



Adapting surplus food distribution during COVID-19: the hidden infrastructures of labour, care, and community resilience in Ireland

Michelle Share & Perry Share

To cite this article: Michelle Share & Perry Share (19 Feb 2026): Adapting surplus food distribution during COVID-19: the hidden infrastructures of labour, care, and community resilience in Ireland, Journal of Hunger & Environmental Nutrition, DOI: [10.1080/19320248.2026.2632376](https://doi.org/10.1080/19320248.2026.2632376)

To link to this article: <https://doi.org/10.1080/19320248.2026.2632376>



© 2026 The Author(s). Published with license by Taylor & Francis Group, LLC.



Published online: 19 Feb 2026.



Submit your article to this journal [↗](#)



Article views: 49



View related articles [↗](#)



View Crossmark data [↗](#)

ORIGINAL RESEARCH



Adapting surplus food distribution during COVID-19: the hidden infrastructures of labour, care, and community resilience in Ireland

Michelle Share^a and Perry Share^b

^aSchool of Education, Trinity College Dublin, Dublin, Ireland; ^bSchool of Social Science and Humanities, Atlantic Technological University, Sligo, Ireland

ABSTRACT

COVID-19 created unprecedented challenges for community and voluntary organizations that distribute surplus food. Within a commissioned study of the impact of the pandemic on the Irish NGO – FoodCloud – resilience and hidden labor emerged as central to continuance of services. This paper examines how FoodCloud-partnered organizations adapted distribution practices during the crisis. Drawing on interviews, stimulated by photo-elicitation, it reveals how resilience was enacted through logistical improvisation, physical labor and emotional work to sustain values of dignity and connection. It shows how the community development approach shaped adaptation, including efforts to minimize stigma and maintain connection under crisis conditions.

KEYWORDS

COVID-19; food insecurity; surplus food distribution; community development; resilience; community development organizations; Ireland

Introduction

The impact of COVID-19 on food systems

The COVID-19 pandemic reshaped food systems worldwide.^{1,2} Food insecurity was intensified as supply chains were disrupted. Schools and communal meal sites closed, with responsibility largely shifted back onto households. In Ireland, as elsewhere, community and voluntary organizations (CVOs) became important brokers of emergency support. They rapidly scaled up food provision, while reinventing practices to comply with public-health restrictions.³

Across Europe and North America, food banks and community food initiatives were heralded as examples of organizational resilience during the pandemic, celebrated for their ability to maintain food distribution during the crisis.^{4,5} Nonetheless, studies document the burden of maintaining provision under conditions of heightened demand, logistical disruption and constrained

CONTACT Michelle Share ✉ sharem@tcd.ie 📍 School of Education, Trinity College Dublin, College Green, Dublin 2, Ireland

© 2026 The Author(s). Published with license by Taylor & Francis Group, LLC.

This is an Open Access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivatives License (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/>), which permits non-commercial re-use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original work is properly cited, and is not altered, transformed, or built upon in any way. The terms on which this article has been published allow the posting of the Accepted Manuscript in a repository by the author(s) or with their consent.

resources.^{6–9} The response of CVOs was largely predicated on surplus food availability but also on organizational adaptation, volunteer labor and strained infrastructures of care.^{10–13}

From the initial national “lockdown” in March 2020, CVOs were required to operate in line with stringent government public health guidelines and to reconfigure services in multiple ways. Onsite day services, such as childcare, adult day services or youth services, were no longer accessible to community members. Residential services did remain open, but providers had to amend their accommodation and service delivery to protect staff and residents. The period of the pandemic, especially the first lockdown, was characterized by fear of the unknown and well-founded concerns about community members and staff safety.

Surplus food distribution – a contentious field

“Surplus food” can be thought of as food that has entered the food system but has not been consumed as originally intended as it has not been purchased, has exceeded a “best before” date, has failed a quality-control check, or has otherwise “fallen out of” the designated food distribution chain. If it can be rerouted via surplus food distribution (SFD) to an alternative endpoint where it will be consumed, it escapes being “food waste” – with its negative connotations – and becomes revalued as food for consumption.¹⁴ SFD typically operates through a mix of organizational forms. In many contexts, large-scale food banks act as central hubs, collecting surplus from retailers, manufacturers and farms for redistribution to CVOs.^{4,15}

The redirection of such surplus food from commercial supply chains into community settings has been promoted as a practical response to food insecurity and food waste. Government and corporate actors often (somewhat contentiously) frame SFD as a “win-win”: they claim it can reduce food waste while simultaneously alleviating hunger.^{14,16} In practice, corporations engaged in SFD can also gain reputational and fiscal benefits through tax incentives, reduced disposal costs and fulfillment of corporate social responsibility agendas.^{17,18} Historical traditions of charitable food aid, from Victorian “penny dinners” to soup kitchens, have underpinned the sector and legitimized SFD as an acceptable way to address need.^{19,20}

Critical scholarship highlights significant tensions in SFD. Redistribution depends on a continuous supply of surplus food, embedding community actors in fragile and unpredictable supply chains.⁷ While positioned within the waste hierarchy²¹ as preferable to landfill, SFD may legitimize overproduction and corporate greenwashing. By framing food insecurity as a matter of waste rather than inequality, SFD risks

depoliticizing it.¹⁵ Scholars argue that the moral economy of charity and gifting also creates ambivalence, with recipients subject to stigma and lack of choice.^{19,22,23}

The work of SFD

While critics have highlighted significant philosophical tensions in SFD, other research has begun to examine the everyday work required for redistribution to happen. Such studies foreground the *material aspects* of surplus food; its bulk, perishability, and cultural appropriateness pose logistical challenges for community providers.¹⁴ Other work highlights the *emotional labour* of sustaining dignity, empathy and connection in spaces of food aid.^{24,25} Such spaces are not only logistical operations but also “spaces of encounter” where different forms of compassion are enacted, which may reinforce existing hierarchies but can also create possibilities for solidarity.²⁶ Moral judgments about deservingness can be interpreted, contested and negotiated through everyday encounters with food aid recipients.²⁷

The pandemic amplified the challenges of both the material and emotional aspects of the work of SFD across the community and voluntary sector. CVOs had to reorganize logistics, absorb volunteer shortages and manage heightened emotional strain in supporting isolated households.⁹

Resilience

Recent research conceptualizes community-based organizations’ crisis response through an organizational resilience lens. This refers to the absorptive, adaptive and transformative capacities that enable organizations to maintain essential functions, modify practices and, in some cases, to reconfigure their roles under conditions of shock.^{1,28–30} In food-assistance and SFD settings, these capacities are visible in how organizations come to stabilize supply and demand volatility, redesign distribution and volunteer practices and build new logistical and inter-organizational arrangements to keep food moving despite public-health restrictions.⁸ Scholarship cautions that “resilience” may involve the institutional entrenchment of charitable food-aid models.⁵ This raises questions not only about how organizations adapted during the pandemic, but about how organizational models and partnerships shaped the direction and consequences of adaptation in SFD.

The community development approach to food aid

Food aid scholarship has tended to focus on traditional charity models, particularly food banks in the UK and North America, where food aid is the primary or sole function.³¹ Less examined are the diverse community

development organizations that incorporate food provision within broader social support. These operate from different principles: they prioritize non-stigmatizing access, relational connection and holistic community support rather than emergency relief alone. The distinction matters as organizational models shape how food is distributed, how dignity is preserved and how relationships are maintained. Community development approaches are rooted in participation, collective empowerment, equality and human rights. They emphasize people as rights-holders rather than recipients.^{32,33} In Ireland, these principles are embedded in the All-Ireland Standards for Community Work that draw on the Budapest Declaration to link participation and justice to collective social change.³⁴

Empirical research supports the significance of these different organizational models. Smaller, independent food banks, compared with larger national or franchise-style networks, afford volunteers greater opportunities for direct connection with users, as they are less constrained by formal procedures and bureaucratic processes.²⁶ The relational space this creates can foster dignity and reduce stigma. Analysis of UK food aid argues that COVID-19 exposed both the limitations of charity-based food aid and the potential for “more-than-food aid” approaches grounded in dignity, participation and collective care.³⁵ US research shows similar patterns: food assistance organizations reorganized delivery systems and volunteer roles to meet rising demand during the pandemic, revealing both the loss of client choice and the fragility of industrial food systems, while highlighting the need for community-based, sovereignty-oriented approaches to resilience.^{36,37} These studies suggest that organizational principles fundamentally shape not only what services are provided but how relationships are maintained under crisis conditions.

Conceptual framework

The scholarship reviewed above points to SFD during COVID-19 as more than an operational response to heightened need: it is a contested arena where crisis-related adaptations intersect with longer-standing political, moral and organizational dynamics. We draw on an organizational resilience lens to examine how CVOs sustained core functions, redesigned practices and, in some cases, reconfigured roles under pandemic constraints. At the same time, we treat resilience as an embedded process shaped by surplus-dependent supply chains, partnership relations and the moral and affective demands of food aid work. These conditions can enable continuity but may also introduce or entrench charity-oriented models. Our focus foregrounds organizational difference: community development-oriented organizations may operationalize resilience through relational,

rights-based and non-stigmatizing forms of support that can sit uneasily within the logics of surplus redistribution. Against this backdrop, we examine how community development approaches and local infrastructures shaped what adaptation looked like in practice.

Research gap and aims

Despite growing attention to organizational resilience during COVID-19 and longstanding critiques of charity-based food aid, little research has examined how community development-oriented CVOs enacted resilience within surplus redistribution systems during the pandemic. Existing resilience literature often treats capacity in relatively general terms, while food aid scholarship has centered on food-bank/charity models in North American and UK contexts. Underexplored, therefore, is how community development approaches (e.g., dignity, participation and relational support) shaped absorptive and adaptive (and at times transformative) practices in SFD, and what forms of labor, partnership work and infrastructure sustained these responses.

This study addresses this gap by examining how 22 Irish CVOs, operating within a community development approach, adapted SFD during COVID-19. Drawing on contemporaneous qualitative interviews stimulated by photo-elicitation, we ask: How did CVOs enact resilience in their SFD practices during the pandemic? What forms of labor, partnership work and infrastructure, shaped by a community development ethos, helped to sustain distribution under crisis conditions? What does this reveal about the relationship between organizational models and resilient response? In doing so, we illuminate the infrastructures and practices through which community development approaches helped to maintain provision while seeking to preserve dignity and connection under crisis conditions.

Study context

In March 2020, following the World Health Organization's characterization of COVID-19 as a global pandemic,³⁸ the Irish government announced the closure of schools, colleges and childcare facilities,³⁹ followed in late March by a national "stay at home" order.⁴⁰ Many retail outlets closed, apart from "essential" ones, in line with public health guidance to close non-essential retail,⁴¹ with essential retail categories including food and beverages and pharmacies/chemists (among others).⁴²

Restrictions were gradually eased during summer 2020. At the end of 2020, with an upsurge in COVID-19 cases, Ireland returned to stay at home orders and essential-service operation only. Restrictions eased through 2021, and by early 2022 most had been lifted. On May 5, 2023, over 3 years since the initial shutdown, the WHO declared that COVID-19 was no longer a public health

Table 1. Location of participating organizations (n = 22).

Location	n
Urban town	4
Rural town	12
Rural countryside	0
Urban city	6
Total	22

emergency of international concern.⁴³ It has been recognized that, internationally, Ireland had among the most stringent social restrictions in relation to the pandemic.⁴⁴

At the onset of the pandemic, the FoodCloud non-governmental organization (NGO), which matches surplus food from retailers and distributors with community partners through its app-based system and national hubs, faced unprecedented demand for surplus food from CVOs as schools, clubs and communal meal sites closed under public health stay at home directives. Households that had previously relied on food supplied through such channels turned to CVOs.⁴⁵ Unlike the UK, the Netherlands or the US, where food banks dominate provision, Ireland's landscape of SFD is more varied and community-based.⁷

The following sections outline the qualitative methodology and present findings on how resilience was enacted through logistical, physical and emotional work.

Methods

Qualitative semi-structured online interviews (of 60–90 minutes) using photo-elicitation were conducted with 22 participants across 22 CVOs between November 2021 and January 2022. As a participatory approach, photo-elicitation can “evoke a different kind of information”⁴⁶ where participants are “co-creators of knowledge.”⁴⁷ It is particularly appropriate to the study of food and eating in a social context, as it can provide rich insights into the “embodied and tacit experience of preparing and consuming food.”⁴⁸

Purposive sampling ensured that the cohort of CVOs reflected diversity in size, geography and service type (e.g., food banks, meal providers, community centers) across urban and rural settings (Table 1).

The sample included diverse organizational types (Table 2). Although four organizations self-identified as foodbanks, each formed part of a larger community development body such as a church or national charity. Other organizations, such as Family Resource Centres (n = 3) and housing agencies (n = 2), also provided foodbank services alongside their primary functions.

Table 2. Type of participating organization (n = 22).

Organization type	Identifier Code	n
Foodbank	FB	4
Family Resource Center	FR	3
Meals-on-wheels	MoW	1
Community childcare	CC	1
Housing/homelessness	HO	2
Older Persons' Service	OP	4
Youth Service	YS	2
Disability Service	DS	2
Addiction Service	AS	1
Mental Health Service	MH	1
Community Center	CoMC	1
Total		22

Many integrated SFD into broader wraparound services, combining it with social, educational or health supports.

The majority of participants (19) were employees in managerial/leadership/co-ordinator roles, while the remaining three worked as volunteers.

Photo-elicitation

In advance of their interview, participants were asked to take and then share some photographs with the interviewer that showed food activities in their organization that could include food procurement, preparation, storage, dining, and challenges and opportunities in daily food activities. Participants could decide how many photos to submit but with a requirement that no images of people could be included. During interviews, participants were asked to describe the photo, what was going on in it, why they took that particular picture, and what it told us about food use in their organization. These images served both as elicitation prompts during interviews and subsequently in a published report as visual data that could illustrate the physical, spatial and material aspects of SFD in their organization. A total of 132 photographs were shared across 21 participants.

Interviews

Underpinned by the photo-elicitation process, each semi-structured interview explored seven main topics: a) organizational motivations for food provision; b) the role of food in maintaining connection with service users; c) pandemic impacts on operations; d) characteristics of surplus food supplies including variety and predictability; e) financial significance of surplus food access; f) perspectives on food waste reduction; and g) enablers and challenges of using FoodCloud services. These topics related directly to the underpinning themes

outlined above: the community development ethos, adaptation and resilience and the components of SFD work.

Data analysis

Interview transcripts and accompanying photographs were analyzed thematically. Photographs were not treated as stand-alone visual data but as discussion triggers that illuminated participants' accounts. The approach provided a fuller context of participants' situation than could have been elicited in a standard interview.⁴⁹ Data management and analysis was a reflexive and iterative process that involved all members of the research team (author 1, author 2 and a research assistant). It involved the digital audio-recording of each interview and contemporaneous notetaking, summary written notes of each interview's content and reflections on conduct, review of recordings and clean verbatim transcription and management in NVivo 12 qualitative software. Deductive content analysis of summary notes and transcriptions was undertaken by two team members (author 1, research assistant) who then met to discuss and agree themes. The final stage involved all team members in the inductive analysis of themes identified in the previous stage and the identification of illustrative examples to demonstrate the meaning of the themes from the participants' perspectives. Photographs shared by participants during photo-elicitation were analyzed alongside interview transcripts to identify images that visually demonstrated key analytical themes (e.g., logistical improvisation and workforce adaptation). They served not only as interview prompts but as data that illuminated material and organizational practices discussed in participants' accounts. Preliminary findings were reviewed with the Stakeholder Reference Group and the FoodCloud Research Group; draft findings were then discussed in a final focus group with participating CVOs.

Ethical considerations

Ethical approval was obtained from the School of Education, Trinity College Dublin. All participants provided informed consent to take part in the study. Pseudonyms are used with quotations and accompanying codes to indicate the type of organization. All photographs were participant-generated. Participants provided explicit consent for any image reproduced in publications; these were screened and edited to remove identifying details, and participants could withdraw photographs from dissemination up to the point of publication.

Table 3. Analytical themes and sub-themes, forms of resilience and community development approach.

Theme	Sub-themes	Form(s) of resilience enacted	Community development approach	Key insights
Logistical improvisation	A surge in demand Negotiating a volatile food supply. The pivot to new operating models: food parcels; new health and safety protocols; packing and bagging arrangements	Adaptive resilience: Organisations rapidly adjusted distribution methods, spaces, packaging and operating models to comply with restrictions while attempting to maintain service	Dignity-centered practice; Accessibility	Organisations prioritised maintaining dignity even when efficiency was compromised (e.g., concern about black bags). Adaptation was constrained by both public health requirements and organisational values.
Intensification of physical labor and workforce adaptation	Shifting workforce dynamics The physical demands of food handling	Absorptive resilience: Maintaining core functions despite volunteer loss; Adaptive resilience: Role consolidation, use of personal resources (vehicles, bodies)	Collective participation (disrupted then reconstituted); Mutual support	Resilience depended on individuals absorbing infrastructure gaps through their own bodies and resources. Workforce depletion revealed the fragile, undervalued labor foundation of SFD.
Emotional labor and relational work	Empathy, dignity and non-stigmatising approaches. Keeping people connected through food Surfacing unmet needs	Transformative resilience: Deepened relationships; expanded support beyond food; surfaced unmet community needs; reconceptualized food aid as relational infrastructure	Rights-based approach; Holistic support; Non-stigmatising practice; Connection and belonging	Food became a mechanism for maintaining social connection under isolation. Emotional work not incidental but central to organisational resilience and capacity-building. Care was relational infrastructure, not individual kindness.

Findings

Analysis of interviews with CVOs identified three interrelated themes that reveal how organizational resilience was enacted during the pandemic: logistical improvisation; intensified physical labor and workforce adaptation; and emotional labor and relational work. Table 3 maps the relationship between these empirical themes, the forms of resilience they represent, and the community development approach that shaped organizational responses.

Together, these themes demonstrate that resilience was not simply an organizational capacity but was enacted through concrete practices – logistical adjustments, physical effort, and emotional care – shaped by underlying organizational values. Below, we present each theme, in turn, showing how CVOs' responses during the COVID-19 pandemic were informed by both

crisis pressures and their commitment to dignity-centered, community-oriented approaches.

Theme 1: Logistical improvisation

A Surge in demand

All CVOs experienced significantly greater demand for their services. This increase came from two main cohorts. The first was existing vulnerable groups, such as older people who attended day services or received familial support, whose traditional support networks were severed by public health restrictions. As one Meals-on-Wheels provider noted:

The FoodCloud food doubled ... double amount of people looking for help ... our service went up by about 30% because you know daughters who cook for their mum couldn't go to the house, right? (Phelim, MoW 1)

The second cohort was newly vulnerable households hit by sudden economic shocks. This included those in casual employment, as in the entertainment industry, who had lost their jobs at the start of the pandemic; those with children and/or young people living at home previously in receipt of school meals; and older people who were not “online” and so unable to avail of online shopping.

As Sonia explained, there was a greater demand in her youth service from families who experienced pandemic-related job losses while also having children at home all the time:

For me losing jobs is the biggest one. Because anyone that I did deliver food to over the pandemic like they said they used to have this certain amount of income a week. Now they're down to whatever and they're struggling to buy food. It's costing more to have the kids at home because they're eating more. Whereas if they're in school they're not eating as much. But they're at home and they're in the fridge all day (Sonia, YS1)

There was a shared experience across nearly all services of significant increases in the demand for food and from new people, but at the same time they had to contend with changes to food supply.

Negotiating a volatile food supply

For CVOs required to close onsite services, such as childcare and youth settings, there was the question of how to deal with supplies already in-house that could not be provided to service users in the usual way. Some could move food on to other organisations within their network who were doing food deliveries.

CVOs spoke about how, at the onset of the pandemic, they had received large volumes of surplus food from restaurants and other organizations that were closing because of the lockdown. Maura (DS1) spoke about a “massive

delivery of Easter eggs” and Feargal (FB1) of “unusual” high-end goods such as chocolate from TK Maxx.

The unanticipated arrival of more food and/or new types of food brought challenges. Some CVOs, especially those with kitchens or suitable storage facilities, had the capacity to adapt. For example, a residential service with a kitchen and catering staff could respond to donations from hotels and restaurants required to close under public health orders. They could effectively accommodate donations such as the contents of restaurant cold rooms and freezers and catering-size products.

For one catering manager, the unusual donations placed her in the fortunate position of being able to provide high-value food to residents, such as fillet steak donated by a restaurant. Drawing on her image of cans of artichokes ([Image 1](#)), she explained how some donations were more challenging to deal with:



Image 1. Artichoke hearts (Sara, HO1).

I put them in a soup, and it was horrendous. And then we had one worker that worked here, he was vegan, so we used to try and say to him “Please take some home!” (Sara, HO1)

Unexpected sources of food could be beneficial, but CVOs were also challenged as they grappled with how to get the food to those who needed it; this required them to find new ways to operate.

The Pivot to New Operating Models

CVOs needed to rethink their approach to food provision. Many were involved in the delivery of social care services, often on-site. Social distancing and travel restrictions forced changes in their everyday routines and required new ways to do things. These included the make-up and distribution of food parcels; adherence to a range of new health and safety measures; and, in the case of foodbanks and delivery services, alternative packing and bagging arrangements.

Food Parcels

Unable to provide on-site or “pick-up” meal services, CVOs “pivoted” to the delivery of food parcels to those they felt were in need. A youth center no longer in a position to cook food on-site was reluctant to stop taking surplus food from FoodCloud, so they “ended up going out every night of the week with food and delivering to different houses” (Sonia, YS1). The situation was similar for a CVO for young people with disabilities that also closed its service at the start of the pandemic:

We did have a few families approach or saying that they were struggling and things like that ... we’d come in every Friday, and we’d package up these food hampers. And then ... a community responder was out delivering to families from our club and families in the community as well (Maura, DS1)

While CVOs found new ways to get food to their client groups, they also had to ensure that they did so in accordance with COVID-19 health and safety protocols.

New Health and Safety Protocols

COVID-19 restrictions required CVOs to comply with a plethora of new health and safety measures. How they managed their food provision service was circumscribed by the two-meter social distancing requirement and additional hygiene measures, including wearing face masks and repeatedly wiping down surfaces. As Julie explained, some CVOs responded to the need to social distance by moving premises, but this generated a new problem with queuing and lack of privacy:

So, we moved to [place name] which had two different doors. So, somebody could come in one and then out the other. ... there was no privacy (Julie, FB3)

Other CVOs spoke of the extra work involved with sanitation to comply with public health protocols:

Sanitising that happens twice a day, every day, no matter what. All our light switches and frequently touched surfaces ... so there’s a lot of changes (Marie, YS2)

Packing and Bagging Arrangements

For CVOs that operated a delivery service, the necessary tasks of packing and bagging became more challenging. Pre-pandemic, community foodbank members had usually brought their own bags, but the pandemic required a new way of operating:

We had to change because we didn't want to take in anybody's bag. So, we started pre-pack. So, we had to buy plastic bags, etc, . . . The paper bags were no good, they weren't strong enough (Feargal, FB1)

The plastic bin bags mentioned by Noelle also featured in Julie's (FB3) account of pandemic-related packing and bagging arrangements. Referencing her photo ([Image 2](#)), she reflected on the added costs and environmental impact of using large volumes of these bags, as well as the negative connotations associated with receiving surplus food in a black bag:



Image 2. Photo black bin bags of food for collection (Julie, FB3).

So even little things like the black plastic bags that we pack the food into, that is costing us approximately €8000 per year on black plastic bags. So, it's not environmentally friendly. And we're conscious that there's no dignity in somebody receiving a black plastic bag down a laneway (Julie, FB3)

These logistical adaptations created new physical work, placing additional demands on a depleted workforce.

Theme 2: Intensification of physical Labor and workforce adaptation

There is significant work involved in SFD, carried out by volunteers and paid staff of CVOs. These types of work involve physical labor, emotional work, organizational and managerial capacities.

Shifting workforce dynamics

The surge in demand for food coincided with a sharp decline in the availability of volunteers, particularly older individuals required by public health advice to “cocoon.” This generated significant workforce challenges associated with handling increased volumes of food and people.

Meals-on-wheels providers and foodbank operators that had a high reliance on volunteers experienced this decline in volunteering. Such CVOs were also mindful of protecting the health and welfare of their own staff and service users, so limited the engagement of volunteers:

We banned all volunteering. We didn’t allow anybody into the building for the first year because our clients are so vulnerable health wise. . . . So, it left us with no volunteers (Sara, HO1)

A CVO involved in services for older people was depleted of the older volunteer drivers and kitchen assistants needed to operate the meals-on-wheels service. Eithne explained that she had to do everything herself:

I cook and prepare the potatoes and the meat and then I serve it into the trays myself and then seal them up, and I have to label them and then I go on the road and deliver them (Eithne, OP2)

Ellen similarly reflected on the depletion of their regular Family Resource Centre workforce in the early stages of the pandemic, when community employment workers were not working with them:

I did feel the strain of it and then more towards the end of the year a few staff were able to come back in. . . . I did all the deliveries. I didn’t really want to hand that off to anybody else because I didn’t wanna lose that connection either (Ellen, FR1)

This dual burden of intensified physical work and the need to maintain human contact was a common theme. For one youth service (YS1), there was a strong desire to reach community members who were no longer attending: they delivered supermarket surplus (food and clothing) numerous times per week.

The physical demands of food handling

As we have seen, during the pandemic, CVOs had to contend with increased volumes of food, high demand and the need to develop alternative ways to get food to people. Food is often heavy, bulky and difficult to handle. The logistical challenges and labor intensity of SFD were explained by the manager of a food bank, stimulated by her image of pallets on a forklift ([Image 3](#)):



Image 3. Logistical challenges (Julie, FB3).

So, the forklift was a huge issue, especially when the pandemic hit because the volume of food coming into the warehouse increased . . . all the staff here were saying we cannot cope with just having a forklift for one week. . . . their backs were sore and stuff. . . . we had to make the decision to have a 12-month [machinery] lease (Julie, FB3)

Getting food to people often required a combination of an available person's time, their own vehicle, and the physical capacity to lift and move the food. This was difficult when CVOs were dependent on the good will of volunteers:

Voluntary help is quite transient. You might get somebody for a short while. It's a big ask for somebody to volunteer and then use their vehicle, and you've got liability issues then, and it's also very heavy. The stuff is so heavy (Noelle, CoMC1)

The physical work of moving the food could pose a risk to the CVO volunteer workforce, especially given the age profile.

The demands of handling food exposed the precarious foundation on which SFD rested: aging volunteers, use of personal vehicles, and bodies having to absorb what should have been infrastructural costs. This physical effort, however, was inseparable from the emotional work required to deliver the service with humanity and care.

Theme 3: Emotional labor and relational work

Beyond the logistical and physical effort, CVOs invested significant emotional labor, care work and empathy into their pandemic response. This relational work was essential for preserving dignity, maintaining social connections and identifying unmet community needs.

Empathy, dignity and non-stigmatizing approaches

CVOs involved in SFD work often deal with people who experience challenging life circumstances. Within this, meals-on-wheels providers emphasized that food was not simply "dropped off" but that the service also involved social interaction and care work:

I think you just have to be human and have compassion. You just have to have compassion but also sensitivity. And remember that you're not some angel swooping in. You're just one human giving something to another human. (Ellen, FR1)

CVOs stressed the importance of delivering a service in a non-stigmatizing and inclusive way:

When people come in and I just kind of encourage them. That it's not a stigma. The food, you're helping less food wastage . . . if you need it come and take it. No one's judging you by coming in the door. That's the biggest thing I'm trying to get out there. It's no judgement whatsoever by coming through the doors. It's a community thing (Jane, FR3)

This emotional work was integral to the resilience work of the CVOs, as maintaining dignity and connection enabled organizations to continue supporting households under exceptional strain.

Keeping People Connected Through Food

For all CVOs, SFD involves making and maintaining connections with people through food. During the pandemic, the importance of such social connection was heightened. CVOs that had previously provided onsite meal services pivoted to meal delivery services. While those who previously provided meals-on-wheels continued to do so, they were able to use the food delivery service to provide further support to those required to “cocoon” during the early months of the pandemic. For Dearbhla (OP1), the meals-on-wheels service is “not just a meal”:

We also started doing pension collections for people, shopping, even the newspaper. You know that some people weren't able to get out for their morning paper. So, all those things we were able to do for the person and actually it brought in a huge amount of new volunteers (Dearbhla, OP1)

CVOs that operated a delivery service sometimes found the food to be incidental and that the opportunity to check in on people constituted the most significant benefit. The offer of a food parcel provided another opportunity for workers like Peter to keep in-person, albeit socially distanced, connection with community members:

Part of our services during the pandemic was all phone calls. So, we were ringing people, then you were talking to them asking them how they were getting on - “Oh I'm afraid to go to the shop,” “I'm afraid to do this and afraid to do that” and we would go “Well look - We have food here that Lidl's given us. What type of things would you be interested in?” So, then I would drop it at their front door. Knock at the door, step away and let them come and take the food (Peter, MH1)

Aisling's CVO moved during the pandemic from a day center meal service to a meals-on-wheels service. But it became apparent that the service was viewed more broadly as an important mechanism for social interaction for those confined to their homes:

I just actually had a text from the son of a woman that lives on her own . . . she was getting meals from us three days a week. He said she needs a bit more social contact now - can I get the meals five days a week? (Aisling, OP4)

“Food can be a great conversation starter” noted Peter (MH1). SFD may provide opportunities for engagement with people who may be lonely or disconnected socially:

The food is a huge importance for them because again the boredom and because it’s something to open a conversation up with. I mean 50% of the clients will ask at least one of us around the kitchen area everyday “What’s for lunch” You know “how are you today? I’m good.” And “how are you today?” And it nearly opens up the conversation, you know (Sara, HO1)

Surfacing Unmet Needs

While food worked to open conversations with people, it also, particularly during the pandemic, highlighted or surfaced unmet needs in the community:

The pandemic itself - no, of course, overall you can’t say there’s anything positive - but this gave me time to make different connections and new connections and see the need. That is, you know, it’s like if you scratched the surface what’s underneath, you know, yeah, and that’s what we began to see (Ellen, FR1)

There were a few people in from the entertainment business . . . And then when all the gigs stopped . . . they absolutely had nothing, you know, if they hadn’t put anything aside. (Sandra, FB4)

Together, these themes show how resilience was enacted in practice and shaped by organizational values.

Discussion

This study examined how Irish CVOs adapted community food support during COVID-19 and what these adaptations reveal about organizational resilience in SFD. The analysis suggests that resilience was enacted through three interconnected forms: adaptive adjustments to logistics and operations; absorptive maintenance of provision despite resource depletion; and, at times, transformative responses, including the deepening of relational connections. These forms of resilience were not neutral organizational capacities but were shaped by the community development approaches that underpinned participating organizations. We now interpret these findings through resilience scholarship and examine how the community development approach shaped crisis-time adaptation.

The findings resonate with pandemic-era research that shows that voluntary organizations adapted rapidly, absorbing new operational burdens while sustaining provision under crisis conditions.^{6,9,28} Studies of European food banks emphasize how organizational improvisation helped to sustain provision,^{4,5} while Italian research describes community responses as forms

of social innovation that enabled resilience.¹² US studies point to strains on food charities around volunteer management and distribution bottlenecks.¹¹ This body of work documents adaptive and absorptive resilience: organizations adjusted their practices while maintaining core functions under stress. Our findings confirm these patterns but make visible the work through which such resilience was achieved.

The present study adds to the literature by revealing the invisible infrastructures that sustained resilience: the physical labor of lifting, carrying, sorting and delivering food; the organizational coordination that enabled distribution under volatile supply conditions; and the emotional and relational work involved in protecting dignity and connection, as crisis pressures pushed toward standardized provision. Resilience was not simply an organizational property but was enacted through bodies, vehicles, time and care. Participants' accounts show that absorptive resilience – the maintenance of provision despite volunteer depletion – often relied on individuals to absorb what should have been infrastructural costs through their own physical effort and personal resources. These findings echo UK analyses of food banks as “spaces of encounter” where compassion is continually negotiated,²⁶ and align with scholarship that frames food aid as a site of both care and inequality.²⁴ They also suggest that within community development-oriented organizations, relational care could soften giver-receiver distinctions through reciprocal communication practices and that food delivery could become a mechanism for sustaining relationships and surfacing unmet needs.

Most organizations in this study were not conventional food banks. Many were embedded in community development approaches and combined SFD with broader services. They emphasized non-stigmatizing, relational practices. During the pandemic, these approaches were put under pressure: closure of communal meal spaces diminished the social dimension of food provision, while parcel-based distribution risked becoming more transactional. Necessary changes to how food was packaged for distribution could further depersonalize the process. Nonetheless, organizations worked to retain a sense of dignity, framing parcels as “care packages” and maintaining connections where possible.

These findings contribute to our understanding of the differences between community development-oriented and charitable models of food aid. Critical scholarship has long questioned whether the SFD depoliticizes hunger by framing it as a problem of waste rather than inequality.^{7,15} Research has tended to frame food banks as charitable providers, where distribution can be stigmatizing and recipients lack choice.^{19,22,50} The Irish organizations studied here suggest a more mixed picture. While logistical pressures during COVID-19 led to some convergence with food bank practices, strong community development traditions continued to shape provision in ways that prioritized relational care and minimized stigma. It was much more than food that was being delivered.

Policy discussions should thus avoid assuming a single model of SFD and instead recognize the diversity of practices and values across organizations and the opportunities for alternative, localized responses to food aid. Our findings support research that argues that the pandemic opened opportunities for “more-than-food aid” responses that connected redistribution with empowerment, solidarity and rights-based community.³⁵ Similarly, King and colleagues³⁷ highlight that the resilience demonstrated by community-organized food initiatives reveals possibilities for food systems built on sovereignty and food justice. The present study also points to the potential for the food work of CVOs to challenge those aspects of corporate SFD that reinforce dependency and stigma. Nonetheless, for the CVOs in this study, strong community solidarity coexisted with material fragility and organizational strain.

The concept of invisible infrastructures helps explain why resilience, while achieved, was also fragile: it rested on resources (volunteer goodwill, physical capacity, emotional reserves) that could be depleted but not easily replenished. This reflects the current scholarship on resilience that has moved beyond the notion of simple “bounce-back.”⁵¹ Our findings suggest that in voluntary-sector contexts, resilience can depend on precarious, person-dependent resources and informal arrangements that substitute for adequate infrastructure. Moreover, the form that resilience took was shaped by organizational values: community development principles meant that even under extreme pressure, CVOs prioritized dignity, connection and holistic support, rather than operational efficiency alone.

The COVID-19 pandemic functioned as a revelatory crisis in the provision of surplus food by CVOs. The pandemic did not create the vulnerabilities in SFD; rather, it exposed them. Resilience was achieved, but at a cost, and celebratory framings of community adaptability risk obscuring the burdens absorbed by workers and volunteers. That cost is also ideological: community development organizations, while enacting more humane and participatory forms of support, continue to operate within fragile infrastructures that rely on undervalued labor and limited policy recognition. Recognition of the invisible infrastructures – the material, embodied and emotional work that sustained SFD – is essential if SFD is to remain viable and if lessons are to be drawn for future crises.

Future pandemics or similar disruptions are likely to create the same conditions described in these findings: demand rising quickly at the same time as surplus supply becomes unpredictable and volunteer capacity falls away. Preparedness, then, is not only a matter of having “resilient” organizations but of ensuring the practical supports are in place so that CVOs are not forced to improvise everything in real time. This means planning for the pivot from communal provision to parcels and delivery and resourcing the basic infrastructures that keep food moving, such as storage space, handling equipment, vehicles, staffing back-up and clear local coordination, so that physical strain and reliance on personal vehicles do not become the default. It also

means recognizing that food provision is rarely “just food”: delivery created opportunities for check-ins, dignity and connection, and for surfacing unmet needs, even when distancing measures made this harder to sustain. Supporting these relational practices alongside logistics would help future emergency responses avoid becoming purely transactional and would reduce the hidden costs that staff and volunteers absorbed during COVID-19.

Limitations

This study has some limitations that should be considered. While photo-elicitation and collaboration with stakeholder groups enriched the analysis, the findings cannot be assumed to represent all organizations partnering with FoodCloud. The sample frame was designed to cover the main categories of CVO, but rural groups were overrepresented. In addition, community participants were self-selecting, and those who took part may have had a greater interest in food-related issues than those who did not. As with all qualitative research, the findings are context-specific; their value lies in providing transferable insights into how resilience in SFD is enacted through local infrastructures of labor, coordination and care under crisis conditions.

Conclusion

COVID-19 exposed how SFD depends on invisible infrastructures of labor, coordination and care within community and voluntary organizations. The Irish CVOs in this study, which operated with a community development ethos, worked to sustain provision while also protecting dignity and connection, even as crisis conditions pushed practices toward more standardized, parcel-based forms of aid. These findings underline that resilience in SFD is achievable but costly and that celebratory narratives of adaptability can obscure the material fragility and undervalued work on which continuity rests.

If SFD is to remain viable in future crises, policy and funding must support the infrastructures that make distribution possible and recognize the diversity of organizational models, while keeping sight of the structural measures that address the root causes of food insecurity.

Disclosure Statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author(s).

Funding

This research was funded by FoodCloud.

References

1. Carducci B, Keats EC, Ruel M, et al. Food systems, diets and nutrition in the wake of COVID-19. *Nat Food*. 2021;2(2):68–70. doi: [10.1038/s43016-021-00233-9](https://doi.org/10.1038/s43016-021-00233-9).
2. Rivera-Ferre MG, López-I-Gelats F, Ravera F, et al. The two-way relationship between food systems and the COVID-19 pandemic: causes and consequences. *Agric Syst*. 2021;191:103134. doi: [10.1016/j.agry.2021.103134](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.agry.2021.103134).
3. UCD Institute of Food and Health. *The national COVID-19 food study* [report]. Dublin, Ireland: University College Dublin; 2020. https://www.drugsandalcohol.ie/32826/1/The_National_COVID-19_Food_Study_REPORT.pdf. Accessed January 11, 2026.
4. Capodistrias P, Szulecka J, Corciolani M, Strøm-Andersen N. European food banks and COVID-19: resilience and innovation in times of crisis. *Socioecon Plann Sci*. 2022;82:101187. doi: [10.1016/j.seps.2021.101187](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.seps.2021.101187).
5. Dekkinga P, van der Horst H, Andriessen T. Too big to fail: The resilience and entrenchment of food aid through food banks in the Netherlands during the COVID-19 pandemic. *Food Secur*. 2022;14(3):781–789. doi: [10.1007/s12571-022-01260-5](https://doi.org/10.1007/s12571-022-01260-5).
6. Barker M, Russell J. Feeding the food insecure in Britain: learning from the COVID-19 pandemic. *Food Secur*. 2020;12(4):865–870. doi: [10.1007/s12571-020-01080-5](https://doi.org/10.1007/s12571-020-01080-5).
7. Kenny T, Sage C. Surplus food redistribution and healthy, sustainable diets: exploring the contradictions of charitable food provisioning. *Int J Sociol Agric Food*. 2021;27(1):71–86. doi: [10.48416/ijf.v27i1.82](https://doi.org/10.48416/ijf.v27i1.82).
8. Oncini F. Food support provision in COVID-19 times: a mixed method study based in Greater Manchester. *Agric Hum Values*. 2021;38(4):1201–1213. doi: [10.1007/s10460-021-10212-2](https://doi.org/10.1007/s10460-021-10212-2).
9. Power M, Doherty B, Pybus KJ, Pickett KE. How COVID-19 has exposed inequalities in the UK food system: the case of UK food and poverty. *Emerald Open Res*. 2020;2(10):11. doi: [10.35241/emeraldopenres.13539.2](https://doi.org/10.35241/emeraldopenres.13539.2).
10. Bagwell A, Brown H, Pugh C, Schroeder K, Weir CF, Williams Q. Community food resilience in the time of COVID: an example from an Appalachian county. *Geogr Rev*. 2022;113(4):461–481. doi: [10.1080/00167428.2022.2085103](https://doi.org/10.1080/00167428.2022.2085103).
11. Bradley SE. Challenges to food charity resilience during the COVID-19 pandemic. *J Hunger Environ Nutr*. 2023;18(6):813–830. doi: [10.1080/19320248.2023.2201172](https://doi.org/10.1080/19320248.2023.2201172).
12. Cattivelli V, Rusciano V. Social innovation and food provisioning during COVID-19: The case of urban–rural initiatives in the province of Naples. *Sustain (Basel)*. 2020;12(11):4444. doi: [10.3390/su12114444](https://doi.org/10.3390/su12114444).
13. Lanier J, Schumacher J. The action of foodbanks and food pantries in Central Illinois during the COVID-19 pandemic. *J Hunger Environ Nutr*. 2021;18(6):869–877. doi: [10.1080/19320248.2021.2010629](https://doi.org/10.1080/19320248.2021.2010629).
14. Midgley J. Surplus food redistribution. In: Reynolds C, Soma T, Spring C, Lazell J, eds. *Routledge Handbook of Food Waste*. London, UK: Routledge; 2020:349–362. doi: [10.4324/9780429462795-27](https://doi.org/10.4324/9780429462795-27).
15. Riches G, Silvasti T, eds. *First World Hunger Revisited: Food Charity or the Right to Food?* Basingstoke, UK: Palgrave Macmillan; 2014.
16. Alexander C, Smaje C. Surplus retail food redistribution: an analysis of a third sector model. *Resour Conserv Recycl*. 2008;52(11):1290–1298. doi: [10.1016/j.resconrec.2008.07.009](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.resconrec.2008.07.009).
17. Fisher A. *Big Hunger: The Unholy Alliance Between Corporate America and Anti-Hunger Groups*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press; 2017.

18. Riches G. *Food Bank Nations: Poverty, Corporate Charity and the Right to Food*. London, UK: Routledge; 2018. doi: [10.4324/9781315184012](https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315184012).
19. Poppendieck J. *Sweet Charity?: Emergency Food and the End of Entitlement*. New York, NY: Viking; 1998.
20. Williams A, May J. A genealogy of the food bank: historicising the rise of food charity in the UK. *Trans Inst Br Geogr*. 2022;47(3):618–634. doi: [10.1111/tran.12535](https://doi.org/10.1111/tran.12535).
21. Papargyropoulou E, Lozano R, Steinberger JK, Wright N, Ujang Z. The food waste hierarchy as a framework for the management of food surplus and food waste. *J Clean Prod*. 2014;76:106–115. doi: [10.1016/j.jclepro.2014.04.020](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jclepro.2014.04.020).
22. Garthwaite K. *Hunger Pains: Life Inside Foodbank Britain*. Bristol, UK: Policy Press; 2016.
23. Hardcastle S, Caraher M. The role of foodbanks in the context of food insecurity: experiences and eating behaviours amongst users. *Appetite*. 2021;163:105208. doi: [10.1016/j.appet.2021.105208](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.appet.2021.105208).
24. Cloke P, May J, Williams A. The geographies of food banks in the meantime. *Prog Hum Geogr*. 2017;41(6):703–726. doi: [10.1177/0309132516655881](https://doi.org/10.1177/0309132516655881).
25. Herrington A, Mix TL. Invisible and insecure in rural America: cultivating dignity in local food security initiatives. *Sustain (Basel)*. 2021;13(6):3109. doi: [10.3390/su13063109](https://doi.org/10.3390/su13063109).
26. Surman E, Kelemen M, Rumens N. Ways to care: forms and possibilities of compassion within UK food banks. *Sociol Rev*. 2021;69(5):1090–1106. doi: [10.1177/0038026121991330](https://doi.org/10.1177/0038026121991330).
27. Hamdon C. Deservingness on the front lines: How volunteers navigate moral judgments in emergency food distribution. *Can Rev Sociol*. 2025;62(4):324–334. doi: [10.1111/cars.70011](https://doi.org/10.1111/cars.70011).
28. Abba K, Ring A, Lloyd P, et al. Community groups, organisations, and employers respond to the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic: a story of resilience and continued vulnerability. *BMC Public Health*. 2025;25(1):890. doi: [10.1186/s12889-025-22104-9](https://doi.org/10.1186/s12889-025-22104-9).
29. Dayson C, Bimpson E, Ellis-Paine A, Gilbertson J, Kara H. The “resilience” of community organisations during the COVID-19 pandemic: absorptive, adaptive and transformational capacity during a crisis response. *Volunt Sect Rev*. 2021;12(2):295–304. doi: [10.1332/204080521X16190270778389](https://doi.org/10.1332/204080521X16190270778389).
30. Shareck M, Badji MS, Picard K, et al. Developing community resilience in the face of COVID-19: case study from the Estrie region, Canada. *Health Promot Int*. 2024;39(4):daae094. doi: [10.1093/heapro/daae094](https://doi.org/10.1093/heapro/daae094).
31. Loopstra R, Lambie-Mumford H. Food banks: understanding their role in the food insecure population in the UK. *Proc Nutr Soc*. 2023;82(4):253–263. doi: [10.1017/S0029665123002720](https://doi.org/10.1017/S0029665123002720).
32. Ife J. *Community Development in an Uncertain World*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press; 2013.
33. Ledwith M. *Community Development: A Critical and Radical Approach*. Bristol, UK: Policy Press; 2020.
34. All Ireland Endorsement Body for Community Work Education and Training. *All Ireland Standards for Community Work*. 2016. <https://www.aieb.ie/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/All-Ireland-Standards-for-Community-Work.pdf>. Accessed January 11, 2026.
35. Milbourne P. Beyond “feeding the crisis”: mobilising “more than food aid” approaches to food poverty in the UK. *Geoforum*. 2024;150:103976. doi: [10.1016/j.geoforum.2024.103976](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.geoforum.2024.103976).

36. Winkler L, Goodell T, Nizamuddin S, Blumenthal S, Atalan-Helicke N. The COVID-19 pandemic and food assistance organizations' responses in New York's capital district. *Agric Hum Values*. 2022;39(3):1–15. doi: [10.1007/s10460-022-10400-8](https://doi.org/10.1007/s10460-022-10400-8).
37. King S, McFarland A, Vogelzang J. Food sovereignty and sustainability mid-pandemic: how Michigan's experience of COVID-19 highlights chasms in the food system. *Agric Hum Values*. 2022;39(2):827–838. doi: [10.1007/s10460-021-10270-6](https://doi.org/10.1007/s10460-021-10270-6).
38. World Health Organization. Who director-general's opening remarks at the media briefing on COVID-19—11 March 2020. <https://www.who.int/news-room/speeches/item/who-director-general-s-opening-remarks-at-the-media-briefing-on-covid-19—11-march-2020>. 2020. Accessed January 11, 2026.
39. Department of Education (Ireland). COVID-19—statement from the Department of Education and Skills. <https://www.gov.ie/en/department-of-education/press-releases/covid-19-statement-from-the-department-of-education-and-skills/>. March 12, 2020. Accessed January 11, 2026.
40. Department of the Taoiseach (Ireland). Taoiseach urges Ireland to stay at home to combat COVID-19. <https://www.gov.ie/en/department-of-the-taoiseach/publications/taoiseach-urges-ireland-to-stay-at-home-to-combat-covid-19/>. 2020. Accessed January 11, 2026.
41. Department of the Taoiseach (Ireland). *Latest guidance on public health measures* (24 March 2020). <https://www.gov.ie/en/department-of-the-taoiseach/publications/latest-guidance-on-public-health-measures-24-march-2020/>. 2020. Accessed January 11, 2026.
42. Department of the Taoiseach (Ireland). *List of essential service providers under new public health guidelines*. <https://www.gov.ie/en/department-of-the-taoiseach/publications/list-of-essential-service-providers-under-new-public-health-guidelines/>. 2020. Accessed January 11, 2026.
43. Central Statistics Office (Ireland). *COVID-19 in Ireland: timeline 2020–2023*. <https://www.cso.ie/en/releasesandpublications/ep/p-covid19/covid-19informationhub/covid-19inirelandtimeline2020-2023/>. 2025. Accessed January 11, 2026.
44. Connolly A, Noone P, Buggy C, et al. Strategies for managing the COVID-19 pandemic and lessons learnt: an Irish perspective. *Public Health Rev*. 2025;46:1607427. doi: [10.3389/phrs.2025.1607427](https://doi.org/10.3389/phrs.2025.1607427).
45. Government of Ireland. *School meals programme: updated guidance*. 29 Mar 2020. <https://www.cpsma.ie/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/20200329-school-meals-updated-guidance-final-pdf.pdf>. Accessed January 11, 2026.
46. Harper D. Talking about pictures: a case for photo elicitation. *Vis Stud*. 2002;17(1):13–26. doi: [10.1080/14725860220137345](https://doi.org/10.1080/14725860220137345).
47. Biederman DJ, Lindsey EW. Promising research and methodological approaches for health behavior research with homeless persons. *J Soc Distress Homeless*. 2014;23(2):105–108. doi: [10.1179/1573658X14Y.0000000008](https://doi.org/10.1179/1573658X14Y.0000000008).
48. Power EM. De-centering the text: exploring the potential for visual methods in the sociology of food. *J Stud Food Soc*. 2003;6(2):9–20. doi: [10.2752/152897903786769670](https://doi.org/10.2752/152897903786769670).
49. Croghan R, Griffin C, Hunter J, Phoenix A. Young people's constructions of self: notes on the use and analysis of the photo-elicitation methods. *Int J Soc Res Methodol*. 2008;11(4):345–356. doi: [10.1080/13645570701605707](https://doi.org/10.1080/13645570701605707).
50. Purdam K, Garratt EA, Esmail A. Hungry? Food insecurity, social stigma and embarrassment in the UK. *Sociology*. 2016;50(6):1072–1088. doi: [10.1177/0038038515594092](https://doi.org/10.1177/0038038515594092).
51. Davoudi S, Shaw K, Haider LJ, et al. Resilience: a bridging concept or a dead end? *Plan Theory Pract*. 2012;13(2):299–333. doi: [10.1080/14649357.2012.677124](https://doi.org/10.1080/14649357.2012.677124).