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**SPEAKERS**

Participant 145, Interviewer, Interviewer 2

**[INTRO]**

**Participant 145** 13:10

One of the other interesting areas- When I came on board here in 2016, we were just at the at the cusp of the Flint water crisis. So one of the initial efforts in recognizing all of the impact of lead led exposure was helping educate Flint residents, especially the inner city residents, with lead mitigating food, veg- food, foods and vegetables, in particular. Vitamin C vegetables, b-12 vegetables. So part of the effort was education, part of the effort was to help provide access to some of those. And then a bigger part of the effort was just helping folks understand how to use those things. Because many people are so used to purchasing processed foods, they don't know what to do with a tomato to make it into tomato sauce. And it's really, it's sad, but it's no fault of their own and maybe an upbringing situation, that they haven't been gifted with those experiences and, and that expertise. So-so realizing that we can provide you know, CSA's with a beautiful assortment of fruits and vegetables, but they may not have a stove to cook it on. Or they may not understand what to do in order to process things, in order to you know, make them into the most healthy form that they can consume. So this effort is not just access to-to the food, it's it's much more educationally oriented.

**Interviewer** 15:04

I'm already, I'm already moving, but this is great. I will maybe back up one second. And take a moment to explain to her the modeling process. So I'm not just making connections. So I will go through a little example. So backing up one second, my role here is really to facilitate this process. So translating your your experience and your knowledge into this map that I'm sharing. Into the boxes, lines and connections between concepts. So, but I'd also want to make sure that we explain what all of these things mean. So if you have the chance to basically double check my work, because this is your map, this is not my map. I'm jus creating it off your knowledge. So I definitely want you to feel very comfortable, be like, "no, that's wrong. Like, that's not how I would say that," and make sure that, you know, this is something that is a real reflection of your understanding, not of my interpretation.

**Participant 145** 16:02

Okay.

**Interviewer** 16:05

Um, so I'm going to go through a little example of if you're exploring the idea of traffic. And so when we connect concepts, through some relationships, some connection to each other, we have three decisions we need to make. The first is the direction of the connection. So does the amount of cars impact how much traffic there is, or traffic impact the amount of cars are on the road. So I might say, I think cars impact traffic, not the other way around. Because like, if you got to go to work, or a doctor's appointment or something, like you're just going to sit in traffic and be frustrated. You're not going to necessarily- you'll not drive on the road. So cars to traffic.

**Interviewer** 16:43

My second decision is if it's a positive or a negative connection, so this basically means- it's not necessarily like a good or bad. It means if one goes up, does the other one also go up? Or does it go down? Does it move in the same direction, or the opposite direction. So cars and traffic, more cars, more traffic, less cars, less traffic. Same direction, that's going to be a positive connection, and we'll have a blue arrow. Public Transportation might be a negative relationship, because when you have more public transportation or a better public transportation system, then more people are riding subways that don't drive on the roads, or you know, they're going to take the bus instead of driving their own car. And more people can fit in one bus then if those are all individual cars. So better public transportation, and more, is meaning that there's going to be less traffic in this fictional city. So it's going to be a negative connection, and we'll have an orange arrow.

**Interviewer** 17:38

My final choice is the strength of the relationship. This is sort sort of assessing you know, how impactful is one thing on another. So cars and traffic might be a strong relationship. That it is the most impactful thing on how much traffic there is. If we had no cars, you would have no traffic. So it's gonna be a strong relationship. Public Transportation might be more of a medium relationship that is, you know, impactful. But it's not the end all be all, you know. Like the bus is still on the road, there are always going to be those people who vastly prefer to drive their own cars that take public transportation. So you know, more of a medium connection, that it can have a pretty big impact. But it's not going to end the problem on its own.

**Interviewer** 18:26

I can also think about a weak connection. And that might be something like a city deciding to invest in some traffic circles. It's gonna have an impact on, you know, a very local impact on the flow of traffic. But if they suddenly decided to have all intersections in this fictional city be traffic circles, there's still going to be traffic, like it's an impact, but it's a pretty weak impact. So that's kind of my three decisions. What direction? Is it positive? Or is it negative? And is it a weak, medium or strong relationship? Do you have any questions about that process?

**Participant 145** 18:57

No, I do not. It makes perfect sense.

**Interviewer** 18:59

Awesome, and again, that a lot of the trying to figure out some of the finnicky stuff is my job. But again, it's mostly so you can double check that what I made is accurate. So like, for this one, I've already started connecting data. And again, please correct me this is your map of your like, I don't like how you worded that, like, I don't think that connections accurate. Like, please tell me. I'm trying to map your understanding. You know, it's really trying to translate yourself. So it's, it is yours. You can make it any way you want.

**Interviewer** 19:31

So currently, I have connected pretty strongly that the central greenhouse and farms supports the women farm, sort of on that campus. And as you said, there's a connection to really food pharmacy there, that they donate food, and that one of the benefits of this program is that it improves food access for folks. So I think those are both around the medium connections there. And then other ones that I started adding is something that you were talking about is that one of the problems, or one of the benefits of educational programs is that it makes it so that enables, like, gives people the knowledge of how to prepare foods. Another I think he was talking about is, you know, making healthy or nutritious choices. And then one of the challenges I kind of I'm not exactly sure where we're going to include it yet. But something that you talked about that I thought was really interesting is that one of the challenges is that people don't necessarily have like the facilities to prepare food. That if you give them raw ingredients, what are they going to do with it if they don't really have the tools to, to make it into something, even if they knew how to make it. Awesome. So that would be some of the connections I've made so far. And is that sort of accurate to your understanding, are there any changes you'd like to make?

**Participant 145** 21:00

I don't see any-any changes in how you've crafted it so far, but I certainly would see one very natural addition or extension to the women's farm. And that is exposure education training on growing healthy food, you know, fruits and vegetables. And even it has a greater scope than that. It could be, you know, we don't have [inaudible] stock on our farm currently, but it certainly provides the opportunity for education for the women who volunteer on the farm to learn how- The ultimate goal is for someone who can find- either use the ground here on the campus, in the gardens, or find an area where they can garden themselves. Raise food for themselves, but also to sell to provide them with some sustainability. So, maybe a little bit of a spur or a link off of the women's farm from the, you know, creating opportunities, education experiences for- in particular for urban women from Flint but it really is open to anybody from Genesee County.

**Interviewer** 22:19

Would you want- is describing it as like economic opportunities fair. Would you want just opportunities in general. Is there another sort of like, phrasing that you would, you would sort of attach there?

**Participant 145** 22:31

Um, certainly economic opportunities is one of the end goals for them to you know, be able to open up, either give them, you know, a booth at the Flint farmers market or set up a roadside stand that they can sell the things that they grow. Also providing access to healthy, you know, healthy vegetables in particular for themselves and their families. And, and maybe I'm not describing it as well as I would like to be, I'm not finding the- finding the words, but: then provided the experiences and the knowledge on how to start a garden or how to, you know, collaborate with maybe a local farmer to see if they can, you know, borrow-lease, for a minimal amount, or even free, a small amount of land that they can use themselves. So I don't know if that- if that rounds out the thoughts a little bit. It's looking very spider-webby, but I don't mind that,

**Interviewer** 23:28

That's great. That's how it's gonna- that's how it's gonna shape up.

**Participant 145** 23:32

Okay.

**Interviewer** 23:37

Cool. So some of the connections I've made here is, you know, connecting to this sort of education piece in a lot of ways that you're talking about that it-it leads to educational opportunities that hopefully would, you know, give them the skills and tools to start gardening or even like urban agriculture, and to-to create those economic opportunity is something I also heard was a gentle partnerships. Like with other farmers, that would make it more convenient. Awesome. Yeah. Um, and then maybe also mentioned resources.

**Participant 145** 24:29

Yeah, that's a great addition as well, [Interviewer]. You know, as the women's farm was being developed here on the campus, you know, some very rudimentary challenges and concerns arose on access to water, for example. Which, if they had to do it independent of the Ministry and Ascension here, would have been very challenging and incredibly expensive. So genesis provides access to water at no charge. Then electricity, for example, is a need. It's not an- you know, required need for greenhouse operation, but it certainly can be an asset. Solar can, you know, can be a resource as well. But so the access to the soil portion of the dirt maybe in some cases, the easiest part of the process. You know, the other challenges, which has been a learning curve for us for the five years that I've been involved in it are all part of the processes that makes the support of Ascension in this effort very valuable.

**Participant 145** 25:41

But also it- you know, it's providing so much back to us, the women's farm and the group, from a learning standpoint. Really, the model is being reshaped from the idea of bringing volunteers out here on the farm to- and even the grant writing processes for enabling the dollars to continue the farm- has changed from bringing urban women farmers out to learn the craft, to "what did we do in the process right and wrong to help other people so that they don't make- maybe make some of the same mistakes." So the future grant writing, for example, that-that [name] is doing, and [name], and [name]. And I, and I can mention some last names, but I think it's [name], and [name], and [name], I can't think of her last name. They're all with, with Michigan, the state of Michigan.

**Participant 145** 26:36

The learning curve has been a big part of the value in the process. And, you know, to be candid, the financial side of this is important. You know, they-they, I mean- I know, there are grants and opportunities, for example, for high tunnels, that-that can help fund high tunnel construction for, you know, future gardening and gardening, in particular undercover. But to be able to continue to pay [name] and or [name] for their efforts at you know, the mentor, and really the manager of the farm is something that requires the effort from the [audio cuts out] — That's something that's incredibly important to Ascension in particular. So, you know, those are-are answering right to our corporate leadership in, you know, one of the big goals. And again, I'm not educated as nearly as much as I should be on understanding all of that. I just know how important the role is in community engagement and community benefit for-for our nonprofit status, for example.

**Interviewer** 28:05

You froze for a couple of seconds. And so I want to make sure that I captured it. Was there more like a better word for this, a different aspect that I potentially missed that contributes to sort of the financial success or financial wellbeing more so, or this continued support for these sorts of programs. Is funding okay? Or, if you like, is it more complex?

**Participant 145** 28:33

No, I think that's just a very good word to describe, you know, all of the elements, all the financial elements that are necessary in order to make it work. So because it-it does- I mean, it's basically all about grant writing, in order to provide that funding. But funding encapsulates it absolutely.

**Interviewer 2** 28:52

You did briefly mention funding in relationship to staffing. So you were saying something about the fire managers?

**Participant 145** 28:59

Correct. We've got two managers currently, [name] and [name]. And forgive me I don't I can't remember [name]'s last name- [name] is her last name. They are paid part-time managers of the farm. So in their role as managers of the farm, they not only provide mentorship and education and training for any other volunteers that are able to come out to the facility. But also they are entrusted with the ultimate care of maintenance, production, of you know what's happening in the in the farm. And then also harvesting, harvesting and you know, maintaining food quality and safety standards, packaging standards, and then providing those either for sale at the Flint farmers market. Which then returns revenue back into the farm. Or in some cases donating to the nonprofits, for example, the food pharmacy, or edible Flint or some of those other organizations as well.

**Interviewer 2** 30:03

Okay, thank you for that.

**Participant 145** 30:05

Thank you. You're welcome. Thank you for your question.

**Interviewer** 30:08

Okay. Um, I also added this piece that I want to check in with you about, and we're talking about, like community engagement, and I'm going to switch to it in a second. But we, we have a set of what we're calling food system values that are things that emerged from conversations and focus groups with Flint community members. And we are talking about this sort of sparks the connection in my mind to this value that we have of community empowerment. That one of the goals of the women's farm, of-of these education, the partnerships of economic opportunities and stuff. We've talked about how they sort of like engage the community. Would it be fair to sort of connect that to this idea of community empowerment, I just want to check in because it's not something you explicitly said, but I'm seeing a lot of connections personally.

**Participant 145** 30:55

Alright, and I'm not sure if it's my internet connection, or what, but you froze up kind of in the middle of that [Interviewer]. So?

**Interviewer** 31:03

Yeah, um, I wanted to check if you'd be okay with me like, basically calling this concept we're talking about sort of community engagement, as like community empowerment, which is one of the values that we're going to talk about in a second.

**Participant 145** 31:23

I think that's-that's a fair relationship to what the- what the effort is. Absolutely. That's probably a really good way to encapsulate what the the overall goal of the farm is, and that's empowering urban women to, you know, with the resources to be a little more self sustaining. So yeah, that's that, that could kind of umbrella everything.

**Interviewer** 31:59

Awesome. Great. So the next thing we're going to do is go through a couple more definitions of these food system values. So as I said, sort of concepts that came out of conversations with Flint residents. Um asking people, "what do you want from the food system? What is a food system that serves you well look like?" So some of them will look familiar, because we, again, sort of sparked my connection to it. So we've added stuff like education, partnerships, community empowerment, nutritious foods. So I will sort of go through these definitions fairly quickly. And if you want to think about- if there's a couple that are not yet on the map that you would potentially want to include, or if you want to focus in more on some of these values that we have already talked about a little bit.

**Interviewer** 32:55

So education, we're defining as opportunities to learn food skills. So in our context, we talked more about the sort of the cooking, gardening, agriculture, nutrition and health. And potentially apply those to career development. So hopefully, that definition fits in with your understanding of how we've represented education in your map. And we also have community empowerment. This is that people want the food system to empower communities to support local economic development, foster a sense of community and prioritize residents cultural values. We also have quality of life is respected, which is sort of a combination of a lot of things that we were hearing. It was basically that people want to be able to move through the food system, with their dignity, choices, comfort and safety respected, to promote the common good and quality of life for all.

**Interviewer** 33:46

Um, we also have partnerships. So as we talked about, basically that want the food system to promote creativity, problem solving trust, strong partnerships that provide leadership and support collaboration and communication. Also, the last three will be nutritious foods: that people want more food options that are high nutrition, less additives, and preservatives, appropriate portions. Um, affordability. So food should be priced that community members can access the type, quality, and quantity they require. So it's really concerning, not just the-the net price of food, but also resident income and measuring folks ability to purchase the foods that they want. And then availability. So the type, quality and amount of food people required for community members to conveniently be families and themselves should be physically present. Do you have any questions about these food system values?

**Participant 145** 34:38

No, no, they're pretty clearly delineated.

**Interviewer** 34:43

Um, yeah, so we've already added education, community empowerment, partnerships and nutritious foods to the map. Are there any of these other values that you would be interested in adding to your map? And the answer can be no, also

**Participant 145** 35:02

I am really looking at the last two: affordability but maybe more so availability. And you know, I've got- I've got thoughts that I would- would certainly interject into there. They can circle back to education in some degree because- Unfortunately, many of the more economically challenged residents of any community tend to purchase the worst foods possible with the dollars they have available. They're buying prepackaged and prepared foods. Maybe it's because all they have is a gas station or a 7/11 down the street that's convenient for them to get to versus having, you know, a nice grocery store, which- I guess I shouldn't say maybe. I know that's factual that- Access to, literally access to good quality food is very challenging.

**Participant 145** 35:48

Again, the education that we talked about and how to prepare the food- So you know, for example, with the preponderance of type 1, type 2 diabetes in inner city community residents, and then consuming primarily packaged foods are negatives in every sense of the word. So the education access, those things just really go hand in hand. Part of it- the availability and again, I would circle around availability with that, you know, what types of stores are available. Are you know, they shopping them from convenience stores, or are they able to get to a grocery store. So, so again, I've as I kind of zeroed in on affordability, but maybe more so availability and-and education.

**Participant 145** 36:43

Transportation as you just queued that up as well has been a big challenge for us at the women's farm, because there isn't really ease of transportation to get women from inner city out here to the farm. So that's been a hurdle that we have not been able- I mean, no, let me I'll say, candidly: it's been a hurdle that we have not been able to overcome yet.

**Interviewer** 37:17

[inaudible] So transportation. I also included- Again, there might be a different phrasing, but like spatial access. So it's sort of also like, not only your ability to get places, but like, the convenience of it, or like the access- like is it even in your area and stuff like that. It affects where people go. You know, convenience stores have less availability of foods that people like may want that. That's more like, packaged unhealthy foods. And grocery stores have more. So those two: convenience stores have less nutritious foods. And then maybe connecting these sorts of things to healthy food choices.

**Interviewer** 38:04

Yeah, maybe- it will be- We can add in sort of this- This is the point where the map starts getting really complicated, but complicated in a really awesome way. So we're really, also impacting, you know, where people are going that maybe — I'm wondering if it's also-

**Interviewer 2** 38:33

I'm trying to make a direct connection between that and the availability. I know those those two, you know- I did get that one

**Participant 145** 38:46

You know, it would be easy to look at the connections, the the webbing, and consider that this is challenges that can't be overcome. But I look at it and, and certainly drilling on the red lines, which are the areas of of the greatest challenge, and realize that there are solutions to the problem. We can't solve them all, you know, in a matter of days, weeks or months. But a combined effort will help move- We just need to continue to move toward the solutions, as opposed to just throwing our hands up and saying there's nothing we can do, because that's really just not true.

**Interviewer** 39:24

And that's an incredible segue. So something that we're also interested in talking about today. And so the goal of our project is not only to build out this common understanding of what's going on with food in Flint, but also identify leverage points. So things that could be added or changed about the food system in Flint that would have significant impacts in one way or another. So that could be small changes that could be a big changes was really sort of focusing on the outcome is that is it going to have really positive outcomes for the community. So I know it's sort of a big and open ended question. But are there any leverage points that you would consider or that you can think about, and in relation to the Flint food system?

**Participant 145** 40:12

I think the, I think the greatest leverage point really circles around education: helping our at risk residents to understand and become educated at where the food is accessible, how to get it, how to use it in the in the most health- most healthy way. So even taking a step further and, and canning and preservation of the resources as well. It's a- it's a craft that I speak often of that, unfortunately, is dying with the generation that's passing right before our eyes. So and even gardening, for example. As our grandparents and parents pass away, the ability to pass down those-those crafts is being lost.

**Participant 145** 41:10

And if- I don't make a blanket statement by saying that, because there certainly are people that are still engaged in those activities. But I'm afraid as the older generations are passing before us, that's going to be, you know, it's going to become less and less a reality of what's happening. Which takes us to being more reliant on you know, grocery stores, or being more reliant, if folks don't have access to that or have the financial resources, then to food banks, and to, you know, some of the, the free or discounted resources that are available. So it's a double edged sword, or actually just a vicious circle of, of negative circumstances. Because they may be able to get the food, but then what do they do with it when they get it? How do they prepare it safely? Healthy- in a healthy way? So I know I'm kind of circling back in some of the things that we talked about, as well. But those- that thought just, you know, kind of rose up in my mind.

**Interviewer** 42:15

You know, I am- This is a bit of a tangent, but it was only when I got to high school that I realized not everyone's mother spent like three weeks in like late summer, canning all of our like garden tomatoes, and like Indiana peaches and stuff like that. I'm like, "Oh, that's just us."

**Participant 145** 42:33

You're- you are 100% correct. You know, when I say the word- and I know [Interviewer 2], we may be of similar generation. When I say "root cellar," people don't even know what that is anymore. But I mean, my grandmother, they-they had a root cellar, that's where the potatoes were stored and the root vegetable. And-and that's just non existent. We had a room in our basement when I was a child that had all the canned goods, you know, whatever it was: pickles and-and-and-and especially a lot of tomatoes, you know, sauces and things like that. It's just a craft that's not being perpetuated. And sadly, you know- that- I don't know that that's entirely a part of what we're talking about right now, other than it provides some of that sustainable- self sustainability that is just being lost. And especially in the inner city. They may have room to garden, but then can they get seeds? Can they afford the seeds? Do they know what to do with them? You know-This is fascinating, because when you ask most inner-inner city, or really any children. I'm not even gonna blanket it at an inner city. You ask most inner- most children "where do tomatoes come from," and they say the grocery store.

**Interviewer** 43:51

Yeah, my um-

**Participant 145** 43:52

So one of my passions, you know, one of my passions has been to help kids understand what, you know, what you do with seeds. But it's really important for me, because kids- children's attention spans are very short. And so it's very important to me that when I engage them in seed sowing, for example, that we're doing leafy vegetables. Because from sowing to harvest is three weeks. When you sow a tomato seed to harvest is 100 days, and they don't have the patience to wait for that. But when they can harvest leaf lettuce- Maybe they don't like leaf lettuce or spinach or kale, but at least they understand the input and the outcome. And that's very, very important.

**Participant 145** 44:36

So-so, you know, maybe maybe part of this is is education but at a much younger level. Not necessarily- I mean we can try to educate the 20, 30, 40, 50 year olds that don't understand it. But if we can get back into the, you know, the grade school and elementary schools and influence the biology classes to understand- And I don't even know if that if these things are being taught anymore about seeds and seed germination and, and, and whether kids are even exposed to that at that level anymore. You know, so that's really something I passionate about. I don't I don't stand up on that soapbox probably often enough to promote that. But that's where we start this process to, in my mind to solve it. And it's sadly- It's just not- You know, I think it's-it's- I don't want to say non existent, but it's certainly not a priority.

**Participant 145** 45:37

And I understand it. Schools, everybody's pressed. And in this past year, you know, it's not even, not even a year to count. Just because of how awkward and odd its's been with remote learning and things like that. But even in a normal year for kids to understand gardening and seed germination and things like that, it's just not priority. I don't know if that was a tangent [Interviewer]. So I apologize if it was. But really that speaks right to- you know, if we want to solve this problem, it starts with seven year olds. I mean truly it does.

**Interviewer 2** 46:16

Mm hmm.

**Interviewer** 46:19

I am- I feel like I've been seeing more and more in the last few years, this idea in like food systems space tha- like that early exposure to food and choices and knowledge really, like makes it so much easier to like, be even just, like healthy. And be like a conscious consumer later on in life. That like once you've established habits around food, it's incredibly hard to break them.

**Participant 145** 46:47

Yes. [Interviewer 2], I know I can speak for myself, you know, we had home-ec when I went to school. You know, we had shop class when I went to school.

**Interviewer 2** 46:55

Absolutely

**Participant 145** 46:56

And, you know, boys learn how to stitch and sew and sew on buttons. That's a value that- Exactly, you know, if, if a nine year old knows how to thread a needle right now, I would be surprised, you know, Sadly.

**Interviewer 2** 47:12

Yeah, it's-it speaks to the evolution, but you're bringing up really good points in terms of a education standpoint. As I shared, I'm in Detroit. So we're teaching anybody big enough to carry something how to grow food. So your point is well taken that the education process has to start- We got to- we got to get everybody engaged. You talked about the women. We got to get farmers who can raise the next farmers, right, you know, so you're you're absolutely- not a tangent at all, this is all really important perspectives. And some of the things you've talked about, I just want to want to encourage you to keep talking that your perspectives are- you're bringing forth some things that may have been nuanced, in some other conversations and some things that have absolutely not been talked about at all. So do know that-that-that what you're offering is perspective that's going to fill in some gaps.

**Participant 145** 48:08

Okay. The other thing that, as well, and we haven't even approached this yet is food waste and food loss. You know, I've heard the percentages was actually just shocking to the amount of waste that would really- could feed the planet. So finding, networking, access to that excess, to that waste, and that loss. That alone would help move the bar toward a solution to the problems. If- there's not going to solve it, because we still haven't taught people how to process or cook a butternut squash. But you know, 30%-25% of all vegetables are are wasted to loss. It's probably that much or more with proteins, starches, as well. So making those connections. I think that, you know, I would- Speaking for the farmers, I think they would rather give it away, than throw it away, Because I would rather give it away in what I do, than throw it away. So again, it's the networking portion of that.

**Participant 145** 49:18

Now then that goes back to humility, and, you know, are our people comfortable getting something or asking for something, or admitting that they need help getting something? I don't know where that aligns in here. And I thought I saw one of your boxes, kind of related to that. But-but that certainly presents some challenges as well. There's a pride factor here of you know, yeah, I have a problem but I don't want anybody to know that. And you know, and so the shame of that, and part of that is how they're approached, you know, when they are out seeking or asking for it.

**Participant 145** 49:57

And hopefully they're treated with with care and compassion. I know what society is like sadly. And sometimes where the most need is is recognized very critically. Like "Why aren't you doing something for yourself? Why aren't you helping yourself? You know pull your- pull your boots on and go, you know, go to work, or go-" It's not that easy. It's just not. You pile onto that addiction issues, you pile onto that abuse issues. And you know, we've got resources in Flint, for example, with St. Luke's. And it's so a women's home, a women's shelter for, in particular ladies who are coming off dependency issues. They have a, they have a garden on their property. They're they're helping women learn how to do laundry, they're helping women learn how to sew. They're helping-helping women learn how to garden so that they can create- they can break out of this cycle of abuse and addiction.

**Participant 145** 51:00

Abuse: women who are in battering situations that you know are relying relying on a battery just so they have a roof over their head and maybe a place for their babies to sleep. Those problems are-are being addressed I don't know that you can address them vocally you know, if we can throw enough resources at that. But and again, the-the embarrassment of those things, you know. The controlling nature of those things, My gosh, Flint and Genesee County alone the human trafficking challenges and then the reality that it's happening five miles from where I am, is-is-is scary. And you know there's there's a lot of passion involved in some of the- some of our team here on human trafficking and, and helping to address it. You know and right here in Genesee County. I know, again, tangents, but sustainability, education, teaching-teaching these- teaching women that they- that they don't have to rely on somebody else for anything. And I shouldn't say just women, everyone, but this certainly hits home with women in particular.

**Interviewer 2** 52:20

Now you're making some very strong connections that we absolutely have not heard-heard. Thank you.

**Participant 145** 52:26

You are welcome. Thank you.

**Interviewer 2** 52:28

Yeah, these are the nooks and crannies and places that oftentimes are not coming to people's minds, because they're not the most visible things. And we've not heard anybody talk about the places where people are recovering, or, or being in sanctuaries from abuse, and that there's food elements tied to that. So this is very important.

**Participant 145** 52:54

Yeah, in one of our efforts here with the women's farm, and again, transportation, presented challenges, was getting women from the shelters out here to the women's farm. And we're 15 miles, 12 miles from downtown Flint. It doesn't seem like an insurmountable distance. But in the world of transportation, that's a long ways. And you know, we're still working through those processes. And the most important thing is that the women's farm now is five years old, and it is continuing and the goal is for it to perpetuate for forever so what we're not achieving today, we're striving to achieve tomorrow.

**Interviewer** 53:54

I sort of added in those pieces definitely let me know if there's any changes or additions that you would like to make to that I added to-

**Participant 145** 54:03

That was so much I just read your [Interviewer] I don't even know how you kept up with it. So congratulations for that.

**Interviewer** 54:09

Like our 40th interview, so I it's [inaudible] so hopefully-

**Participant 145** 54:18

This is also a big package that is all together. It's all tied together. We want to think that "No, that doesn't have anything to do with it over here, or that that doesn't have anything-" It's just not that simple. There's, you know, I see the big picture. And even in my little world as a greenhouse manager, you know, my exposure to this group and my liaison activities with the women's farm. I wasn't educated about these things, as what much as I should have been five years ago. I'm a very avid reader of newspaper and I consume a lot of press. So I certainly have, you know, a lot of rounding information. But the experiences that I've gained from people like [name], and you know what she's experienced and what- Not, not personally, but what she's experienced in her role with one farmers market, for example. And even [name] who at one time was involved with, she was a coordinator to help the folks that were getting either snap or double up food bucks and things like that use those dollars as efficiently at the Flint farmers market as possible. So that's been a great education for me.

**Interviewer** 55:34

I bet. Early in my career, I had to pick what- and I have a background with sustainable systems in general. And then coming into a PhD, I had to sort of decide on which sys-system I wanted to focus on. And I'm like, if I pick the food system, I'm secretly doing every system. It's connected in one way or another.

**Participant 145** 55:55

Yes, absolutely.

**Interviewer** 55:57

Awesome. [Interviewer 2], it is two minutes to 10. And I know you have another meeting after this. So I will let you go and join the meeting. But I'll sort of wrap up this conversation.

**Interviewer 2** 56:10

Yeah, absolutely. Nice to meet you, [Participant 145]. And I certainly, you know, point us- you know, [Interviewer] is going to talk to you about other folks. You've named a few that would be definitely if we can get to them in a week. And I'll poke [name] and try to get her but if you've got someone else. Very nice to talk to you. I'll listen to the rest of the recording. So I'll have some benefit to the rest of the conversation. Sorry to have to jump off.

**Participant 145** 56:35

No, [Interviwerr 2], thank you very much. Thanks for your comments as well and Blessings to you. Thank you.

**Interviewer 2** 56:41

Yeah, blessings to you as well [Particpant 145]

**Interviewer** 56:42

[COVID SECTION]

**Participant 145** 1:09:03

Let me let me just collect my thoughts a little bit if I can, wrap it all, in kind of package it as concisely as possible.

**Participant 145** 1:09:21

I think- we talked a lot about education. We talked about the aspects of education from teaching people how to use the food that's available. But I think even a greater thought of education and helping people understand the resources that are out there and available to them. I don't- I think in every community, there are resources available that people aren't taking advantage of, whether it's a soup kitchen, whether it's you know, a local church or ministry that has either a food bank, or you know dollars available to help with either food purchases or paying utilities or preventing water shut offs or you know, all of those sorts of things.

**Participant 145** 1:10:03

It goes to humility and pride, because some people are embarrassed to ask for help. Some people don't know who to ask for the help. They don't even know where to start or begin. So, you know, I would think that the ability to educate- And then how are- so if we're telling people about it, where are we telling them? How are we telling them? So that they're, they're getting the information. Because if it's only on the, you know, on the six o'clock news, and they don't have a TV, they're not hearing it there. If they don't have a subscription to the Flint journal and reading the newspaper, they're not seeing it there. So how are we providing that information? How are we going block to block house to house and letting people know that the resources are available to them?

**Participant 145** 1:10:50

I don't know the answer to that question. But it seems that as we talked about earlier with [Interviewer 2], in educating youth to garden, and to can, and to be a little more resourceful on their own: education is still a big part of this. And letting people know, just simply what's available to them. That they may have- they may have, you know, a food pantry, a block away from their house, and if they don't know what's there, they're not gonna be able to take advantage of it. So I think that's part of it as well. It's, it's, my brain kind of keeps coming back to that, you know, just just letting people know about the resources. And and if they don't know about it, how do we let them know? You know, how can we get the word out in in a way that that they're comfortable with? And that their, that their pride doesn't get in the way. Or, you know, or judgment or prejudice or what have you gets in the way of them taking advantage of those resources. There's, there's certain communities and certain ethnic groups that are that have a tremendous amount of pride in not wanting to ask for help. And if that stymies them from getting the help, then that's, that's something that we- it would be great if we could find a way to break through

**Interviewer** 1:12:14

[OUTRO]