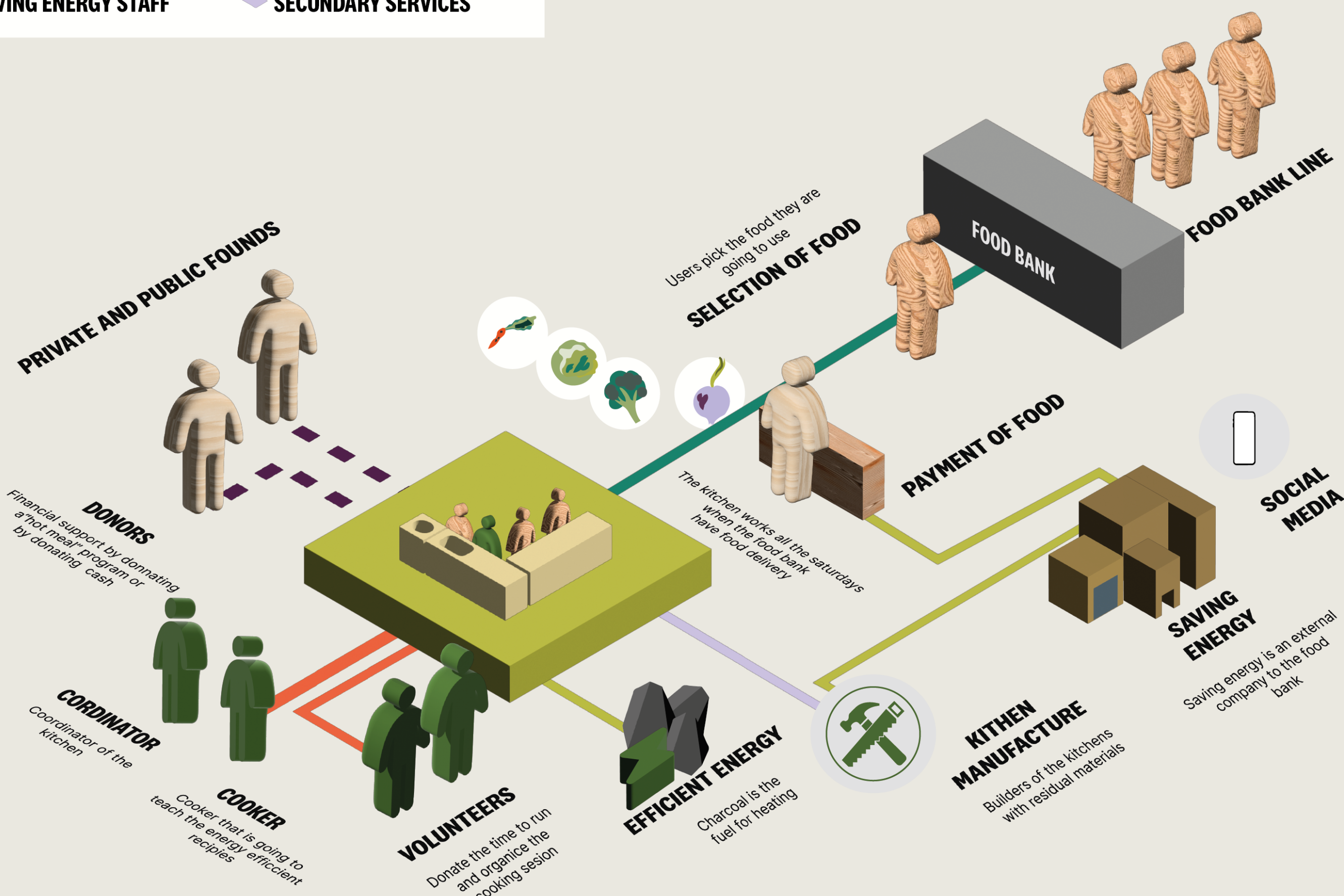


SAVING ENERGY, DESIGN AGAINST INFLATION

A food service design dedicated to studying and empowering new behaviors during food inflation.

Tania Hernández Guerra

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The cost of food continues to rise, prompting people to develop strategies to consume in a more economic way. Escalating prices impact individual budgets, particularly affecting those already facing financial challenges. According to the World Economic Forum, worldwide inflation reached 6.5% in 2023, marking the highest rate in decades. Despite being one of the 10 largest economies globally, France experienced a food inflation rate of 14.8% in February 2023, the largest price increase in years.

“Saving with Energy” is a project that emerged from academic and field research on changes in food consumption behavior due to the inflation of 2023 in France. It explores how escalating prices affect food budgets. The project is supported by experts in the field: a journalist specializing in food insecurity in France, a psychologist specializing in vulnerable populations, and a nutritionist specializing in malnourished populations.

The project takes a systemic approach, analyzing various aspects of the problem: prices and economic strategies in food retail, food aid in France, consumer choices, nutritional challenges, and the psychological effects of economic stress on families.

The research revealed that inflation not only raises food prices but also increases expenses in energy, gas, and housing, collectively contributing to food insecurity. This shift in family budgets results in reduced spending on food, compromising both its quality and quantity, leading families to skip meals or seek food aid.

According to the research, one of the biggest price increases in 2023 was in gas and electricity, which rose by 15%. As a result, 46% of households in France faced unpaid debts for gas and electricity. This increase has reduced the money available for food.

In response to these insights, “Saving with Energy” offers a shared energy-efficient kitchen where people can learn to cook recipes that require minimal energy, such as raw food dishes or budget-friendly meals that don’t rely heavily on electricity. The objective is to help families save energy, thereby reducing the need to cut their food budgets.

The initiative provides weekly cooking meetings where participants prepare meals for the week, sharing energy costs with a group of people. Interviews for this project revealed that one

effective strategy for reducing expenses is sharing resources. By creating collective expenses, the initiative aims to reduce participants’ weekly food and energy costs.

To create lasting habits, the service not only provides a physical space but also offers tools to help participants continue these practices. An interactive tool was designed featuring a series of hacks to help users discover new ways to save energy while cooking at home.

The objective of this project is to illustrate the relationship between economics and food consumption behavior. The research reveals that a new type of consumer is emerging—one who is more conscious of how they spend their money and seeks quality food at lower prices. “Saving with Energy” aims to propose a design solution that promotes new communal behaviors, offering users options that can help them manage their food budgets in a healthier and more sustainable way.