### **Reflective Journal Entry**

**Introduction:** After this week's readings on the topic of food insecurity, specifically the critical perspectives on charity as a solution, I was struck that this could be quite a challenge to commonly accepted approaches toward fighting hunger (TVO Today, 2022; Social Determinants of Health, 2023).

**Personal Reactions and Feelings:** The thought that maybe, just maybe, charity was perpetuating the problem it was trying to fix—that of food insecurity—was something quite disturbing and challenging to consider. The discussion by Paul Taylor, in which he strongly stated that "charity isn't a fix for food insecurity,"(CBC Radio, 2023) hit a close note to my heart. It made me reflect on the many charity drives that I have attended and question what the long-term solution is, or probably I am just fueling the issue rather than trying to fix it.

**Insights and Learning:** The material has enlightened me on the structural issues of food insecurity. According to the Social Determinants of Health: The Canadian Facts, "household food insecurity" is a term that refers to a systemic problem linked with economic inequality and not to food insufficiency (Social Determinants of Health, 2023). This is a very important insight for anyone interested in social policy or community work, since it underlines that what is required is systemic change rather than charity.

**Application to Personal or Professional Life:** This reflection will influence how I do community service in the future. Instead of charitable actions, I'm much more interested in advocacy now for policy changes that get at the root of food insecurity—higher minimum wages and social assistance rates (Social Determinants of Health, 2023). That's based on Evan Fraser's point that we should do more in sharing food equitably rather than produce more food to meet people's needs(CBC Radio, 2023).

**Critical Reflection:** While I do value the argument against charity as the singular solution, I have been left to wonder how we balance immediate relief efforts against long-term systemic change. As Fraser mentions, we "have enough food, but it's poorly distributed," which would suggest that, in concert with policy change, we must find ways to better manage the resources that exist (CBC Radio, 2023). This material really helped me reflect on how both approaches, charity and systemic change, can coexist and be mutually supportive.

**Conclusion:** All in all, this week's content has been a powerful catalyst in terms of not only making me further reevaluate my thoughts on food insecurity but also the role charity tends to play within society. It put an emphasis on the fact that actual systemic change and nuanced ways to solve complex social issues are what will make the real difference (TVO Today, 2022; Social Determinants of Health, 2023; CBC Radio, 2023).

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### **References**

* CBC Radio. (2023, November 29). *Charity is not a solution to food insecurity*: How to feed the future. CBC Radio. <https://www.cbc.ca/radio/ideas/charity-is-not-a-solution-to-food-insecurity-how-to-feed-the-future-1.6912347>
* Social Determinants of Health. (2023). *Social determinants of health: The Canadian facts.* Chapter 8: Food insecurity (pp. 34-37).<https://thecanadianfacts.org/>
* TVO Today. (2022, March 28). *What is food insecurity?* [Video]. YouTube.<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2YgxG6tyaXs>