



**Youth Roots Durham Final Report
February 2021
Youth Challenge International**

About the Team- Youth Roots Durham



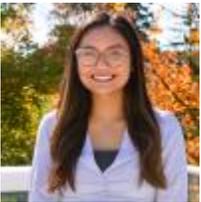
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Project Summary

Local Community Partner

Our local community partners are the Town of Whitby and Durham Region. Through the project span, we maintained correspondence with the Project Manager of Sustainability and Climate Change for the Town of Whitby, Jade Schofield and the Manager of Sustainability at Durham Region, Ian McVey.

A further community partnership with the Durham Food Policy Council (DFPC) and Durham Integrated Growers (DIG) helped our team immensely with speaker outreach, website development, and additional resources. We thank Mary Drummond and members of both organizations for their support and guidance. We also would like to thank Derek Chung for dedicating his time to assist our graphic design efforts and webpage creation.

Our project would not be successful without our community partners. We extend complete gratitude for their support.

Challenge Question

How can we increase knowledge on Food Security and Climate Change in the Durham Region during the COVID-19 pandemic?

Final Project Solution

There is a lack of knowledge in the Durham Region surrounding food insecurity and its relation to climate change. As a possible solution, we created a week-long event titled “Does Your Meal Plan Cover Climate Change?” Events included an educational speaker panel, networking event and four workshops that followed. The speaker panel consisted of industry experts within the government, non-profit and youth sector who answered questions regarding food security and climate change in Durham Region. The networking event followed, allowing participants to interact with speakers and understand how they could get involved with their local communities or grow professionally within the field.

The following four workshops were Climate Change 101, Food Security, Climate Change X Food Security and Youth Activism and Involvement. Current efforts to launch a webpage on Durham Food Policy Council’s website will allow recordings and resources to exist past the IMF program.

Project milestones and achievements

We managed a team to create and tackle the workings of an online summit. Members had an active role in completing tasks and seeking guidance from one another. We participated in design-thinking modules to create a project that would respond to the current COVID-19 environment, while also creating lasting awareness of climate change and food security within Durham Region. We extended our partnerships with Durham Food Policy Council and Durham Integrated Growers, allowing us to create deeper connections with local community actors and strengthen awareness of their work. The resources and additional help from Durham Food Policy Council allowed us to excel in structuring our project, reaching prominent industry leaders and developing our digital content through social media and the webpage.

We were successful recipients of \$1730 in IMF grant funding through two rounds of grant submissions, allowing our team to expand its access to resources (See Appendix 1).

With successful social media campaigning, our Instagram and LinkedIn followings expanded, allowing greater reach in audience interest. By releasing two surveys, we were also able to gauge audience interest in topics, schedule and structure of events.

Finally, we successfully executed all of our virtual events with consistent attendance and positive reviews.

As the IMF program ends, we await the launch of our webpage on Durham Food Policy Council's website sometime in late February.

Main Findings: What did you learn by implementing this project?

We released our summit and workshops to the target audience. We learned that communication and planning are vital to plan and deliver our project efficiently and effectively. By utilizing each person's strengths, we executed each phase of the project smoothly.

We also learned the importance of community partnerships and community outreach. Community partnerships are vital to allow for collaboration and positive community-building. We learned about some amazing organizations that are doing work in the interest of food security in the Durham Region. We hope to continue fostering these relationships for further collaboration.

Impact

Social Media

We created two social media channels: Instagram and LinkedIn.

Instagram:

Our target audience was youth in Durham Region.

Our target audience was most active on Instagram, allowing us to utilize the platform and share information through story campaigns and posts building up to the event. Our Instagram page accumulated 183 followers and an average reach (number of people who saw our content) of 115 accounts and 158 impressions (number of times our content appeared on feeds). In building our following, we found it useful to follow similar accounts, increasing our follower count.

LinkedIn:

Our LinkedIn page also allowed us to target university students, increase outreach (when individuals liked or commented on a post, it was publicly shared through their connections timelines in addition to the act of sharing our posts) and easily track metrics. Our page has attracted 27 followers since its creation in early December, with posts generating a range of 27 to 282 impressions (number of times a post appeared to LinkedIn members).

Event Engagement

Thirteen participants attended the speaker panel (See Appendix 2). The event focused on answering questions created by our team and the general public. One participant said, "I never considered that climate change affected food insecurity through scarcity / basic economics (supply + demand). Very interesting." Malcolm C

Five attendees attended the networking panel. With a more intimate group, we decided to format the event as a question period. Panelists also provided educational materials and local projects for attendees, which we sent in a follow-up email. This event informed youth on how they could get involved in environmental efforts.

Our first workshop (Climate Change 101) event was hosted by Ian McVey (Durham Region) and Jade Schofield (Town of Whitby) and had twelve attendees. Attendees actively engaged through survey polls and within the chat section.

Most participants stayed for the next workshop, Food Security and Food Systems, hosted by Mary Anne Martin (Durham Food Policy Council & Durham Integrated Growers). Thirteen individuals attended and enjoyed the interactive jam board breakout rooms (See Appendix 3/ 3.1)

The third workshop, Food Security & Food Systems X Climate Change, was hosted by Ryan Cullen (W. Galen Centre for Food at Durham College) with nine attendees. Many participants stated their

interest in this workshop. The guest speaker left attendees with a call to action to reach out to a local farmer and become familiar with local producers/farms (See Appendix 4/ 4.1).

The final workshop, Youth Activism and Involvement workshop was hosted by Trystan Lackner (Youth Roots Durham) and had eight attendees present, ending our week of events. Attendees evaluated their current capacities and brainstormed ways to become more engaged in issues they are passionate about (See Appendix 5).

Additional Metrics

We released pre-evaluation and post-evaluation surveys for attendees to complete. Before our events, attendees indicated participants had previous knowledge about climate change and food security; however, most had a limited understanding of food systems and local food security initiatives. During the post-evaluation surveys, attendees indicated their knowledge had progressed in all areas, especially their knowledge of local food security initiatives and organizations. Attendees indicated that workshops were easy to follow and well-structured. Surveys were not fully completed by all attendees; however, they provided us with valuable feedback to be used for future projects.

Testimonials

Evaluation Survey Testimonials:

“Speakers seemed very knowledgeable, and I trusted the sources being delivered.”

“The interactive portion and connecting with others through the jamboards. Also, the guest speakers were great.”

“Dynamic speakers, local focus, interactive activities.”

“I enjoyed the speaker’s passion and knowledge.”

“I really enjoyed the jamboards and getting to share ideas with other participants during the workshops. I also liked how each speaker had their own workshop to attend that was based off of their own knowledge on the topic of food security and climate change because they all connected in some way, but they also brought up their own information as well.”

Following our workshops, three attendees followed up with speakers to learn more from their insights and their work in the field.

We received positive praise from a few speaker panelists who were impressed by the event execution and schedule breakdown.

Insights & Lessons Learned

Top Challenges

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, we adapted our project to a virtual format. By transitioning all project planning and event execution online, we utilized project management tools like Google Drive, Basecamp and Slack. By delivering an online speaker panel and workshops, we developed a feasible project aligning with COVID-19 measures while also elevating youth education to gain familiarity with these issues in their community.

Our team had a little difficulty finding local speakers to participate on the speaker panel during our planning phase. Durham Food Policy Council helped engage community members and prominent leaders in food security within the Durham Region to participate in our speaker panel. We hope to collaborate with our community partners for future events and include more local youth groups and BIPOC communities to ensure our events are reflective of diverse voices.

Lastly, we had over 40 individuals who registered for our events; however, an average of 15-20 attended. During our promotions phase, we encountered a few complications with Instagram promotions. Considering Instagram is where we anticipated a lot of youth activity, promotions would have allowed us to reach more exposure and hopefully garner more interest within Durham Region and surrounding areas. We hope to utilize Instagram promotions and plan earlier promotion schedules to use social media platforms to their full potential for future events. Due to technological issues, we relied on word of mouth and organic promotions on social media and posting on student community forums.

Successful Strategies

We had great success with our speaker panel. Attendees enjoyed the diversity of industry leaders and the insight they provided. We also found the interactive components of workshops through Google Jam boards and Zoom polling successful strategies to keep attendees engaged.

By following similar Instagram accounts, our communications team was also able to grow our following effectively. We also found our evaluation surveys to be useful in designing our project to cater to attendees' wants.

We worked effectively within our respective roles with continuous team collaboration and communication. Strategizing the planning into different segments helped to envision and piece together a final project with a deadline in sight.

Climate Justice Lens

Climate change and food insecurity are directly linked; when dire situations arise, food becomes harder to reproduce and deliver to the table. When the climate becomes more inhospitable, the soil thus is stripped of its organic layer and cannot function properly to produce healthy plants. Therefore, our team focused on highlighting public knowledge on why and how everyone could curve the issues

connected to food security. Leading Durham experts encouraged the local public to start thinking differently about food and climate.

Where do we go from here?

Recommendations for next steps

We hope to maintain our relations with Durham Food Policy Council, Durham Integrated Growers and the Town of Whitby and Durham Region. We hope to work with the Durham Food Policy Council to continue outreach efforts amongst youth and allowing youth voices to continue to thrive within the community.

Post-pandemic, we hope to potentially host more events in person. Youth Roots Durham dedicates to seeing the plan come to fruition and hopes to impact the lives of many residents of the Durham Region. After the summit, our team will work towards furthering resources deployed to the general public through the webpage and creating more projects in the future. We are grateful for this opportunity, and we look forward to continuing our work within this field.

Appendix 1

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
19	9							
20	10							
21	11							
22	12							
23	13							
24	14							
25	15							
26	16							
27	17							
28	18							
29	19							
30	20							
31	21							
32								
33		Total Spent on Project	\$ 1,077.48					
34		Total Banking Fees	\$19.33		E-transfer fees, cancellation fee and Monthly Plan Fees			
35		Total Spent with Banking Fees	\$ 1,096.81					
36		Remaining Amount to Transfer to YCI	\$ 633.19					
37								

Appendix 2:

Speaker Panel Event Recording (January 17th, 2021):

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1vOWxDTKXCSQGwwlkSNN1ueRelaw2dbDP/view?usp=sharing>

What Do You Think Of When You Hear The Word "Food Security"?

Food Security and its links to overall health and wellbeing

Not having to stress about how much food items cost

Accessibility to supermarkets

Not wondering where your next meal is coming from or when

If food will be accessible or attainable

Having Access to healthy and nutritious food

Having more than one meal a day

The ability to buy food for everyone in a household, not just a few people. Example: Single parents may choose to feed their kids instead of themselves

If imports will be halted due to covid or climate change

The ability to splurge on snacks/cheat foods/fun foods. Example: Birthday cake/celebratory dessert for kids within the household or other members of the household



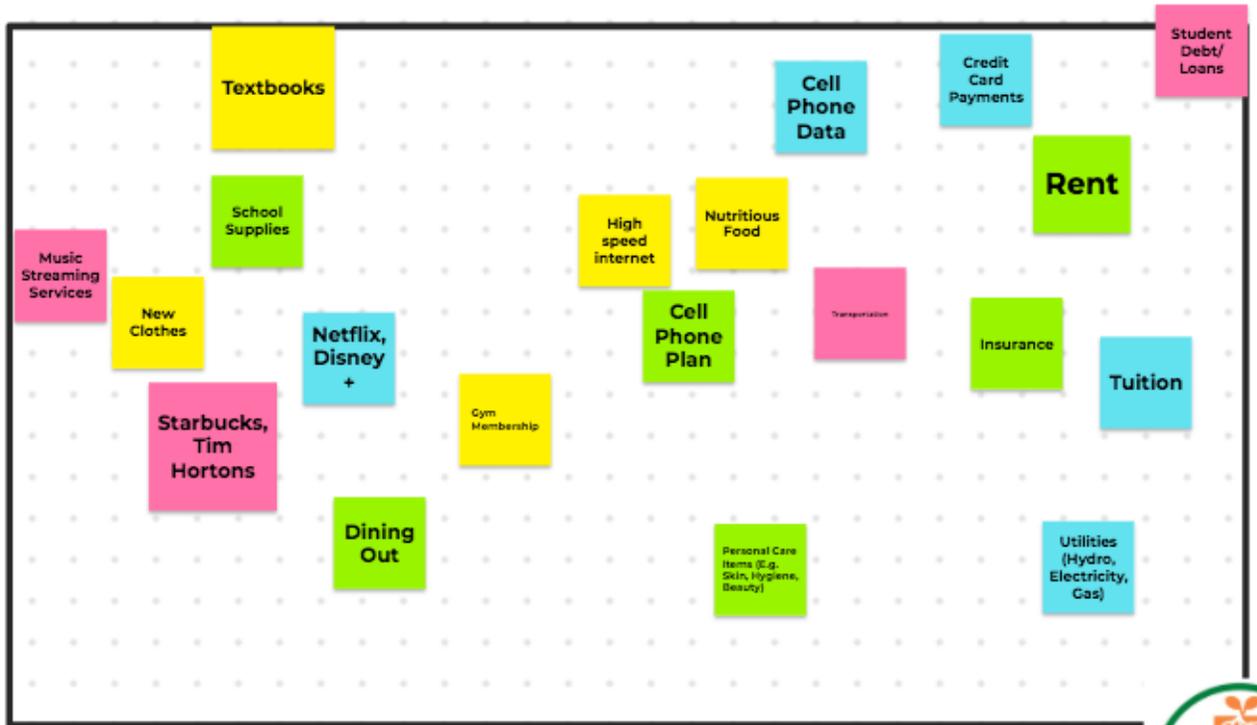
Appendix 3.1

<https://www.durham.ca/en/health-and-wellness/resources/Documents/HealthyLiving/PriceOfEatingWellInDurham.pdf>

Sort your answers based on what you consider to be low to high priority expenses

Low

High

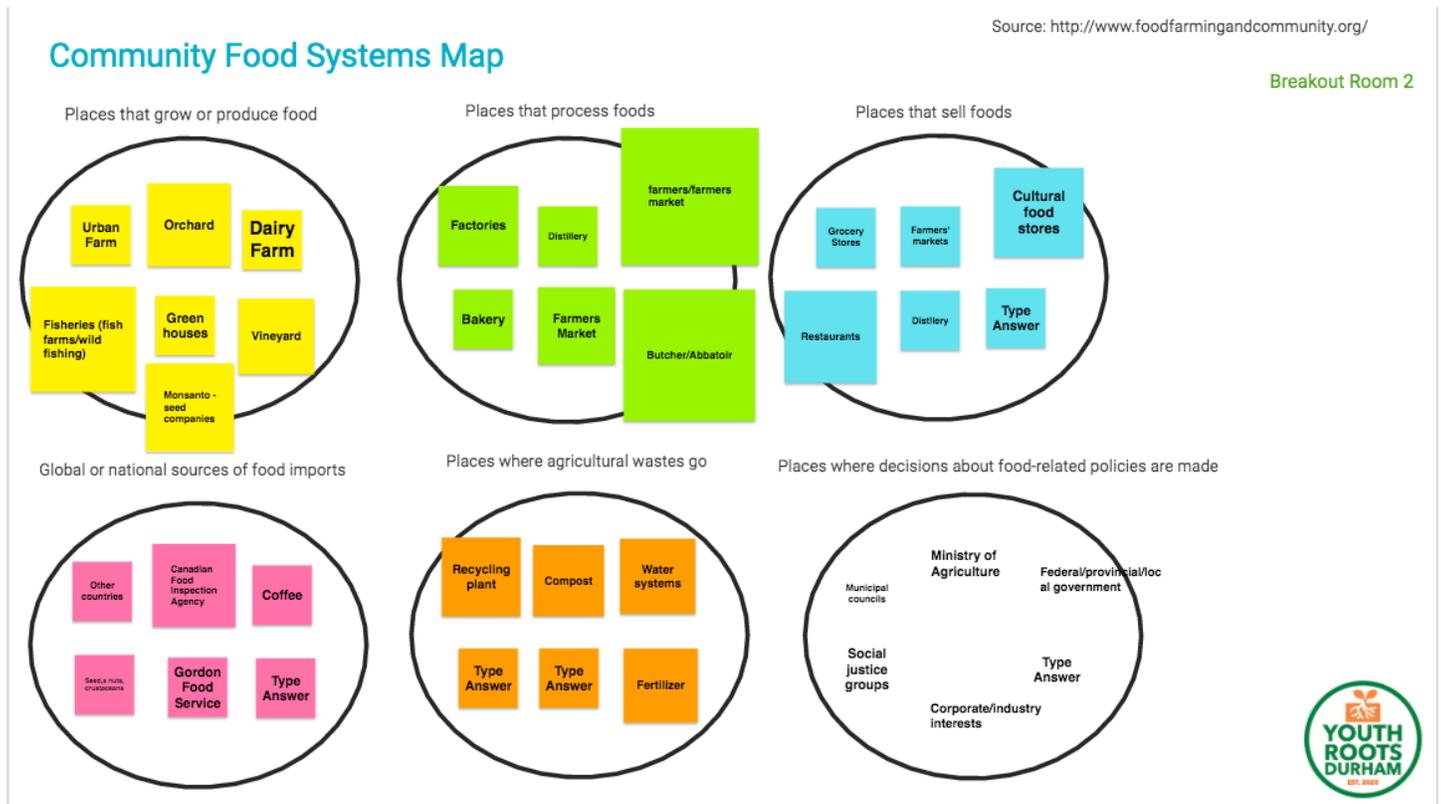


Appendix 4

Ryan Cullen's Presentation:

https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/118I3_bPXW5m78zOGuO9YjMvNklnHncXfAE5gfbI-w0A/edit?usp=sharing

Appendix 4.1



What Does Activism Mean to You?

**Making
the world
a better
place**

Helping those who
cannot help
themselves/making
their voice louder

Improving
your
community

Ensuring a
better world
than what I
was born into

**The
chance
to help**

**Making
your voice
heard**

**Bringing
awareness to
issues in your
community or
globally**

Leaving the
world a better
place for
future
generations