

# Impact Evaluation Toolkit for Food Hubs

2023



Project partners:



# Background to the toolkit

This toolkit was developed by the University of Leeds in collaboration with Foodwise and Leeds City Council to assist Food Hubs in evaluating their impact on the communities they serve and the wider food system. More information about the research behind this toolkit is available at the [Global Food and Environment Institute](#).

This toolkit is in line with the [Leeds Food Strategy](#).

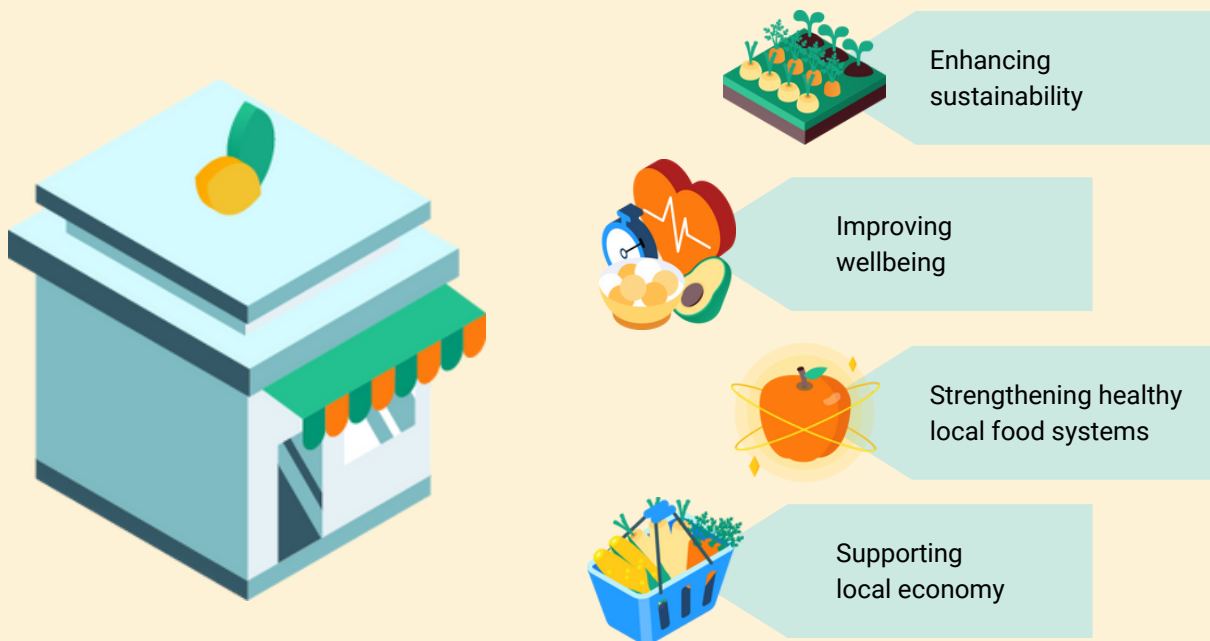
The **toolkit is designed to be self-administered by Food Hubs** to support them in developing funding bids or to evidence their impact within the community.

A Food Hub is an umbrella term to describe entities that sit between people who produce food and people who use it, gathering food from growers and distributing it either to commercial customers or directly to consumers – often working with an explicit set of ethical priorities.



For support using this toolkit or to receive an Excel version of this toolkit, please contact Dr Effie Papargyropoulou [E.Papargyropoulou@leeds.ac.uk](mailto:E.Papargyropoulou@leeds.ac.uk).

Food Hubs benefit **communities** and the **food system** by:



# How to use this toolkit

Click to get to the relevant section you are interested in.

1

## Identify an activity

Begin by identifying an activity or programme to evaluate.



Go through the toolkit for each activity that you do. You can fill the information on this pdf. It is fillable.

2

## Complete the tables

With that activity or programme in mind, go through each table and complete the columns.

- [Sustainability and resilience](#) >
- [Health and wellbeing](#) >
- [Access and demand for healthy, local food](#) >
- [Food security and economy](#) >

### Impacts

Identify the outcomes that your activities/programmes achieve

### Frequency

State how often you carry out the activity or programme (e.g. everyday, once per month)

### Indicators

Consider how you measure the impact (i.e. what metrics you could use)

### Evidence

Capture any evidence that you already have to support the impacts you've stated



We've provided some examples of impacts and indicators. Not all of them may be relevant - skip those which do not resonate.



As you're working through the toolkit, one activity or programme could contribute to multiple impacts and can therefore be mentioned several times. e.g. cooking classes could bring benefits in terms of 'Access and demand for local healthy food', 'Community wellbeing', and 'Economic viability'.

3

## Record additional evidence needed

List any additional evidence that you need to collect in the future in order to support each impact of the activity or programme. Start collecting that data.

## Step 1. Select an activity or program

- Community café/in house meal provision
- Food bank (free to customer)
- Distribute food parcels
- Community pantry/social supermarket (small cost/membership)
- Utilise surplus food
- Composting
- Cooking classes
- Food growing
- Food/health literacy support
- Finance support/signposting
- Mental health support/signposting
- Community group (e.g. art, gardening, music)
- 
- 
- 



*You can add other activities to this list.*

## Step 2. Complete the columns for each impact of the activity



### Sustainability and resilience

<b>Impacts</b> What outcomes do your activities/programmes achieve? Examples provided.	<b>Frequency</b> How often do you do this? E.g. never, sometimes, always, everyday, once a month	<b>Indicators</b> What metrics do you use/would like use, to measure the effect of your outcomes? Examples provided.	<b>Evidence</b> What information do you have to support the effect of your impact?	<b>Comments</b> What could you do to increase the impact of your food hub, or how to capture the effect of the impacts?
<b>Example:</b> Utilising food surplus to make meals (Activity) has the positive environmental impact of reducing food waste (Impact)	Everyday	Number of meals provided	We record how many meals we serve every day: on average 50 meals/day	We will capture information about the amount of surplus food we are using.
Reduce food waste		Volume of surplus food used (kg); Number of food parcels given; Number of meals provided		
Reduce Greenhouse Gases (GHG) by using locally grown food		Percentage of locally sourced food, 'food miles' travelled (miles/km)		
Reduce Greenhouse Gases (GHG) by using seasonal produce		Percentage of fresh produce used that is 'in season' compared to that which is not		
Support biodiversity by growing fruit and vegetables		Volume of fruit and vegetables grown (% of produce grown in house versus purchased/kg of produce grown)		
Support biodiversity by planting trees and plants		Number of trees, plants planted		
Improve soil quality by composting/using compost		Volume of compost produced/used (kg)		

## Step 2. Complete the columns for each impact of the activity



### Health and wellbeing

<b>Impacts</b> What outcomes do your activities/programmes achieve? Examples provided.	<b>Frequency</b> How often do you do this? E.g. never, sometimes, always, everyday, once a month	<b>Indicators</b> What metrics do you use/would like use, to measure the effect of your outcomes? Examples provided.	<b>Evidence</b> What information do you have to support the effect of your impact?	<b>Comments</b> What could you do to increase the impact of your food hub, or how to capture the effect of the impacts?
Improve health e.g. physical activity or healthy eating support		Quotes/images to describe or evidence the impact of the food hub on health		
Improve emotional wellbeing e.g. mental health support		Quotes/images to describe or evidence the impact of the food hub on emotional wellbeing		
Improve quality of life e.g. volunteering opportunities		Quotes/images to describe or evidence the impact of the food hub on improving quality of life		
Improved educational/work attainment due to improved access to healthy food		Improved grades in school; Improved job opportunities; Quotes about concentration		
Promote opportunities to develop social connections and relationships e.g. lunch clubs		Examples/descriptions of programmes that promote social connections and relationships; Quotes/images to describe or evidence the impact of the food hub on providing opportunities to develop social connections, sense of belonging		
Provide opportunities to engage in community activities e.g. gardening groups		Examples/descriptions of programmes that provide opportunities to engage in community activities; Quotes/images to describe or evidence how the food hub engages in community activities		

## Step 2. Complete the columns for each impact of the activity



### Access and demand for healthy, local food

<b>Impacts</b> What outcomes do your activities/programmes achieve? Examples provided.	<b>Frequency</b> How often do you do this? E.g. never, sometimes, always, everyday, once a month	<b>Indicators</b> What metrics do you use/would like use, to measure the effect of your outcomes? Examples provided.	<b>Evidence</b> What information do you have to support the effect of your impact?	<b>Comments</b> What could you do to increase the impact of your food hub, or how to capture the effect of the impacts?
Provide access to land, facilities and infrastructure for food growing (e.g. allotments)		Area of land for growing food (ha/acres)		
Support the purchase of healthy food		Number of people who access food that contain fresh/healthy produce		
Offer a diverse range of healthy, local, culturally appropriate foods		Types of dietary & cultural preferences considered (e.g. halal, vegetarian, African, Afro Caribbean, Eastern European, Asian); Types of food offered (e.g. tinned meat, fresh fruit)		
Raise awareness for benefits of healthy local food		Number of people attending food programmes; Reach of healthy eating campaigns (e.g. social media metrics)		
Develop food skills and food literacy		Number of cooking/food growing classes and number of people attending		
Enable individuals/families to use food provided		Number of cooking utensils/appliances given; Number of recipes donated		
Provide space to store food safely		Space available to store food (meters squared) or number of fridges of x volume		

## Step 2. Complete the columns for each impact of the activity

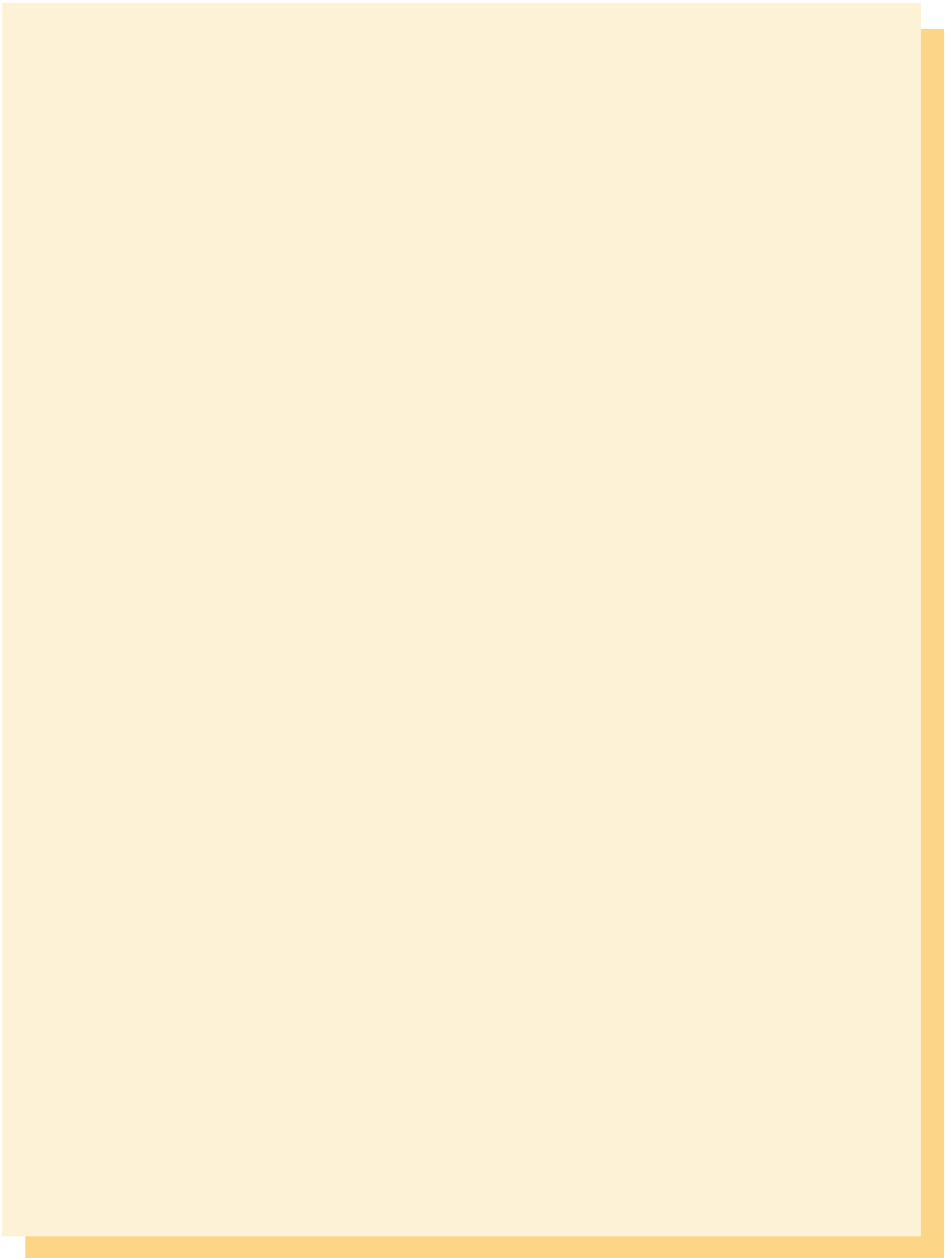


### Food security and economy

<b>Impacts</b> What outcomes do your activities/programmes achieve? Examples provided.	<b>Frequency</b> How often do you do this? E.g. never, sometimes, always, everyday, once a month	<b>Indicators</b> What metrics do you use/would like use, to measure the effect of your outcomes? Examples provided.	<b>Evidence</b> What information do you have to support the effect of your impact?	<b>Comments</b> What could you do to increase the impact of your food hub, or how to capture the effect of the impacts?
Contribute to food security e.g. physical and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food that meets dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life		Number of food parcels provided per week; Number of members of a community food pantry/café or similar; Quotes from members about how the food hub helps them to access food		
Advocate for policies/programmes supportive of sustainable local foods		Examples of advocacy programmes/campaigns to promote sustainable local food		
Facilitate connections between other businesses/organisations		Description of/number of connections between organisations or businesses		
Provide market access to small/medium scale farmers/food businesses		Examples of partnerships with local businesses; Quotes or other evidence from local farmers/food businesses/food producers/greengrocers about their improved access to market		
Assist with access to financial or other support for community members		Description of financial or other support available (e.g. advice or signposting about benefits, debt, housing, education, abuse, immigration etc); Quotes from members who accessed support		
Support community economic development		Number of volunteers/work experience associates; Hours of volunteering/work experience offered; Quotes from volunteers/work experience associates about the impact of the opportunity on their life		
Employ staff		Number of employed staff		
Generate revenue		Sum of revenue generated per year (£)		



### Step 3. Record additional evidence needed



# Appendix A

Use this page to collate evidence about the demographics of the recipients of your services (i.e. users of your services)

Activity	Number of households or individuals served per week/month	Number of households with children served per week/month	Number of individuals with disabilities served per week/month	Number of pensioners served per week/month	Other relevant demographic characteristics (e.g. gender, age, socio-economic status, education, occupation)