



RE-TASTY

Students investigating their school food environment and contributing to science and policy using citizen science

**Contextualization,
methodology and data collection**



**Funded by
the European Union**



Contents

- RE-TASTY in brief
- What is citizen science?
- Research cycle in citizen science
- Impact – Questionnaire before and after





RE-TASTY in brief

Research – Transformative Actions for Sustainability Together with Youth

01.

Citizen science: Students research their own school environment and collect data for their school food system. The data can stay only for the school, or it can also be submitted to a database, thus contributing to scientific knowledge and policy making.

02.

Main research question: How can we make our school food system more sustainable and healthier?

03.

Action plan: How can we make the school food system healthier and more sustainable?

04.

Monitoring: Quantitative data on the school food system (from different schools) collected in a database to contribute to scientific knowledge and policy changes.



What is citizen science?



https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HUQF_YfGcJI

- Active citizens (non-experts)
- Data collection and other research activities
- Impact / spread of knowledge (e.g., through a publication)

<https://emerginginvestigators.org/>





Example of a citizen science study on food

In Austria, adolescent students (citizen scientists) collected data (picture and textual description) of foods sold in and around their school – categorised the foods to healthy, intermediate and unhealthy (Gell et al., 2023).



Research cycle in citizen science

- Introduction - Contextualization – Problem framing
- Methodology - Ethics
- Data collection
- Data analysis
- Data interpretation and conclusions
- Data reporting and dissemination / Action



Healthy eating



<https://www.voedingscentrum.nl/nl/gezond-eten-met-de-schijf-van-vijf/wat-staat-in-de-schijf-van-vijf-en-wat-niet.aspx>



Food health and sustainability in schools - Useful websites

School canteen and healthy foods

<https://www.voedingscentrum.nl/professionals/gezonde-eetomgeving/de-gezonde-schoolkantine/richtlijn-eetomgevingen-voor-scholen.aspx>

School canteen and sustainable foods

<https://www.voedingscentrum.nl/professionals/gezonde-eetomgeving/de-gezonde-schoolkantine/meer/duurzaam.aspx>

Food environment around the school

<https://www.voedingscentrum.nl/professionals/gezonde-eetomgeving/de-gezonde-schoolkantine/meer/schoolomgeving.aspx>





Processed foods – Useful information

Understanding food processing – Examples, benefits and risks

<https://www.eufic.org/en/food-production/article/understanding-food-processing-examples-benefits-and-risks/>

Learn to identify processed foods

Whenever possible, try to avoid or limit ultra-processed foods. Consider the examples in this table to help you quickly determine if a food is minimally processed, processed, or ultra-processed.

Minimally processed	Processed	Ultra-processed
Corn	Canned corn	Corn chips
Apple	Apple juice	Apple pie
Potato	Baked potato	French fries
Carrot	Carrot juice	Carrot cake
Wheat	Flour	Cookies

Source: <https://www.health.harvard.edu/blog/what-are-ultra-processed-foods-and-are-they-bad-for-our-health-2020010918605>





Contextualization and problem framing (Task 1)

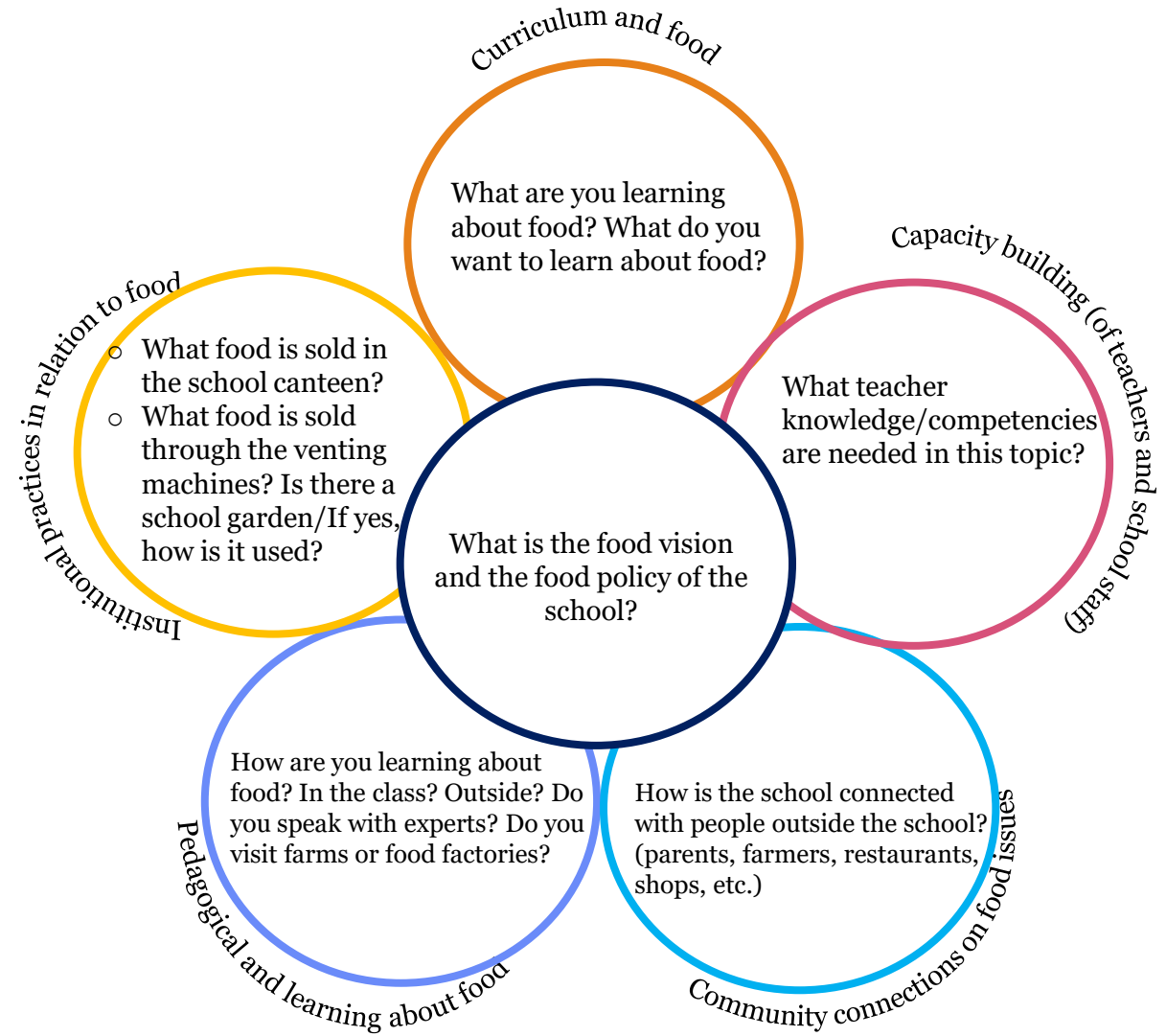
What is healthy food?

What is sustainable food?



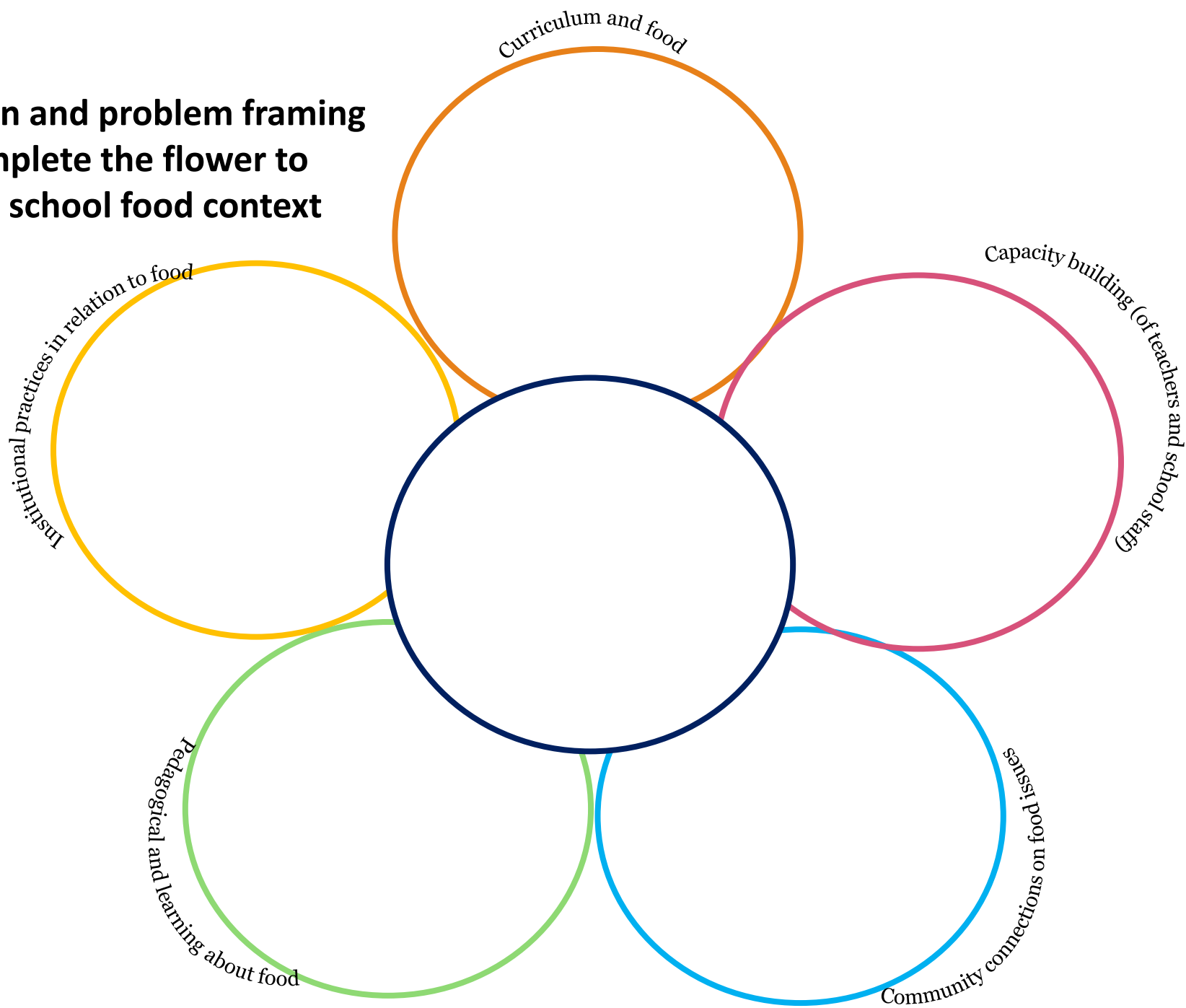


Whole School Food Approach





**Contextualization and problem framing
(Task 2): Complete the flower to describe your school food context**

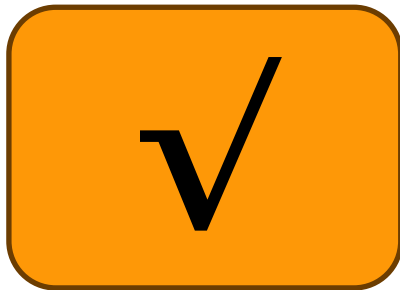




Data collection - Before interviewing

Ask for permission to take an interview from a person

YES



NO





Data collection - During interviewing

Ask follow-up questions

Follow-up questions: makes it easier for the person who is giving the interview to continue the conversation on the subject

E.g. Interviewee: 'I think that we should be eating healthier at school.'

Interviewer: 'What do you mean by that?' 'Can you explain?' 'Can you give some examples?'

TIP 1: After the interviewee answers the question, try to use a follow-up question to get more information and clarifications/more depth to the answer





Data collection - During interviewing

Avoid leading questions

Leading question: A question that prompts or encourages the answer wanted or an answer you have in mind

E.g. Interviewer: So, do you think that the main reason students come here to buy their food is because of the price?

TIP 2: No leading questions



Data collection - During interviewing

Listen carefully to the interviewee

- Face the interviewee by making eye contact
- Listen carefully to the interviewee, nod on what is said and let the interviewee speak – do not interrupt!
- No phone or other distractions
- Allow interviewees time to think

TIP 3: Listen, pay attention, show that you care on what is said



Data collection - During interviewing

- Make sure that you ask all the questions in the questionnaire
- Take as much notes as possible (digitally or on paper) of what the interviewee exactly says
- Do not take any photos of people
- Do not record the person who is being interviewed (unless you have the person's written consent)

Impact – Questionnaire before and after

Before

After



Funded by
the European Union