

#SoulFoodForMigrantYouth



Annual Report

February 2018 – August 2019

#Soul
Food
For
Migrant
Youth

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A Word from the President



By Kryssandra Heslop, Co-Founder, Creative Director & President of Soul Food

This past year and a half has been full of ups and downs, exciting moments, great achievements, and many, many obstacles. However, although creating Soul Food has been extremely hard, it has also been very rewarding. Each day we are inspired and motivated to help young migrants because we believe that they should be granted the same opportunities as youth who come from privileged backgrounds. We use art and culture to enrich their lives because we believe in the power of art, culture and humanity.

We are a small organization, but we have big goals and we are passionate about what we do. In this past year and a half, we've been able to accomplish more than we imagined possible. We have taken over seventy young migrants on more than fifty cultural excursions. We've connected with some of the best chefs and bakers in Paris in order to give professional experiences to our young members, our migrant youth. We've helped some find longer-term professional opportunities that have in turn ensured their security in France by allowing them to apply for visas. I must say though, for me, some of our most important accomplishments are more personal. We've found ways to help young, marginalized, traumatized kids come out of their shells on the dance floor. We've helped them make friends and motivated them to improve their language skills through reading and interaction with locals. We've created safe spaces for them to be creative, but also vulnerable and to express themselves. We have listened to them and done everything we can to make them feel heard. We've introduced them to different kinds of art and music from around the world.

We have been able to do all of this with very little. Now we must continue to learn, grow, diversify, and promote positive integration in a way that positively impacts even more young migrants. If we were able to accomplish so much with minimal funding, limited staff and inadequate resources, I can only imagine how much we will be able to achieve with more. I'm excited to see just how far we will go!

To everyone who has helped us get this far, thank you. Thank you for believing in us and in our migrant youth.

Soul Food: Who Are We?



Mission: To expose migrant youth to cultural events and artistic environments, such as concerts, artist meet-and-greets, and museum visits, in an effort to provide intellectual and cultural stimulation, facilitate positive integration experiences and encourage novel levels of autonomy in their new home country. We work towards these goals with the hope that with each new cultural experience, migrant youth will not only make new friends and forget about their problems, but also feel like a part of French culture and life, instead of like someone who is watching from the outside.

Instead of attempting to force young migrants to forget their past and country of origin, we encourage them to discover French and European culture, and find their own level of balance between these. We show them that culture is not mutually exclusive. This is done partly by embarking on cultural excursions with fellow migrants, and sometimes French youth, creating safe spaces for open dialogue and opportunities to meet locals, and experience art, music and food as locals do.

Vision: Through our work, we help promote sustainable and positive integration within immigrant communities in France. We envision a France with museums, restaurants, theatres, and concert halls full of people from all over the world; not only tourists, but migrants and locals too. We also envision a world where migrants have this type of positive visibility, and not one where we only see them sleeping in tents in crowded cities and refugee camps.

Aims: We aim to help provide access to museums, theatres and other cultural places to migrants from all over the world. We also aim to fill in the excessive time gaps left by the French administration system, when migrant youth are not permitted to attend school, with intellectual and cultural stimulation through our excursions and activities.

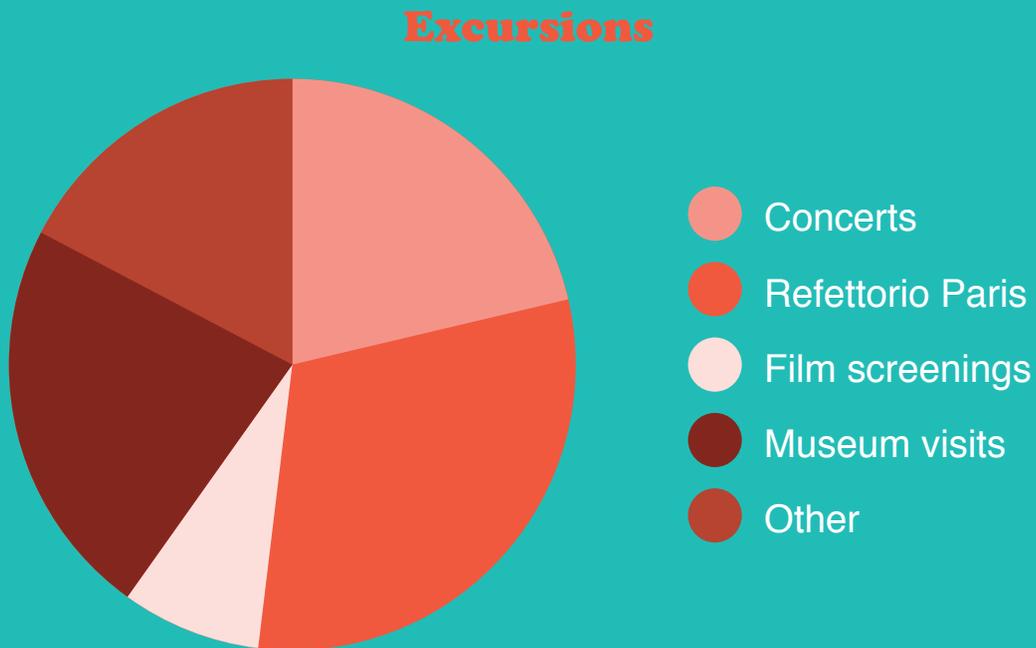


Cultural Excursions & Activities



Cultural Excursions & Artistic Activities at a Glance

Since Soul Food’s first cultural excursion to see Bim Bam Orchestra live, on February 17, 2018, as of August 31, 2019, the organization has been on 52 excursions, including 1 trip.*



We strive to provide opportunities for discovery, creation and self-expression. Therefore some activities are also participatory, such as workshops and drawing sessions.

For the sake of coherency, all members of Soul Food will be referred to here as “young migrants” or “chaperones.” The young migrants we work with are the youth members of the organization (currently all youth members are aged 14- 19). Chaperones are always over the age of 18 but are sometimes volunteers, interns and/or permanent members of Soul Food. “Local youth” will be used to describe French youth (aged 16- 18) who sometimes participate in Soul Food activities for the purpose of promoting positive integration between them and migrants their age, but who are not necessarily members of the organization.

There are currently 73 young migrants on our list of Soul Food members. Some are extremely active and attend several activities and events per month, while others participate less frequently. Diversity, as well as reaching as many migrant youth as possible and answering youth members’ requests for specific types of activities, are things that are kept in mind when inviting young members of Soul Food to participate with events and activities.

* Of these 52 excursions, all but 1 were planned, coordinated and/or attended by Soul Food staff. In this 1 instance, no chaperones from Soul Food were able to attend, so young members of the organization went on a cultural excursion with adults from a different organization. For the purpose of our records, the multiple activities & excursions that were done on the Soul Food trip in August 2019, will be counted as one excursion.

Observational Activities

Since February 2018, Soul Food has been on:

- 16 dinners at the Refettorio Paris**
- 12 museum visits**
- 11 concerts**
- 4 film screenings**
- 4 workshops (1 film, 1 photography and 2 dance workshops)**
- 1 music studio session**
- 1 French course**
- 1 circus show**
- 1 trip**

Of these 52 excursions, 39 were observational in nature.

Thus far, observational excursions have been Soul Food's primary activity. This is partly due to logistics, as well as availability of resources and personnel. A large portion of our administrative work goes towards looking for, planning, coordinating, and attending these excursions.

The number of young members and local youth invited depends on the type of activity, location, availability of chaperones, and how many tickets are given by the venue and/or artists.

Local Youth

Soul Food currently works with local youth from two different high schools. Inviting local youth from time-to-time is another way that we promote positive integration, as it gives our youth members the chance to socialize with locals who are their age, which they do not normally have the opportunity to do. So far, local youth have attended 7 cultural excursions (both observational and participatory).

Participatory Activities

Of the 52 cultural excursions and activities, 13 were participatory in nature. These included:

- 1. Music studio session**
- 2. Dance atelier**
- 3. Drawing workshop at the Guimet Museum**
- 4. English Club**

- 5. Circus show**
- 6. English Club**
- 7. Photography workshop**
- 8. French class**
- 9. Dance workshop**
- 10. English Club**
- 11. Drawing workshop at the Quai Branly Museum**
- 12. Film workshop**
- 13. English Club**

In general Soul Food strives to find more ways for its young members to be active within the organization, including through self-expression and artistic exploration. Several of these participatory activities were organized at the request of young members and/or due to young members' interest in a particular activity, such as music and dance.

The first participatory activity Soul Food organized was at a music studio. This was per the request of young members who are interested in music. During the session, they were taught about recording equipment and technology used to make music today and they recorded an original song.

Soul Food is currently collaborating with dancers and dance instructors to create a larger, ongoing Soul Food dance project.

English Club

Soul Food's English Club consists of young Anglophone members, as well as young members who are interested in learning or improving their English. Gatherings are often held at the Refettorio Paris, where English is spoken while sharing a meal.

Other Activities

Book Exchange

As many young members are not permitted to attend school, we developed this idea as a way to occupy more of their time productively. This is done to encourage reading and French-language improvement, particularly since for the time being Soul Food's personnel and resources are limited and therefore unfortunately we cannot provide constant activity.

Soul Food Trip

Soul Food's last cultural "excursion" of the summer was a trip (2 nights) to the Loire Valley. This was in part a gift from two donors who served as hosts (place to stay and food) and also contributed tickets for various activities. The money used to finance the rest of the trip came from donations.

Three young members, who are all 18- 19 years old, were accompanied by two chaperones. Cultural excursions and main activities during the trip included the following:

- Guided tour of the Château Royal de Blois
- Visit of the city of Blois
- Boat ride to and around Château de Chenonceau
- Local soccer game
- Quick visit of the town of Montrichard
- Nature walk
- Down-time to read and play music in a music studio
- English conversation practice
- Conversations around French history

Two of the young members present are in Soul Food's English Club, and therefore took advantage of the opportunity to practice their English with the English-speaking chaperones and hosts. As part of Soul Food's book exchange program, reading materials were also given at the start of the trip, to encourage reading during down time and throughout the rest of the summer. A music studio was located nearby, so this was also used by Soul Food members to experiment with music and play instruments, namely the piano. Soul Food members also shared several meals with locals, which was welcome as an added element of positive integration.

As a first travel experience, overall this trip was a great success!

Professional Development Program

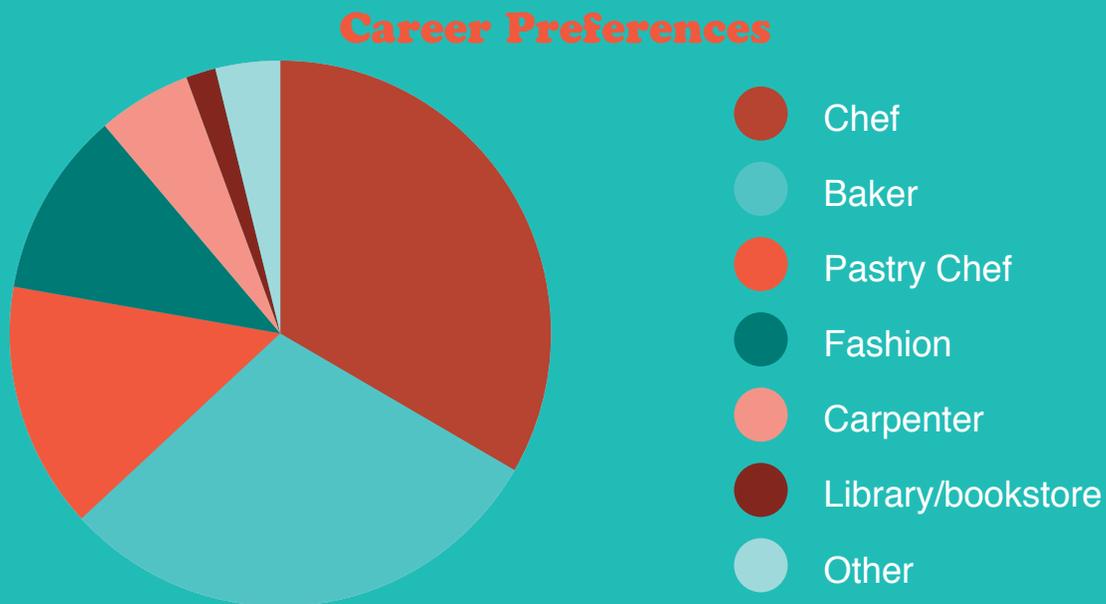


Professional Development Program

There are currently 29 young members in Soul Food's professional development program. As a part of this program, young members must attend an orientation meeting where rules and important information, including French administrative information, are discussed. They must also sign a contract between themselves and Soul Food, a copy of which is then given to their supervisor(s). This contract is a way of holding each young member accountable. It states that they must represent Soul Food with dignity and respect at the workplace, arrive on time, communicate any issues in advance, including scheduling conflicts with Soul Food and their supervisors, requires them to have an email account (we help them with this if they do not), etc. We use this as a first step for their professional lives as well as a way of holding them accountable.

Currently volunteer, internship and apprenticeship opportunities are available in the following careers:

- Chef (culinary)
- Baker
- Pastry Chef
- Fashion (various positions within this field)
- Carpenter†



Since Soul Food is a non-profit that works with artists and promotes positive integration through cultural experiences, we only offer professional opportunities for fields that are also directly related to culture.

When a young member has an interest related to culture, that we do not currently have a professional option for, we liaise with specialists in that field and attempt to find one.

† We work with a carpenter who is also an artist and creates unique pieces out of wood. This, plus the demand of this as a career choice from young members, is why we have included carpentry as an option in our professional development program.

Establishments

For these professional opportunities we only look for prestigious establishments and/or meaningful projects, such as brands that hold sustainability as a priority. One of our main principles is to find our young members prestigious opportunities that they would not normally be offered and to work with establishments that uphold our values. Since the start of our professional development program, young members of the organization have completed professional experiences or are currently completing professional experiences (as volunteers, interns and/or apprentices) at the following establishments:

- L'Ami Jean
- A. Noste
- Maison Château Rouge
- We Love Green Festival
- Refettorio Paris
- La Pointe du Grouin

Professional Opportunities

10 young members have already completed or are currently completing 1- 3 professional experiences that Soul Food has found for them. When possible, we try to coordinate multiple experiences, either in the same field or in multiple fields, particularly when a young member expresses interest in several areas. The overall goal is for young members to complete multiple internships and volunteer opportunities before signing an apprenticeship, which is the key to them finding long-term stability (both in their careers and in terms of their status as migrants in France). Based on their varying migration situations, education levels, ability to go to school, and other French administration obstacles, this is not always possible. When working with young members who have more constraints, we prioritize their French administration situation and help them secure professional opportunities as much as we can.

Breakdown of Professional Opportunities

Volunteer opportunities are the shortest in nature, lasting only 1- 2 days. These are good for young members who are curious about a field, as they have an opportunity to try it without signing any contracts. It is also a learning experience and often involves giving back to the community, which is in line with our principles. For young members who have more complicated French administration situations, this is a way for them to occupy their time constructively, and start gaining professional experience while they wait.

Once our young members are accepted by French child services, the goal is that they attend school. Some are allowed to while others are not, but most are able to start **observational internships**. These can last from one week to two months.

Usually after a young member has successfully completed an internship, a supervisor can propose an **apprenticeship**, which facilitates continued learning for one to two years. This is ideal, as it also helps them with their French administration issues and allows them to gain real work experience, and make contacts in their field.



Communication & Staff



Communication

Social Media

At Soul Food we are active on a few different social media platforms (follow the hashtag **#SoulFoodForMigrantYouth** to see more of our activities and all of our posts). Our handle on all platforms is: **@soulfoodparis**. These are important as they are a way for us to communicate on a regular basis with our public, show donors what we use their donations for, creating a higher level of transparency, and reach-out to potential partners, people and organizations to collaborate with. Social media also allows us to show support to other organizations doing similar work and/or those that uphold our values.

While our general aesthetic and brand is the same on all platforms, we use each slightly differently to optimize our social media presence. Instagram is where we are the most active and where we have the second most follows (282). This is also where others reach out to us the most. We use this account to post photos of our activities and to explain more about what we do and what we stand for.

While we do not currently have an official advocacy policy, this is also where we show our support for social movements that are in line with our values and where we promote artists, particularly those who are minorities. This is all relevant to our activities as we strive to introduce our young members to diverse art and when we look for professional opportunities for those in our professional development program, we look for meaningful projects that address issues such as sustainability, food waste and migrants' rights.

Facebook is mostly used to publish photos of our activities. We currently have 311 likes and 318 followers. While this is where we have the most followers, we have less engagement here than on Instagram.

We use Twitter primarily to support our partners, artists and relevant social justice movements and advocacy campaigns. We also share posts about our activities here but we have less engagement than on other platforms.

For professional purposes, donor searches and future recruitment, we post photos with explanatory captions on LinkedIn. We tend to keep these more general and do not post about all of our activities as we do on the other platforms.

Campaigns

For Soul Food's first birthday, we created a social media campaign around "7 Cool Things About Soul Food," where we explained more about the organization.

When relevant, we join global campaigns through activity on social media, such as World Refugee Day and other United Nations initiatives.

Staff and Volunteers

Interns

Currently Soul Food accepts interns from an American study abroad program (CEA). We had one during the spring 2019 semester and have accepted two for the fall 2019 semester. As these are short-term (two month) part-time internships, according to French law, we are not required to pay them but do reimburse a portion of their public transportation (see financial resources section) as well as try to give them perks when possible and relevant, such as making sure they get to be chaperones during their time with Soul Food, so that they can attend cultural events for free.

Volunteers

Soul Food has had the help of numerous volunteers. Thus far, these have all been short-term or for a specific project or excursion, such as leading a dance workshop or chaperoning with a staff member. We are currently actively looking for qualified volunteers who are able to make a longer-term commitment to Soul Food.

Staff

The two co-founders of Soul Food, Kryssandra Heslop and François Le Louarn, are the principle staff working for Soul Food. Kryssandra is the President and Creative Director, and François is the Secretary and Legal Expert of the organization. They collaborate on almost all aspects of the organization, while also using their individual specializations to complete individual projects and tasks.



Financial Resources



Donations

Direct Financial Donations

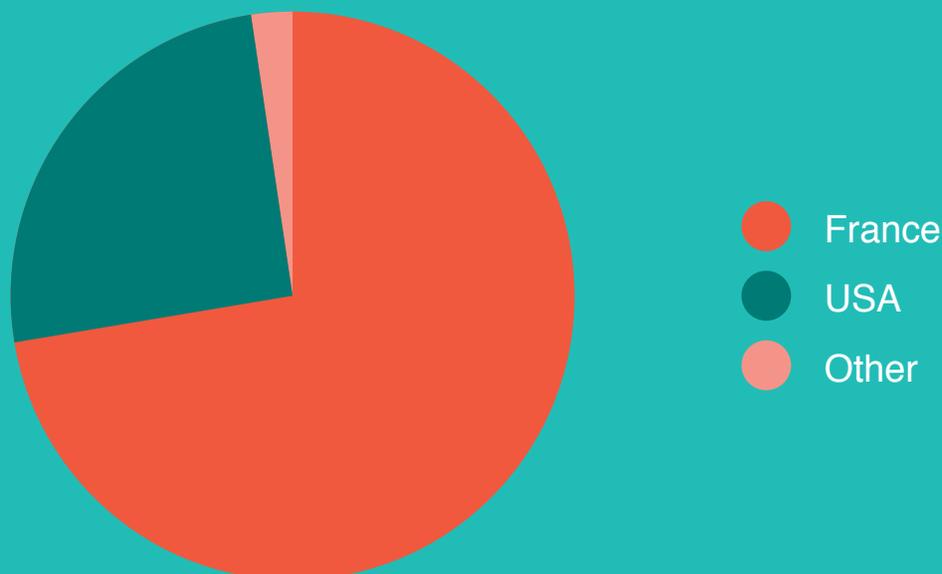
Thus far donations have been the primary financial contribution to the organization. Since February 2019, the average donation has been 65.01€, with the highest equaling 300€. Donations are therefore extremely important for Soul Food's initiatives. 100% of donations used have gone to operational costs.

No staff member of Soul Food has been paid a salary thus far. We are actively looking for other sources of financial resources, such as grants, as well as regular monthly or quarterly donations from individual donors, to ensure that each month we have even a minimal budget to carry out our activities.

Other Types of Donations

In addition to direct monetary donations, others have donated objects, such as office supplies that we have then used for activities such as drawing workshops, as well as for our administrative purposes. Books have been donated, which have formed the basis of our book exchange program. Donors have also paid for our business cards and website. Finally, people have donated their time and skills, not only to lead dance workshops or volunteer directly with us, but also behind the scenes to build our website, create our logo and design our original business cards.[§]

Origin of donations based on amount



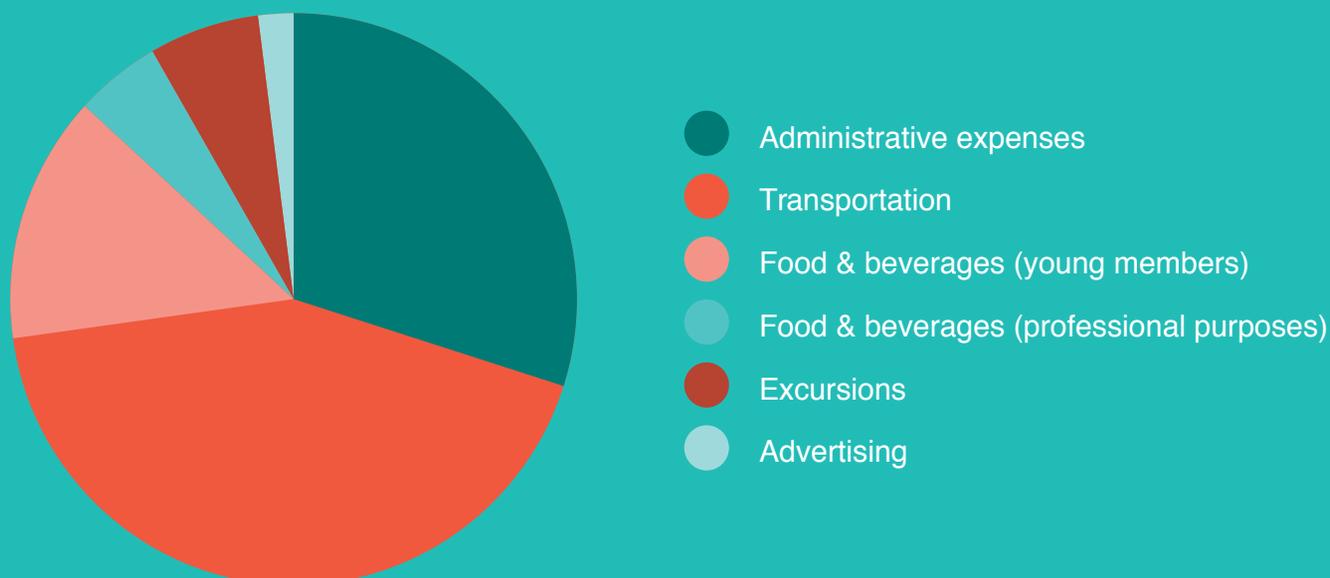
‡ Although Soul Food's activities started in February 2018, official fundraising did not start until the following year.

§ Our business cards were designed by Marine Stéphan, a freelance illustrator. She also created original graphics for Soul Food that we have used for social media campaigns.

Breakdown of Operational Costs

Administrative expenses (tax administration, banking fees)	209.20€
Transportation (% of intern's public transport, rental car, gas, tolls during the Soul Food trip)	299.56€
Food & beverages for young members (healthy snacks on outings and emergency food)	96.82€
Food & beverages for professional purposes (meetings, complimentary food and snacks for volunteers & interns)	33.63€
Excursions (tickets, leisure activities)	14.73€
Advertising (social media)	44.50€
TOTAL	698.44€

Operational costs by amount



Looking Toward the Future



Future Ideas & Projects

Near Future

At Soul Food we have vast ideas and a great deal of motivation. That's how we've gotten this far on so little and we plan to continue to learn, grow and expand in the future.

We have already started planning, researching and coordinating future excursions and activities. We are currently speaking with new potential partners, prospective volunteers, and exploring other professional experiences for our young members. Next year we hope to continue with many of our current activities and expand our initiatives to diversify our youth membership and help more young migrants.

Finally, we are also actively looking for more donations, as well as more varied sources of financial resources. Our goal is to be able to not only expand our projects, but also to higher paid full-time employees so that our work can be more effective.

We would also like the opportunity to not only pay our staff, who dedicate so much time and energy to Soul Food, but also have the option to pay professionals who use their specialized skills to contribute to Soul Food.



A Final Thank You

We would like to say a final thank you to those who have been following our activities and supporting our initiatives. Your enthusiasm and encouragement have helped us continue, even in the face of abundant obstacles.

Thank you to our donors. You have truly helped us take our activities to the next level.

Thank you to those who have contributed their time and expertise. It is with these that you have helped make Soul Food a community and a more powerful initiative and organization.

Finally, thank you to our young members, the young migrants who stirred something inside of us and compelled us to act. You have had to withstand devastating obstacles but your motivation, perseverance, and smiles inspire us every day.

Thank You!

#SoulFoodForMigrantYouth





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