

# Generating Solutions to Food Poverty & Injustice

Transforming the food system by understanding more about peoples' lives

## Food History Tour



We researched, designed and ran a food history walk in Shadwell. These activities enabled the community researchers to develop their skills in archival research and public speaking. We employed counter-mapping techniques to shed light on overlooked

post-war migrant cafés, revealing their essential role in facilitating food security and community, and challenging the exoticist commodification of 'ethnic' food found in contemporary food tours in the area.

Our Food Lives project is part of a larger study, FoodSEqual, which is funded by the UKRI and led by the University of Reading. The aim of the project is 'to reimagine how food policy, food products and food supply chains can be developed' in an effort to 'address a lack of access to healthy, culturally appropriate sustainable food'.

## Participative Research

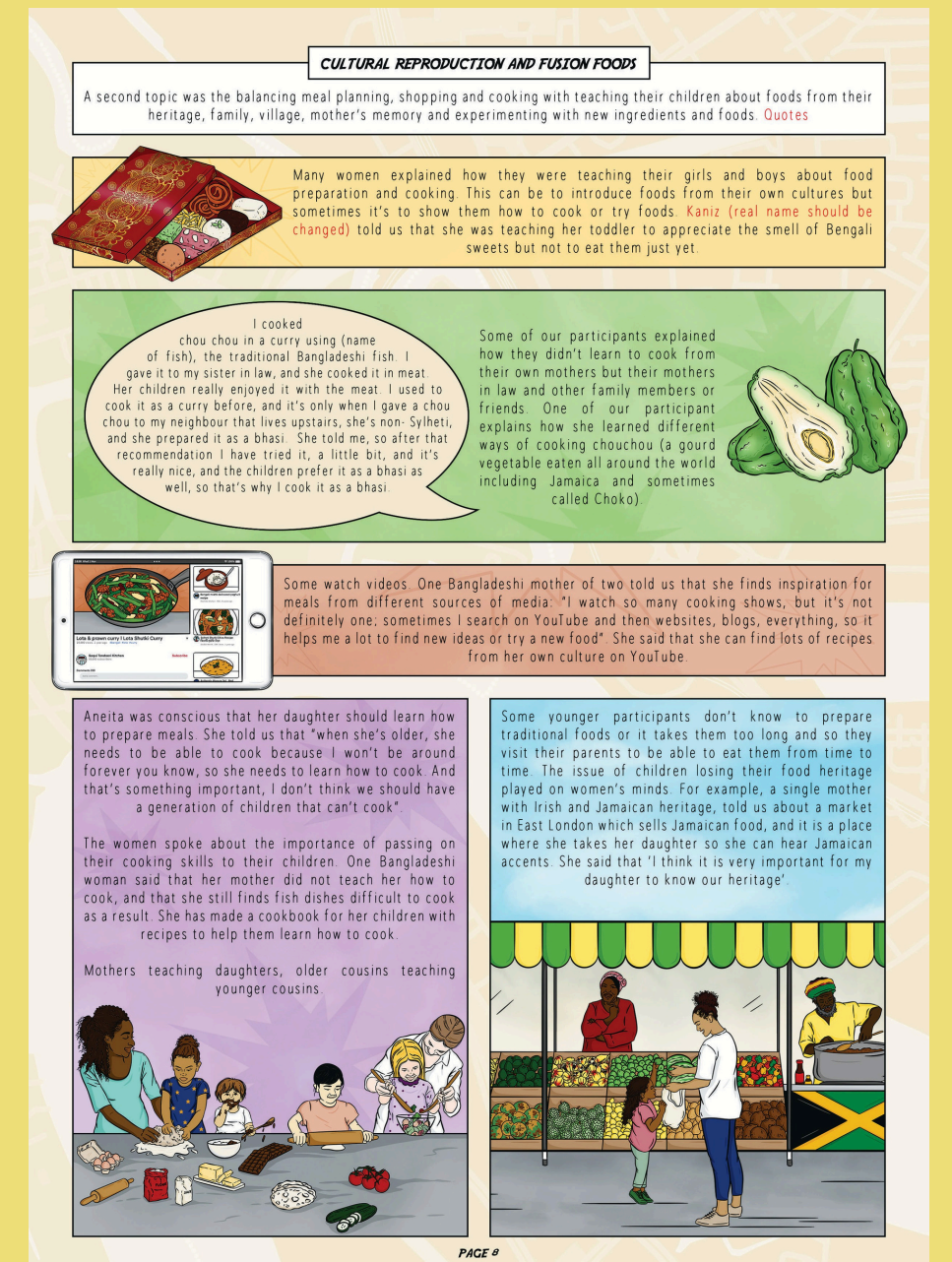
A team of Community Researchers (CRs) are involved in all aspects of research design, including our dissemination, and led by Julie Yip from the Women's Environmental Network.



Qualitative researchers in organisation studies have taken a real interest in mobilising participatory methods to enable organisational members and stakeholders, often marginalised groups, 'to generate alternative perspectives' and to co-produce 'new forms of knowledge' (Burns, Hyde, Killett, Poland and Gray, 2014: 133). Community research input into our dissemination methods means we are reaching different people and opening up the possibilities for strengthening our impact.

## Comic

Researchers suggest that comic-based research facilitates a greater degree of inclusion by enabling participants to become insiders in constructing knowledge. This can be by representing the dimensions of their insiderness based on epistemic resources of identity, lived experience and positionality - race, gender, age, faith and class, and importantly, their knowledge about racism and Islamophobia.



## Impact

This research underlined the significance of historic contributions of working class people of colour to the food system, and their resilience and defiance against the backdrop of racial and colonial legacies. We show how migrant cafes were, and are, pivotal sites of racialized resistance, community cohesion and survival facilitated by migrant entrepreneurship.



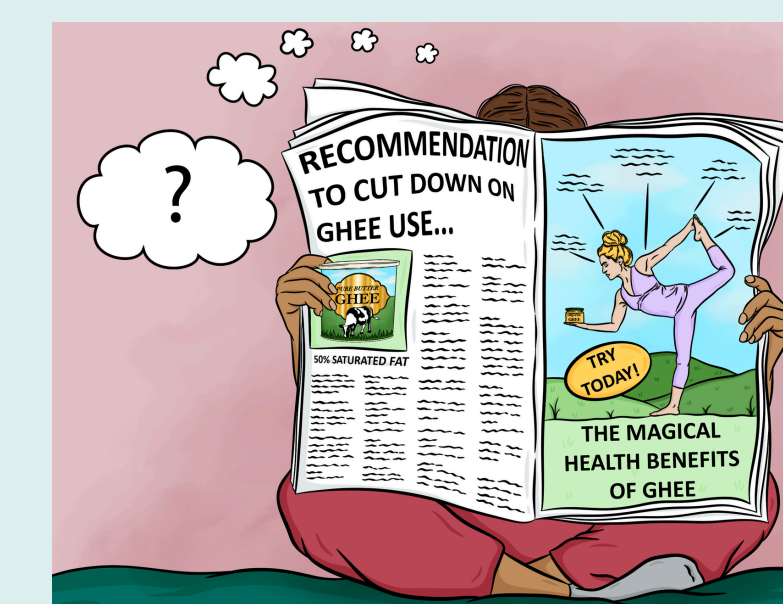
## Our CRs

Sajna Miah has 25 years' experience working with different communities in Tower Hamlets, including 10 years working for Tower Hamlet's Women's Aid as a Bangladeshi Women's Domestic Violence outreach worker.

References: Burns, Diane., Hyde, Paula., Killett, Anne., Poland, Fiona., & Gray, Richard. (2014). Participatory organizational research: Examining voice in the co-production of knowledge. British Journal of Management, 25(1), 133-144. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-8551.2012.00841.x>

## Creative Methods

We have experimented with a number of creative methods in our research data collection and our dissemination, from food tastings to photography, a film and a comic.



## Our CRs

Shazna Hussain has 26 years' experience of the Tower Hamlets community in various organisations. She works in a local school during lunchtimes and volunteers for a community cycling group.

## Impact

We learned a lot about the complexity of the foodwork, food knowledge, skills and creativity of the women when provisioning, shopping and cooking for their families. They have to make budget conscious food that appeals to their families whilst continuing cultural and faith-based food practices and attending to worries about food and health. They juggle these pressures in the specific economic, social and cultural context of racialised, gendered poverty and disadvantage of Tower Hamlets.