional] government. So, it's great to have that buy in from all parts of the system in [the region].

(Participant 23, facilitating organisation)

… I think food citizenship, at the moment, is seen as a bottom-up approach where community work together to help find good food, when actually it really needs to be as much top down with government working to support good food. I think we've, in the last 50 years, done everything we can to make it harder politically.

(Participant 10, facilitating organisation)

Institutional and policy support: illustrative examples

Recommendations for increasing participation in community food activities in diverse communities

6. Conclusion

We summarise **key insights** from our research here:

- Participants' decision to get involved and to stay engaged in community food activitiies is influenced by diverse motivations and the barriers they face. It also depends on the presence or absence of enabling conditions in their specific contexts.
- There is a consensus that participation and longer-term engagement in community food activities will take place as long as the expectations of involved individuals, organisations and other stakeholders are fulfilled and if communities feel that they have ownership in terms of the project design and activities.
- No single motivation or set of motivations is found to be most important. Instead, there are multiple motivations behind participation, which can be grouped into four types: for personal benefits; for social/community related reasons; ecological/environmental concerns; and to show solidarity with larger social movements. Those activities that can address several motivational factors at the same time appeal to a more diverse range of participants.
- Barriers are equally diverse and multiple and depend on the type of activity, individual participants' circumstances and the context. They can be of broadly three types: limited resources and infrastructre (e.g., knowledge, skills, funds, equipment, space, land); challenges with community engagement and communication; and challenges related to policy and institutional regulations.
- Enablers are context-specific and correspond to a particular combination of motivations and barriers. Key enabling factors identified across different contexts include five types: access to key resources (funding, infrastructure, knowledge, skills, sufficient time); networking and supportive local partnerships; co-designing; increased community capacity (knowledge, skills, volunteers, community champions); and public policy support. There is no one single lever to enable participation in community food activities applicable to all contexts.

We used the **social ecological approach** to organise the findings and by doing so, the multiple and interacting influences of motivations, barriers and enablers on participation in community food activities across five levels – individual, family/household, community, facilitating organisation and the wider policy level – became apparent. This approach provides a nuanced and systemic understanding of participation as a social process. It can serve as the foundation for developing well-informed strategies from a community centred, place-based perspective for increasing participation in diverse communities. It can also be used to evaluate to what extent any community food activity, plan or programme supports drivers and barriers at each of these levels, and to gauge how much funding goes to which levels, and how many of the levels.

From a social ecological perspective, facilitating organisations are working at the 'cross-roads' between multiple levels. They occupy a key role as civic enablers with the capacity, knowledge, resources, and power to influence community and individual level factors 'downstream', the policy level 'upstream', and horizontally (with other facilitating organisations, networks and alliances).

Drawing on 'good practices' identified from our literature review of case studies and the experiences of community organisers in our empirical study, we developed a set of six **inter-linked recommendations** for facilitating organisations to support and enable effective participation in community food activities. These are:

- Co-design activity with community
- Enable access to key resources for community organisers
- Support networking, local partnership building, and 'community champions'
- Build a learning community
- Build an inclusive approach
- Influence the institutional and policy environment to support community food activities

These recommendations have a sound basis in the research that we carried out investigating the drivers and barriers to increasing participation in community food activities. However, these recommendations cannot be seen as overcoming all the complexities that characterise diverse contexts and the dynamic nature of interactions across the multiple levels that we have drawn attention to. Further research is needed on the applicability and effectiveness of outcomes based on these recommendations across a range of contexts. In practical terms, the availability of capacity, funds, and skills can be a major factor facilitating or limiting organisations to make these feasible in each context. This is more so in marginalised and vulnerable communities that require additional commitment of time and resources for sustained engagement.

Despite the complexities, our research offers a set of recommendations to consider for supporting community food activities, particularly within the context of increased social isolation and disconnectedness experienced by individuals and communities that should not be underplayed. We are hopeful that this research will generate ideas and motivation for practitioners and researchers alike to learn from, and improve upon, our efforts.

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