CBSD to Intervene on Racial Disparities in Food Insecurity in Hayti, MO

Project Team Leaders

Cora Sanders

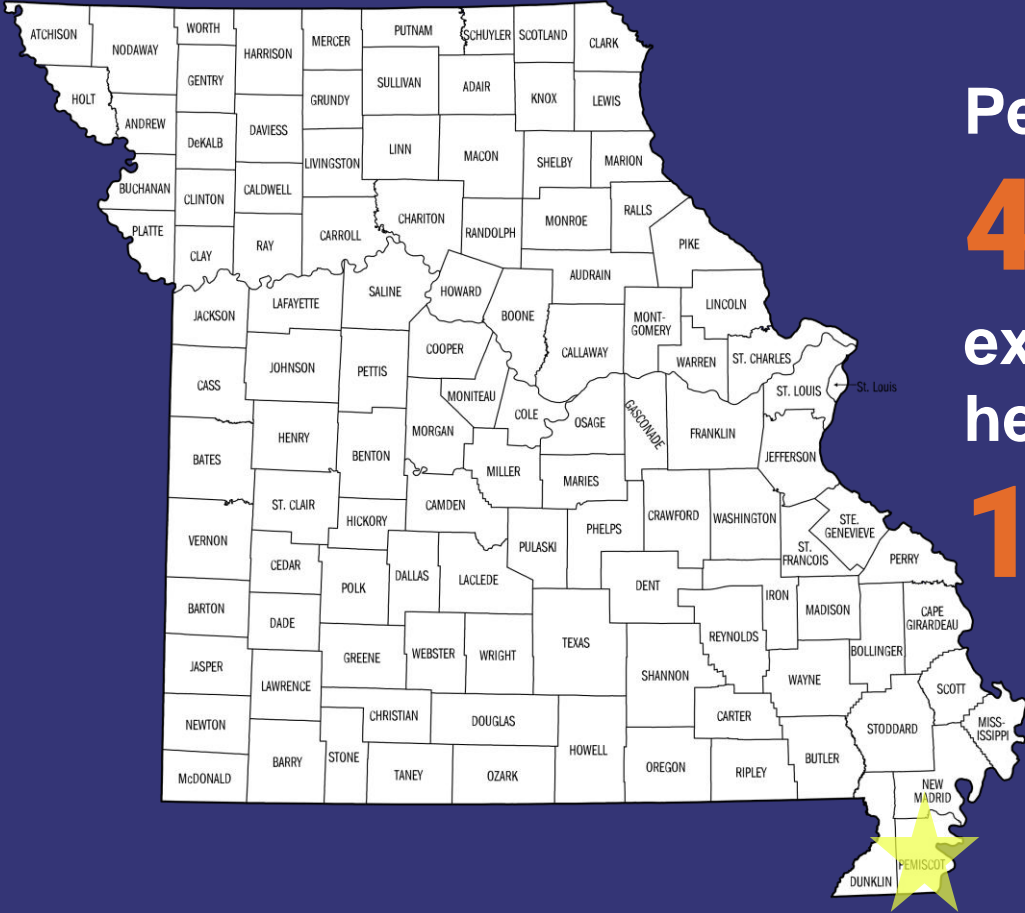
Dixie Duncan

Melanie Houston

MISSOURI

Per USDA reports,

45% of Black residents experience low access to healthy foods compared to **13%** of white residents.

Faith Temple Complex C.O.G.I.C, Hayti, MO — The Seal of the Church of God in Christ, Inc., Organized 1907, Memphis, Tennessee

Our Community, Our Health

FEEDING AMERICA

Food Security Equity Impact Fund

Community-led solutions to end hunger

The Food Security Equity Impact Fund supports community-led solutions to address systemic inequities by awarding multi-year grants to community organizations and network food banks engaged in food justice and equitable access initiatives.

Established in 2021, the Fund addresses the root causes of hunger, invests in communities of color and deepens food banks' partnerships in their communities.

From a community perspective, what is driving racial inequities in food insecurity in Hayti, MO?

Method

"Community-based system dynamics (CBSD) is a participatory method for involving communities in the process of understanding and changing systems from the endogenous or feedback perspective of system dynamics (Hovmand, 2014)"

Group Model Building: "model-building process in which a client group is deeply involved in the process of model construction (Vennix, 1999)"

Community Based System Dynamics + GMB Scripts

Engaging Community as Experts

Our Approach

Racial Equity Lens

Building Trust in Relationships

Key Areas of Focus for Power Dynamics and Equity Lens in Planning and Design

Grounding in Shared Values

Accessibility in Language and Scripts

Engagement Norms for Project Planning Team

Relationship Analysis for Key Contributors

Trustworthiness vs asking for trust

Empowering Community Voice

25 community participants

24 out of 25 participants were Black.

All participants were adults (25+). Most of our participants were
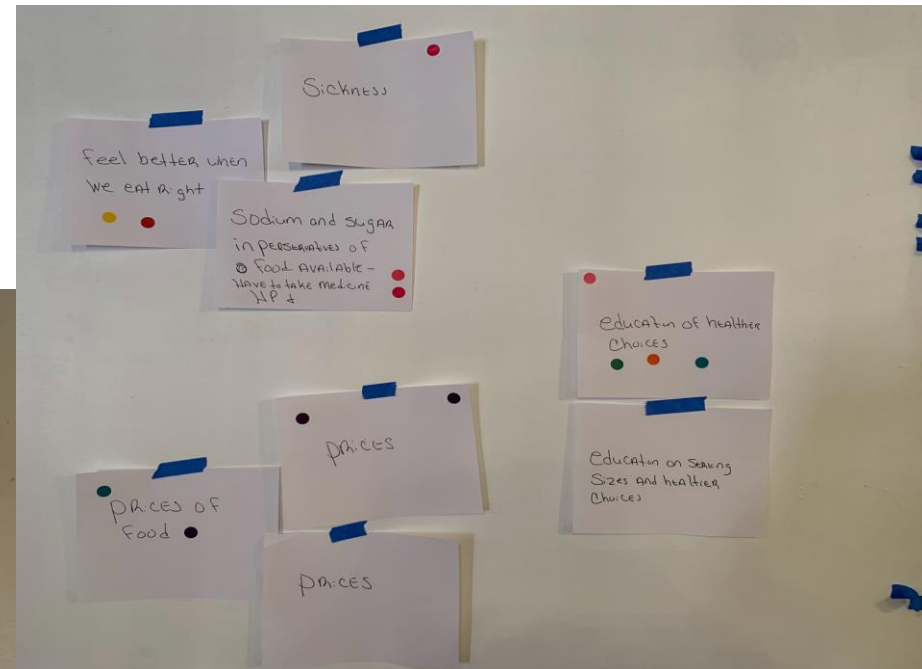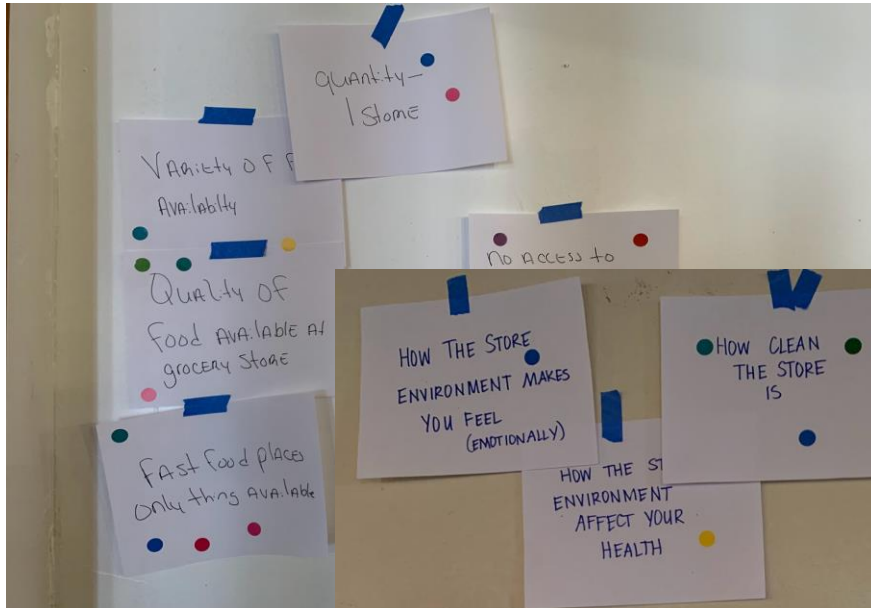
60+ years in age
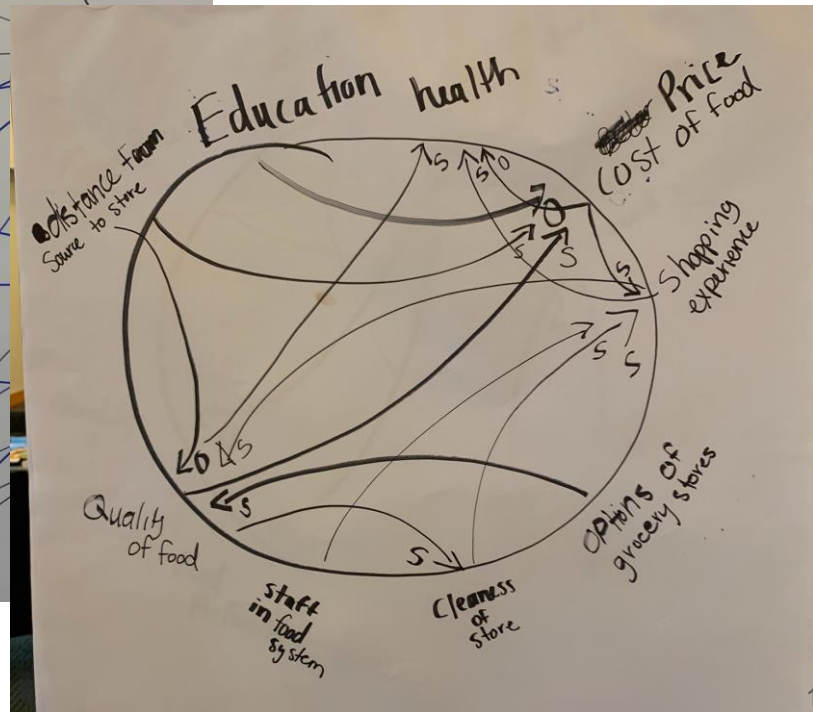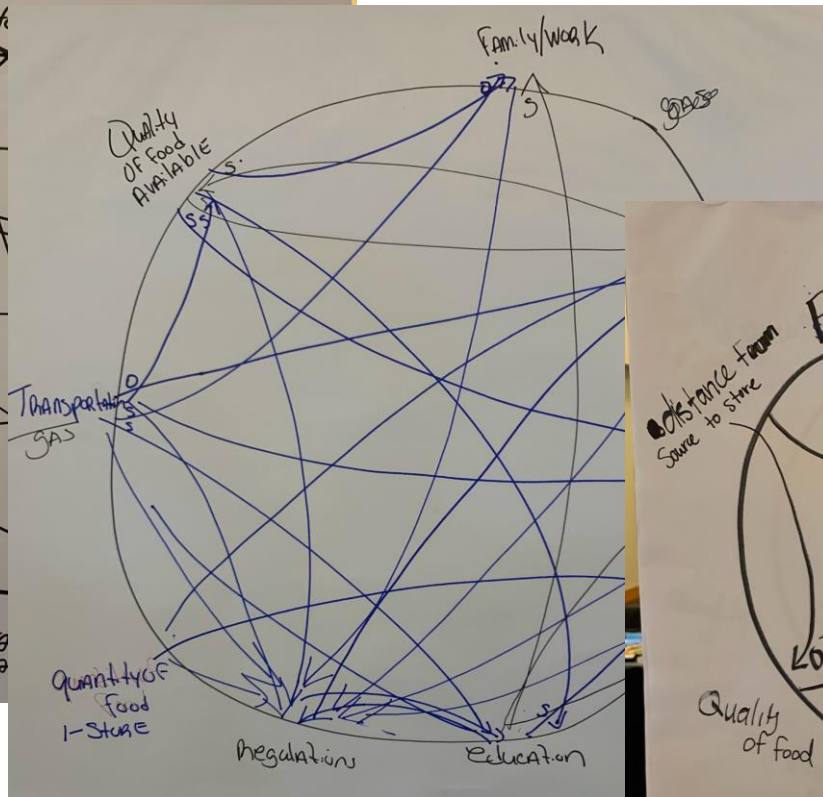
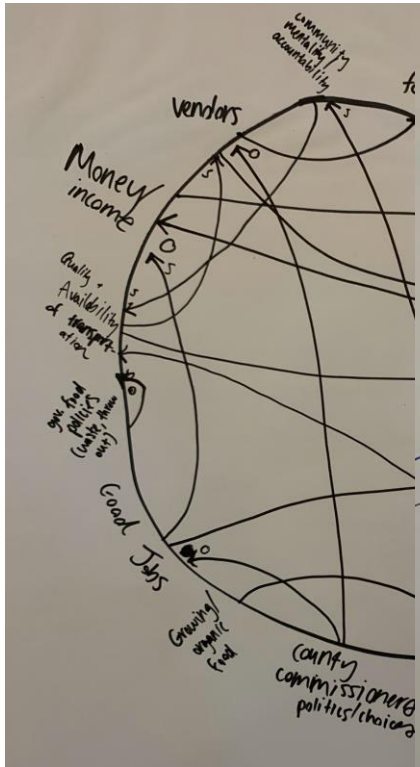| Day 1 - Identifying Relationship between Key Factors	Day 2 - Exploring System Structure and Identifying Places to Intervene
Community Building: Fellowship over Breakfast	Community Building: Fellowship over Breakfast
Dialogue in Small Group	Model Review
Identifying Key Factors (Small Groups)	Action Ideas
Connection Circles	Community Building: Fellowship over Lunch
Community Building: Fellowship over Lunch	

Quantity—
1 slome

Variety of f
Availablty

Quality of
food available at
grocery store

No access to

Fast food places
only thing available

HOW THE STORE
ENVIRONMENT MAKES
YOU FEEL
(EMOTIONALLY)

HOW THE ST
ENVIRONMENT
AFFECT YOUR
HEALTH

HOW CLEAN
THE STORE
IS

Sickness

feel better when
we eat right

Sodium and sugar
in persuvatives of
food Available—
Have to take medicine
HP +

Education of healther
choices

Education on Serving
Sizes and healthier
Choices

Prices

Prices of
food

Prices

LESS EXPENSIVE
OPTIONS OUTSIDE
OF COMMUNITY

TRANSPORTATION

GAS PRICES

11

Policy Level

People Leaving Hayti

economic opportunities/ Policies to benefit community

establish Chamber of Commerce

Competition +

Getting Better jobs

economic opportunities/ community Policies

Farmers/business owners working together + Being engaged +

Policies in favor of farmers/business owners and not community interest −

Sense of accountability to improve community

frustration/feeling powerless +

Quality of available food +

Assessments/inspections of stores/food environment − accountability

Concern for your community −

Commissioners supporting Healthy grocery stores

Community voice in elected officials +

involve local goverment + health department

community representation in voting + council meeting +

Community Committee/Pride "return to Hayti!"

Health +

People Leaving Hayti

motivation to improve community +

local community efforts to improve community +
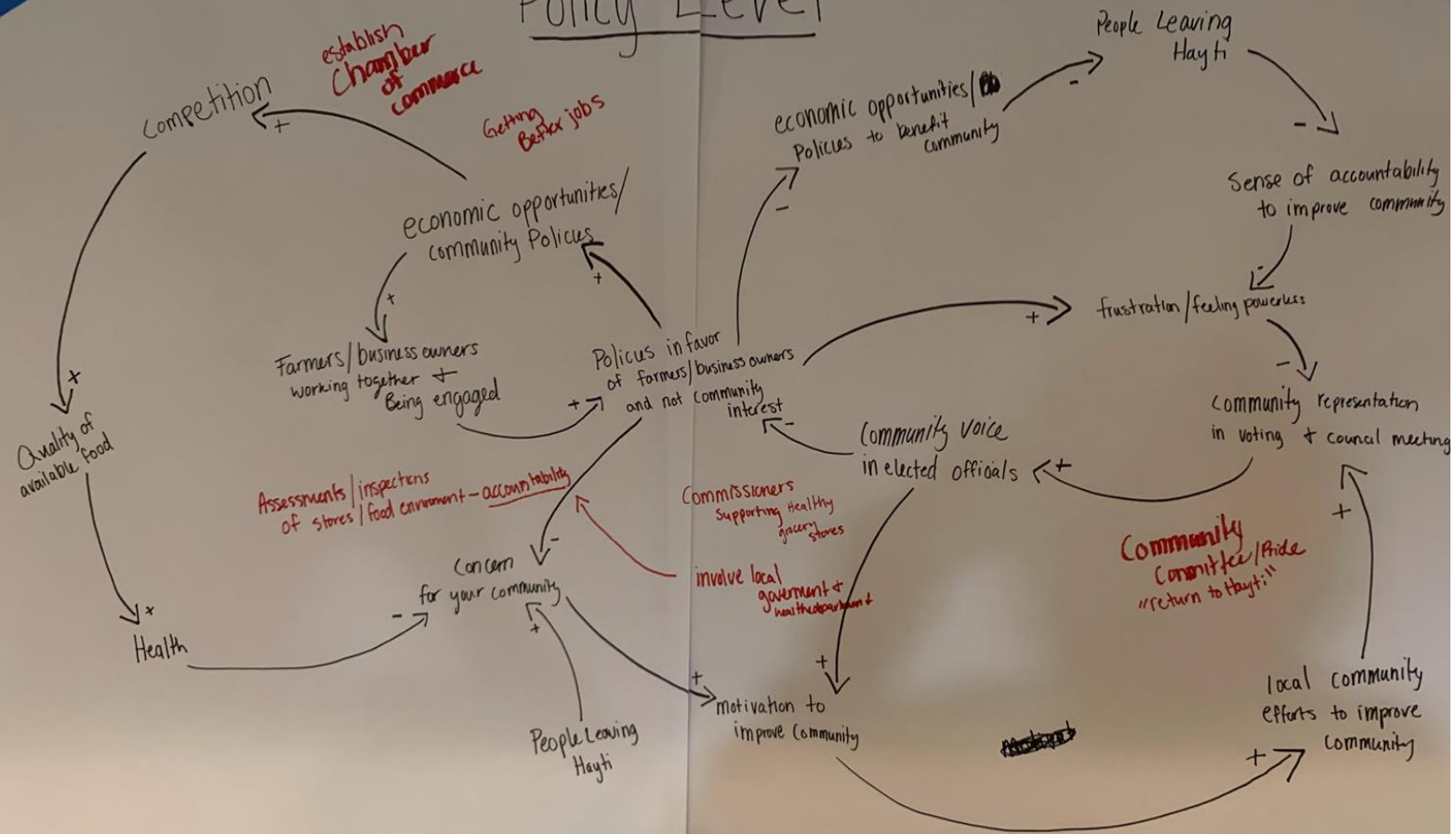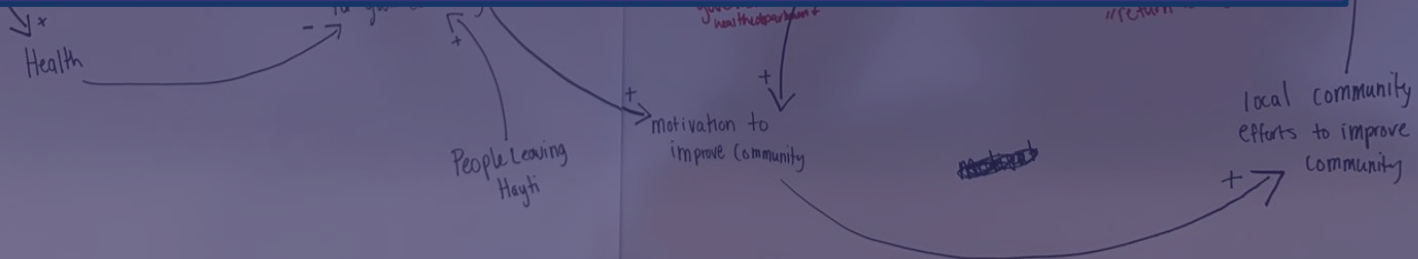
13

Experiencing negative impacts made by people in power motivates community members' desire to improve their community.

However, experiencing those negative impacts and/or not having the political representation in how decisions are made can lead to frustration and sense of powerlessness.

Community Food Environment

Environment of a grocery communicates racialized messages to community members about how they're valued or seen by the store owners and takes a mental and emotional toll on community members.

Mental and emotional toll is exacerbated when traveling to white neighborhoods and experiencing cleaner stores with better produce/meat within same chain.
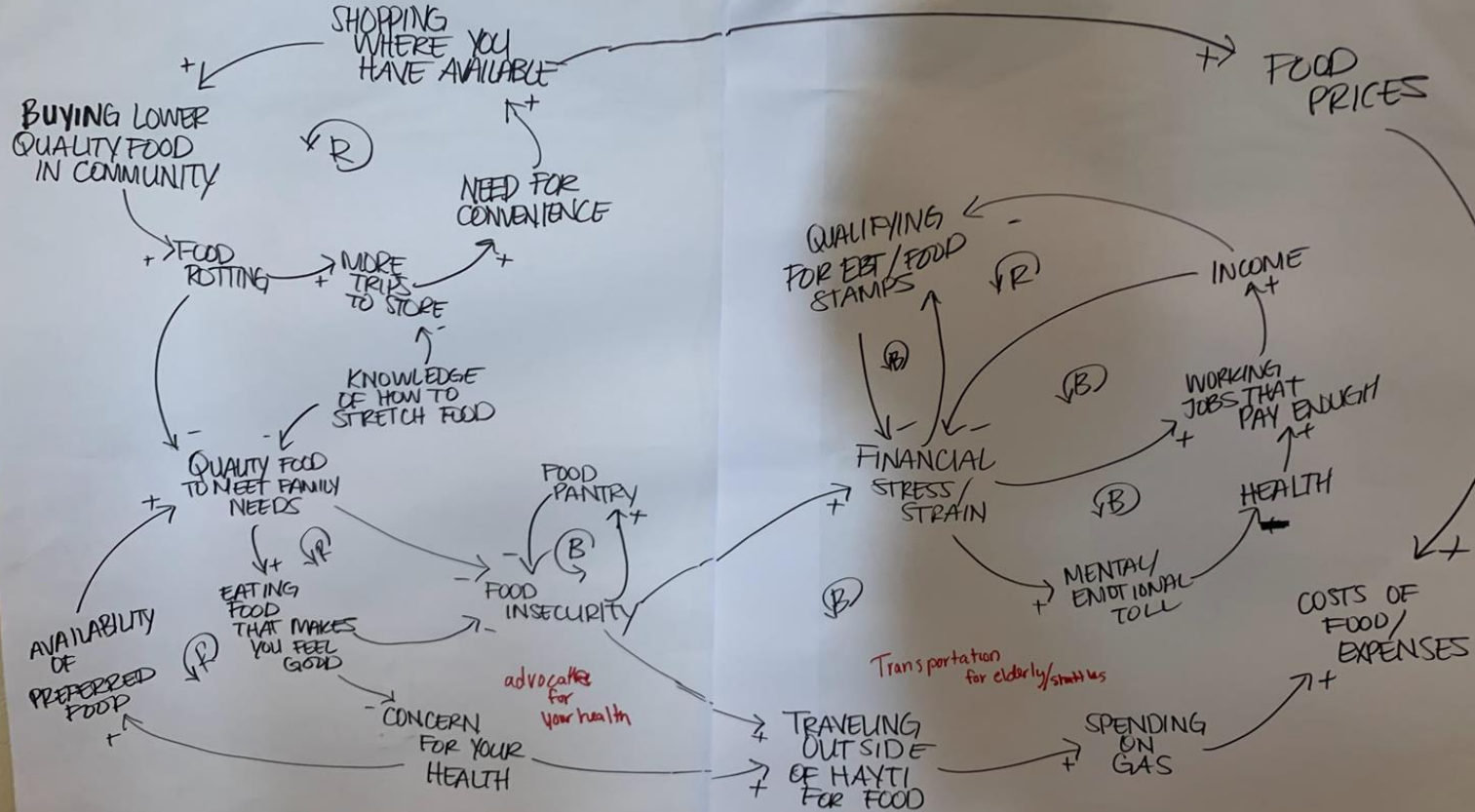
Because these stores are the most convenient options, community members are routinely subjected to these grocery store environments.

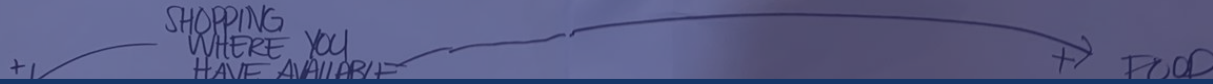Lack of competition in local grocery store markets further facilitates poor standards for community members
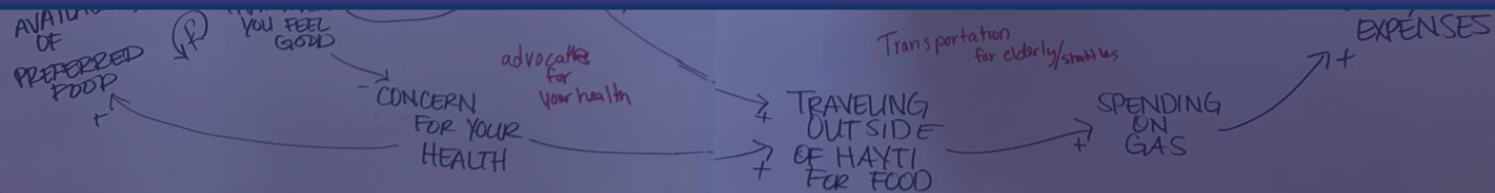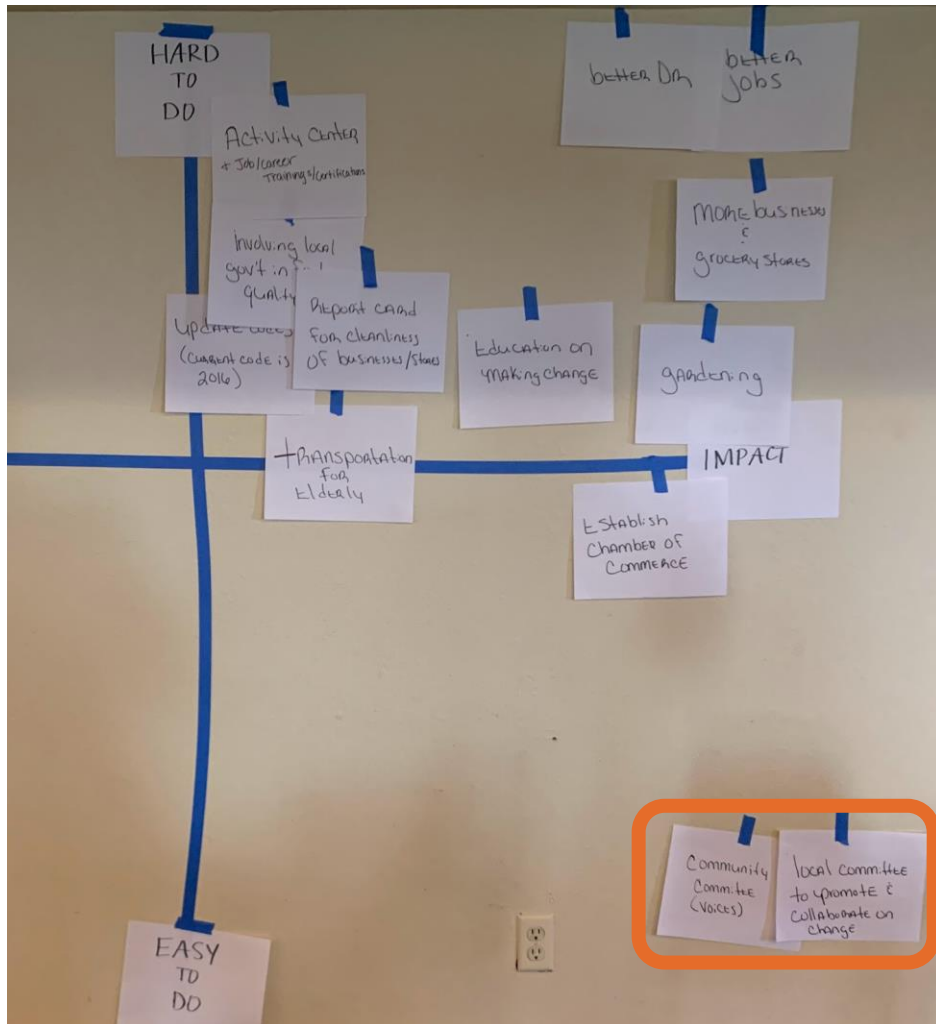
INDIVIDUAL LEVEL

INDIVIDUAL LEVEL

Many adults have caregiving responsibilities for parents/elderly family members with chronic disease. The caretaking toll requires adults to rely on convenient options, which are most often food that does not make them feel good about eating.

While the desire is to avoid experiencing the same chronic disease of older generations, caregiving toll is a vicious cycle of putting off own health needs to support others in family with needs

Local Committee to Promote and Collaborate on Change

Since GMB Workshop

Key Events:

- Developed group text thread to promote civic engagement

- Organized and participated in February Town Council Meeting

- **Community Voices Read Back**

- **Since February Town Council Meeting, Improvements at grocery stores (cleanliness, management and quality of food)**

- Invited key service providers and other relevant leaders in the local food system and included representatives from mayor's office and SEMO Food Bank

- Project Team met with participants from GMB to develop outline and goal for a presentation and develop meeting materials to support community members in the meeting.

- Goal of this meeting was to introduce community committee to other key stakeholders and foster conversation about how other stakeholders can support the community committee (i.e. How are their efforts aligned? How can their work strengthen the efforts of this committee?)

Community Design of Intervention

Community Voices in Action

"A small town that is alive"

Built Environment	Education, Arts and Cultural Engagement
Food Security + Access	Economic Development

Insights, Reflections, New Questions for Community Members

Importance of identifying limits to growth – How can we better anticipate these limits to attract and sustain businesses?

Metaphor: System as a bicycle – "we won't stop moving [forward] because we keep pedaling. We need to consider how we can put a stick in the wheel to stop it from moving forward."

Paradigm shift for Participation in the System & civic capacity

Need for Shared Leadership for Community Empowerment

Insights, Reflections, New Questions for Project Team Members

Shift in Perspective on Value-add of Shelf-Stable Food – How can fresh food also be convenient and accessible?

New Question: Is Black spending unintentionally viciously amplifying racial disparity in access to food? How does this impact empowerment?

Importance of considering the psychological toll of racism

Key Takeaways

Recommendations

Key Takeaways	Recommendations
Having someone on our team who is well connected and well trusted by community was an asset for design and implementation of GMB.	Identifying quality – not just mere existence - of relationship community partner has within the community
Identifying different dimensions of power differentials and establishing new patterns of interactions to address	Identify power dynamics on team and with participants; plan how to support normalizing a new relationship dynamic of equitable power
Space to sit with and unpack the impact of psychological toll of racism	Reflecting on racialized experiences can bring up reflections on feelings of sadness, hurt or anger. Important to consider how to support people if those feelings are resurfaced. Important to consider how to design an experience that will not create these same experiences
Causal Loop Diagramming + Time to listen to one another strengthened sense of connectedness	Consider how the parties involved have been able to listen to each other as they are asked to actively co-create shared understanding
Community isn't looking for handouts or someone to come in and save them	Trust that community members have the agency and answers – and ensure you're asking the right questions and designing a process well enough to elicit and listen to those answers *before* opting for saviorism

Referenced Works

Hovmand, P.S. (2014). Group Model Building and Community-Based System Dynamics Process. In: Community Based System Dynamics. Springer, New York, NY. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-4614-8763-0_2

Vennix, J. A. (1999). Group model-building: tackling messy problems. *System Dynamics Review: The Journal of the System Dynamics Society*, *15*(4), 379-401.