

THE FUTURE OF FOOD BANKS IN EUROPE



# Quantifying the Impact of European Food Banks

**From Farm to Fork**

## YEAR-1 FINAL REPORT



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# Introduction

On 9 February 2021 FEBA organized the Final Plenary Session of the first year of the project “Quantifying the Impact of European Food Banks – From Farm to Fork”.

The online meeting was open to the entire FEBA membership and was the occasion to present the online Observatory on Food Donation and the work carried out this year by FEBA together with a Pilot Group of 8 Members (Belgium, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Norway, Spain, UK) and external experts. More than 70 participants from 26 different countries participated.



## Opening remarks: Translating data into valuable impact

*Jacques Vandenschrik, President, European Food Banks Federation*

Two years ago, on 4-5 February 2019, we met in Brussels for a session on “Impactful data for social good”. That was the beginning of our journey on data collection and digital transformation.

The objective was clear from the start: to share a standardized and consistent methodology for data collection across our members; to assess the impact of our members taking into consideration the economic, environmental, nutritional, and social areas; to define how to make sense of the information for impact management and measurement; and to encourage digital transformation within our membership.



*Capturing the most value from data begins with excellence in identifying, measuring and storing that data; moves through the technical capability and creativity to analyse and visualize that data; and ends with an organization which is able to complement analytics with human talent to implement and communicate relevant insights.*

**This project is not an easy path because it has to respond to multiple and complex needs.** It has to build upon our daily activity and meet our needs. It has to lay the foundations on an existing dataset that can tell our long-lasting story. It has to be efficient and effective, but also significant and reliable, consistent and comparable, accurate and transparent. It has to give a European overview and at the same time in-depth details. It has to minimize the effort requested to our members while offering new valuable outputs. A system that can collect, analyse and aggregate data from members of differing socio-economic and cultural contexts across the continent, sharing the same mission but implementing different models and activities. A system which aims to achieve unity while valorising diversity.

**We have come across unforeseen challenges.** Despite a global pandemic not allowing physical meetings, the quality and continuity of the activities has never been mined. We have faced the difficulty to find a common model to meet the needs of each Food Bank.

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*We have studied the complexity of data collection and the diverse dataset structures used in the different countries. We have discussed and exchanged views, we have identified our indicators, and we have agreed on a common terminology. Through an in-depth analysis of the existing systems used by Food Banks to collect data, we have developed an online platform to host an Observatory on Food Donation. This is a first unique European Observatory on Food Donation.*



The platform has been developed using a bottom-up and agile approach, building on our knowledge and needs, and has the potential to integrate existing systems of data collection and digital tools already used by our members.

Since the beginning we have counted on important partners, such as DG Health and Food Safety of the European Commission and the General Mills Foundation, to support our efforts. We have built on the experience of a Pilot Group

made of 8 members – Belgium, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Norway, Spain, and UK – which have dedicated their knowledge and time. We have exchanged information and views with external partners to enrich our discussions and bring new perspectives to our work. We have worked with professional experts, who have listened to our needs and used their expertise to find the best possible solutions.

**This project can leverage the beneficial impact of our activity for social good.** Working on this project we can drive strategies and empower us to take decisions, we can feed policies and funding, we can identify problems and find possible solutions, we can use food and fund resources more efficiently, we can maintain data comparability, we can learn from each other, we can tell our story, and we can transform vast amounts of data into value-creating insights for our organization, for our members, and for society at large.

This Observatory on Food Donation aims to **systematically record and disseminate the impact of FEBA members taking into consideration the economic, environmental, nutritional and social benefits.** It will help us to **increase the awareness of the prevention of food loss and waste and the reduction of food insecurity**, while enhancing the collaboration with public authorities, the food supply chain as well as private citizens.



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*Looking at COVID-19 and the impacts of this crisis, such as disruptions of the food supply chain and an increase of food insecurity in Europe, the contribution given by Food Banks has been outstanding and proved again the importance of collaboration amongst all the actors. In this context digital tools are extremely useful when they support and enhance an action in progress. Digital tools are essential to be put at the service of Food Banks and not vice versa.*

Today we mark the end of the first year of this challenging and ambitious project. The protagonists will share with us the steps of this journey. We will hear about indicators, dataset and terminology as well as technology and data visualization. We will learn from those who have been involved since the beginning sharing their knowledge with generosity.

We will collect your further inputs and feedbacks. And we look forward to continuing this journey, together because “Yes, we can!”.



## Workflow of the project, indicators and taxonomy

**Laura Gavinelli, Management Consultant & Trainer**

The main goal of the European Food Banks Federation consists in supporting the promotion of the recovery of surplus food for human consumption, in line with the priorities indicated in the EU guidelines

on food donation and as a contribution for achieving the SDGs. A crucial step for reaching this objective is to gain and share common and reliable knowledge about the activities managed by the FEBA's network daily, and their impact on food waste prevention and food poverty reduction.

### PROJECT PILLARS

#### A. INDICATORS

- Why measure performance
- What to measure
- How to produce data and useful information
- For whom to measure

#### B. DATA COLLECTION PLATFORM

- How to operationalize the indicators selected
- How to foster ICT-acceptance (usefulness, ease of use, modularity, data visualization)

### PROJECT MILESTONES



**1.** Definition of common KPIs, dataset structure and data collection strategies

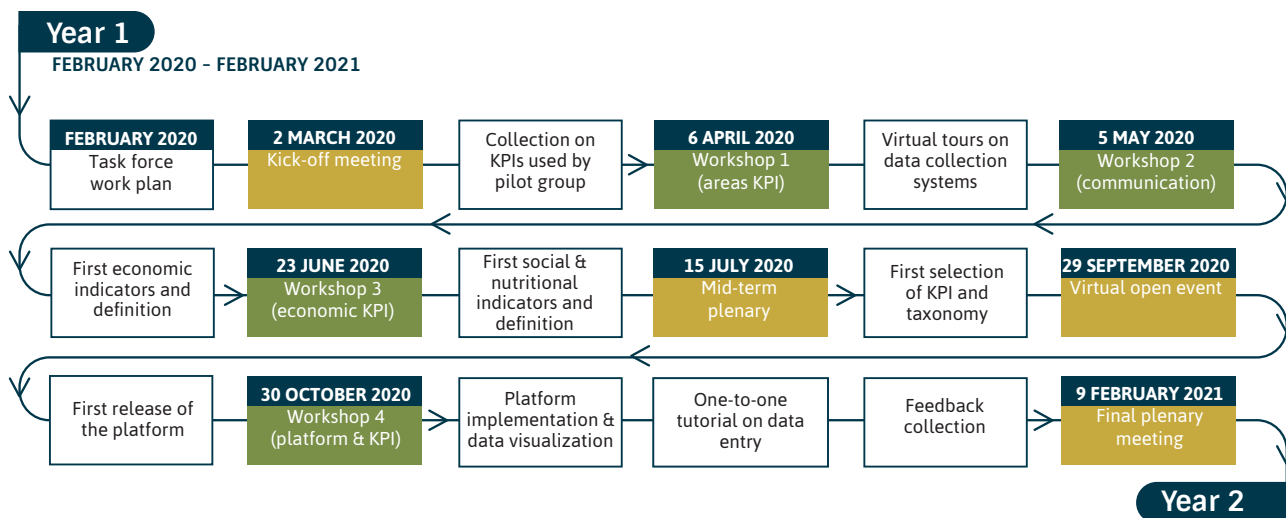


**2.** Development of the Observatory on Food Donation



**3.** Promotion and dissemination of the Observatory on Food Donation

## PROJECT WORKFLOW / YEAR 1 OVERVIEW



Due to the outbreak of COVID-19, the planned timeline was slightly adjusted. Despite this change, the quality and continuity of the project were never undermined. The work of the Leading Team (FEBA Team + external experts) and the Pilot Group of 8 FEBA members focused throughout the year on 4 main areas of impact: economic, social, nutritional and environmental. In fact, almost 100 KPIs were collected from the Pilot Group - most of them are transversal to the 4 areas.

Furthermore, the project continued with the classification of definitions of the different indicators in a continuous comparison with literature and external experts with the final goal to harmonize at European level the data collection process of FEBA members.

*Considering the 3 milestones of the project, at the end of the first year, FEBA launched the first release of the online Observatory on Food Donation to start the collection of data from its members for 2020. Before doing so, a testing phase with the Pilot Group was carried out to better structure and finetune the online Observatory.*



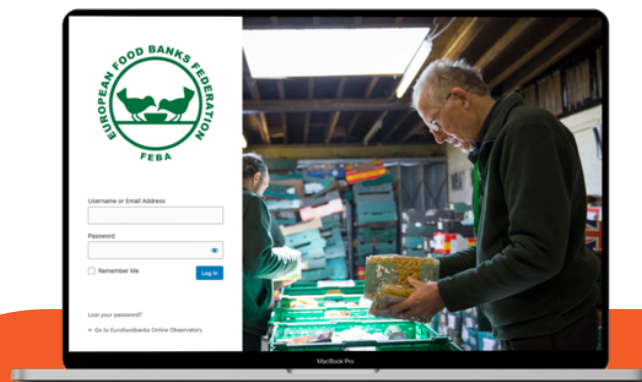
## First release of the online Observatory on Food Donation

*Fabio Fraticelli, COO, TechSoup Italy*

Fabio presented the most important steps of the journey for the first release of the FEBA online Observatory.

The **online Observatory on Food Donation** is a platform where FEBA members bring together key information on food donation. The online platform is designed to allow the automatic data collection and processing, in a consistent way trying to accommodate all the differences between FEBA members. Given the enormous complexity of harmonising such diverse databases, FEBA decided to use an 'agile' approach to the development of the platform.

The agile approach involves the release of incremental version of the final output and following this approach, FEBA started to release few initial features to get tested by the Pilot Group with the final goal to further implement those features for the benefit of the entire FEBA membership.



*The first version of the online Observatory on Food Donation allows FEBA and its members to manage a rich set of indicators, to insert statistics for 2020 and to aggregate data at European level to start having a repository of FEBA impact over the years. This online repository will allow FEBA and its members to generate interactive report, with the possibility to filter the information and select only some indicators for ad hoc communication activities. FEBA and the external experts leading this project are monitoring and supporting daily FEBA members in the process of inserting statistics on the brand-new platform.*



## Pilot Group contributions



**Etienne Rubens, General Coordinator**  
**Fédération Belge des Banques**  
**Alimentaires / Belgische Federatie van**  
**Voedselbanken, Belgium**

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*Despite the differences between FEBA members, it was a surprise to see how Food Banks in Europe are a real community. The first year of this project was really challenging and inspiring and we're looking forward to continue working on this online platform to make it better and even more useful for FEBA members.*



**Dimitris Nentas, General Manager**  
**Food Bank Greece, Greece**

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*It was very interesting to see how many differences there are between FEBA members but at the same time how this online platform can help to harmonize data collection system and makes it easier to collect data for FEBA.*



**Katalin Újhelyi, Director of Development**  
**Magyar Élelmiszerbank Egyesület,**  
**Hungary**

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*It was really challenging to work with other FEBA members but very inspiring, also because the digital tool developed looks very promising and we're looking forward to work together to develop the next versions.*



**Giuseppe Parma, General Director &**  
**Vincenzo Palumbo, Project Manager**  
**Fondazione Banco Alimentare Onlus, Italy**

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*Both at national and European level, the real challenge is to develop these digital tools but also to raise awareness on the importance of collecting data in a systematic way. Working together in this FEBA project helped us to realise the importance to coordinate with other Food Banks in Europe.*



Emma Walsh, International  
Partnerships Director  
FoodCloud, Ireland



*It was a very inspiring project to share information and work together with FEBA members towards the same final goal.*



Paula Capodistrias, Project Manager  
Food Banks Norway, Norway



*We realised the importance to quantify our impact and compare it with the FEBA network to assess our impact both at national and European level and better structure our communication strategies.*



Pedro Castaños Ruiz, International  
Relationship Manager  
Federación Española de Bancos de  
Alimentos, Spain



*It was a challenging project but with very satisfying results, especially looking at the online platform we are developing that will be very important for external stakeholders and future FEBA members' partners.*



David Brown, Senior Technology Manager  
FareShare, UK



*Having a FEBA online Observatory on Food Donation would be strategic to benchmark with other FEBA members and have an important tool for our network, internally and externally.*

## Acknowledgement

The journey of FEBA, its members and external experts continues to always improve the online Observatory on Food Donation and the data collection process inside the FEBA network.

The European Food Banks Federation takes this opportunity to gratefully acknowledge DG Health and Food Safety, European Commission for concretely supporting the reinforcement of the credibility and efficacy of FEBA and its membership.

Thank you also to General Mills Foundation for the precious support to this project.

A grateful acknowledgement to Laura Gavinelli for driving us to the discovery of the value of measuring and the importance of KPIs. A deep appreciation to Fabio Fraticelli and Chiara Grassi for giving an added value to the project thanks to their competence and expertise in the development of the online Observatory on Food Donation.

We warmly thank all the participants from the Pilot Group for their active participation and the engagement in this challenging project and all the other participants who joined the session and supported FEBA in the first year of this challenging and promising journey!





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