
Exploring the case of the city of Montreal, Canada

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5 ELEMENTS TO BE PRESENTED

1) Original settings related to the community organizations and food relief operations

2) Impacts and challenges of the pandemic crisis on food security

4) Regional and local responses

5) The role of governance and the community for a resilient food system
1) ORIGINAL SETTINGS OF THE REGIONAL ORGANIZATIONS WORKING FOR FOOD SECURITY

➢ **Regional public health department**
Collaborating with schools, community organizations and the municipality in order to increase healthy eating habits among the population.

➢ **City of Montreal**
Financing food security projects across the city (2M$/year)

➢ **Centraide United Way**
Financial aid programs for local community organisations (50M$)

➢ **Breakfast Club Canada**
National food aid program for children in schools

➢ **Moisson Montréal**
Regional Food Bank receiving food and basic products through donations and providing them to local community organizations
- 241 accredited organizations
- Public and private founding

➢ **Montreal’s Food Policy Council**
Regional cross-sector and multi-network Food Council

➢ **30 Neighborhoods community tables**
Local cross-sector and multi-network initiatives

➢ **More than 600 local community organizations**
2) IMPACTS OF THE PANDEMIC CRISIS ON FOOD SECURITY (1/2)

March 16th: Confinement measures imposed by Québec’s provincial government
March 28th: Inter-regional movements restricted except for essential services

Food availability across town
- Closure of all restaurants, bars and cafés;
- Concentration of the demand on grocery stores: disruption of the food supply chain
- Momentary lack of food basics (canned food, flour, eggs and milk)

211 Community resources directory
- 41% of received calls are related to food aid
  (10% for health, 8% for community resources, 7% lodging…)

Local community organisations
- Surge in the demand for food aid (3x more)
- Lack of volunteers (most where elderly people, distancing obligations)
- New/increased need for delivery services
211 Community resources directory statistics

Food related needs
5% of the montrealers have reported they lacked food since the beginning of the crisis

- 82% of those who lacked food where not experiencing food insecurity before the crisis
- 61% declared their lack of food was related to their incapacity to get to the grocery store (confinement measures)
- 43% reported that it was related to a lack of financial resources
3) CHALLENGES RELATED TO FOOD SECURITY

- Increased needs for food supplies
- Lack of Protection equipment (masks, disinfecting products)
- Lack of volunteers / social distancing measures
- Increased need for deliveries
- School closure: food aid programs for kids
**1 Regional and 16 local crisis coordination cell**

**Objectives**: Pull together institutional, philanthropic and community partners in order to ensure food aid emergency services for the most vulnerable around the city of Montreal, in the respect of public health directives.

**Priority of Actions**:
- **Collect, update and share information** about available local food aid services
- **Follow up with challenges** in the food aid sector and offer a coordinated effort, with human and financial resources
- **Optimize** the food distribution mechanisms
- **Identify alternatives** in order to respond to the needs of the vulnerable populations
Montreal city
5 parcs with food distribution for homeless people

Montreal boroughs
Emergency founds for community organizations.

NGOs & organisations with regional actions

- La Tablée des chefs: 1,6 millions meals provided
- La Cantine pour tous: Kitchen infrastructures
- Bouffe-Action Rosemont: Delivery trucks rental, UBER deliveries
- Réseau alimentaire de l’est: Airline meals initiative
- L’Anonyme: Food truck for the homeless
Citizens responses

➢ Solidarity groups on social networks: information and mutual aid inquiries and offers
➢ Deliveries: cyclistes solidaires: 550 volunteer cyclists
➢ Artisanal protective face mask production
5) FOOD SYSTEM RESILIENCE: RISKS, CHANGES AND NEEDS

Risks related to the local food system

- General dependency on imported food
- Industrial agriculture sector dependent on foreign workers
- Small organic farmers dependent towards their main clients: restaurants

Changes in the consumers habits

- Surge in subscriptions for local farmers organic baskets: 94% increased compared to last year
- Many new online platforms in order to make local products accessible to the public

Needs and potential projects from the community organizations

- Founding (community organisations as essential service)
- Communication & coordination: Logistic tools for emergency food aid: online platforms and food hubs (transformation and transportation)
- Urban agriculture and greenhouses

Needs in food aid governance

- Stronger transparency in order to coordinate the founding initiatives
- Improve communication tools and information channels between the regional and local levels
Thank you
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