



Activating Regenerative and Conscious Food System Narratives

OpEPA: New Narratives for Nourishment and Sustainability | Global

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"Food is more than sustenance; it's a story waiting to be told." This 6-month project set out to rewrite that narrative by empowering journalists and influencers to reshape how we perceive and interact with food systems. Through a series of workshops and the creation of a comprehensive guide, the project aimed to inspire a global movement toward a more regenerative and conscious food system.

BACKGROUND

This 6-month project consisted of creating and disseminating a guide - "Eating and Shaping the World" - and a series of 1.5 and 2-hour workshops designed to activate regenerative and conscious food system narratives.

The project was implemented virtually in Colombia for participants around the world. It sought to strengthen the capacities of journalists and influencers to develop and promote new narratives on the food system. Both **the guide** and the workshops were delivered in Spanish and English.

During the workshops, the guide's topics were addressed, and dialogue for collaborative learning and internal capacity building was cultivated. Participants were convened thanks to OpEPA's platform for journalists and the networks of CoFSA and UNDP, partners in this project.

IMPLEMENTATION AND CONSCIOUSNESS APPROACH

The project's objective was clear: to encourage deep reflection and improve the relationship between humans and food, ultimately promoting sustainable practices. The [guide "Eating and Shaping the World"](#) broadens the vision of conventional food systems, as well as offers tools for communicators to create new narratives. This was accompanied by practices to strengthen the internal capacities of the readers. At the same time, the experiential workshops were designed to delve deeper into the guide from the rational, corporal, and emotional points of view. These interactive sessions explored relationships with food through the stages of Joanna Macy's spiral. Starting with gratitude for the magic of food systems, participants then explored the pains of the food system crisis and finished with a fresh vision to create more hopeful stories that reconnect with food in new ways. The objective was to encourage reflections that improve the relationship between human beings and food, promoting sustainable practices and fostering a global movement towards a nutritious and interconnected world.

"I loved being able to see the interconnectedness between all the players in the ecologies of food and being able to understand the importance of journalism in changing these narratives."

— Participant

RESULTS AND IMPACT

The workshop demonstrated the connections of food with the world through social and planetary health and generated an awareness of the responsibility our decision-making has. The impacts that participants reported from this experience were incredibly positive. The workshop aroused curiosity and interest in "continuing to investigate and explore different ways of communicating and narrating our relationship with ecologies of food." Indeed, participants reported feeling motivated to include the learnings from the workshop and guide in their work and to involve people from other communities outside their usual circles. They also reported that the workshop strengthened behaviors, habits, and thoughts already present in relation to food systems and that this will impact the groups and communities in which they work.

At the behavioral level, participants reflected on changes in their beliefs and values towards food which could lead to changes in how they consume food and perceive their responsibility and agency within the food system.

Do you feel that this workshop has generated changes in the vision you had about food? in what way?

"The workshop allowed me to meet people, and their opinions made me reflect and deepen the relationship I have with food, in particular about the need to be more conscious about what I eat, what I buy, and where I buy what I eat."

— Participant

LEARNINGS

The potential for scaling up and replicating the intervention is significant, as the New Narratives for Regenerative Food Systems guide is already developed, eliminating the need for additional costs. The project's experience in training journalists and influencers could serve as an inspiring model

for engaging different audiences, particularly key decision-makers and public leaders, in the regeneration of food systems. Using the guide as a basis, the intervention could be adapted to empower decision-makers and public leaders to cultivate their inner capacities and influence policy toward regenerative food systems. In addition, virtual workshops would enable replication of the intervention in various countries and regions. The workshop methodology is also adaptable to other groups working in the food system. The emphasis on transformative educational practices and nature-based educational methodologies allows for a dynamic learning experience that others can adopt. The guide would allow for the development of a specific curriculum that explores the ecologies of food and this whole relational and practical issue of young people, food, and how this relationship is represented in their homes and at school. We believe that in order to replicate the intervention, it is essential to first identify the audience, then to create a relevant guide adaptation, and finally design a sequence of learning - through workshops - that builds collectively on the concepts of the guide and creates space for deep reflection specific to the public.

Upon evaluating the workshop and its impact, future iterations of the project would ideally include a workshop or master class in which the concepts proposed in the guide are explained, as these are complex and need time to fully understand. In parallel, a series of contemplative practices, meditations, and reflective eating practices could accompany the guide. Each practice would need time to develop and be internalized. For example, a diary or logbook could be kept recording the reflections and noticing the internal changes. Thus, with these changes, the total experience would have a longer duration, allowing the necessary time to carry out the proposed objectives, awakening and realizing the magic of the ecologies of food through gratitude, moving past the pains in the food system, recognizing the regenerative potentials, and allow us to "write" the story we want to see.