

THE FUTURE OF FOOD BANKS IN EUROPE

Quantifying the Impact of European Food Banks

From Farm to Fork

REPORT Workshop Meeting

6-7 APRIL 2020
/ ONLINE MEETING



Introduction



1/ What do we have?



2/ What indicators are
we missing and what do
we need?



3/ How can data look
like? A platform's web
frame proposal





Introduction

On 6-7 April 2020, the European Food Banks Federation organized the first Workshop of the project “Quantifying the Impact of European Food Banks – From Farm to Fork”. The workshop was organized in collaboration with FoodCloud.

Eight participants from the selected Pilot Group (Belgium, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Norway and Spain) actively participated in the online workshop. The workshop was guided by the leading team of the project (FEBA Team, Laura Gavinelli, Fabio Fraticelli and Chiara Grassi) with inspiring insights from external experts.

Following the launch of the project during the kick-off meeting on 2 March 2020, the first online workshop for the Pilot Group took place with the main objective to identify common KPIs, share a standardized and consistent methodology for data collection across Food Banks, and define how to make sense of the information of impact management and measurement.





The kick-off meeting was the occasion to introduce the general framework of the project explaining what data really are, why they are important, and how it is possible to move from goals to indicators to measure the performance of the Food Banks and how these indicators can flow into a single database that must be thought of as a tool for making the right decisions and show evidence of the performance and impacts of Food Banks at European level. In this workshop participants were guided by the leading team to go into more detail with the topic of KPIs by asking three questions:

- 1. What do we have? Overview of the indicators that Food Banks already use or have today**
- 2. What indicators are we missing and what do we need? With respect to the areas of impact to monitor (economic, social, nutritional, environmental), participants discussed on the sets of indicators that are still considered inadequate, problematic, absent, as well as on what are the missing ones**
- 3. How can data look like once operationalized in the database? A first platform's web frame proposal was presented to participants**

1/ What do we have?

Participants had to previously send to the leading team indicators and useful information on their method to collect data. During the first part of the workshop, Laura Gavinelli guided participants into the materials sent trying to highlight the most important aspects or the missing ones in a comparison from country to country. It emerged that, till now, there is a great diversity in data collection tools between Food Banks and variability in the KPIs set they use.

In particular:



Not all the 4 areas of impact are covered: especially the nutritional and environmental ones are very little "populated" by indicators



Some indicators can be calculated in different ways (e.g. food out, food weight)



There are different data collection systems: manual, MS Excel or Access files, IT platform, ERP software, surveys. Within the same country, multiple tools may be used at the same time.



The frequency of data entry varies very much: the same indicator is measured from once a month to once a year (e.g. number of end beneficiaries)



Food categories are not the same within the different countries: for instance, FEBA uses 9 food categories; some Food Banks use 4 to 5 categories, while other have not indicated the categories they use



Some Food Banks are trying to profile both the charities – taking into account diverse typologies – and the end beneficiaries – taking into consideration the variable of age. In both cases, the segmentation is not univocal.

In sum, the starting point is a very diversified “landscape” in which preserving the diversity and routines of the single Food Bank is considered a necessity. The participants of the Pilot Group agree on the other hand with the scope of the project: share knowledge and learnings, and be more effective in the management of the activities and with external stakeholders.

2/ What indicators are we missing and what do we need?

From the discussion on KPIs, it has emerged that:



- It is important to keep data collection process as simple as possible and not too time consuming for Food Banks: this is related both to the data entry procedure and to the selection of KPIs.
- The effort of standardizing the KPIs into a unique data collection system should also preserve the diversity between the single countries: that is why the platform will be a flexible tool.

A FEBA platform should enable:



- Aggregated data at European level, both for internal and external use
- A larger and deeper sharing of the knowledge and learnings between the FEBA Members
- A benchmark between Food Banks
- Information about the evolution of the activities of Food Banks over time
- The possibility for individual reporting (at country level)
- The possibility of aggregated reporting (at FEBA level)
- An online observatory with differentiated access to data



The final objective is not to change the way FEBA collects data from its members: the annual survey is the starting point, while the project intends to clarify, enrich and improve it.

As for the selection of KPIs, the starting point will be from the most shared, used, consistent ones, in order to gain a first small set of indicators. The core of the activity of Food Banks is the distribution of food to charities and people in need. This is the right perspective to keep while identifying the necessary KPIs.

Participants and the leading team agreed on the fact that there is difference between performance indicators and impact indicators: it is important to bear it in mind, especially while thinking about what to say and to whom (communication scope).



The project will consider both meaningful indicators of performance (KPIs) and indicators on the impact of FEBA and its Food Banks on 4 areas: economic, social, nutritional, environmental.

A possible bottleneck could be the taxonomy and definition of KPIs, and not only their choice. This means that even when KPIs will be shared, it could be understood in different ways.

This has to do with the definition the KPI and to the question “What do we mean for this KPI?”

As an example:



What do we mean for meal (in terms of weight, components)



What is the “right” conversion rate of food distributed into CO2 saved/prevented?



What is food (categories considered)?



How is it possible to calculate the economic value of the food distributed? (considering for instance pricing on the different markets; what is the right conversion rate of a meal into euro?)

Once identified a sufficient and shared number of KPIs, it could be useful to prioritize them into primary and secondary KPIs. Nonetheless, the importance of a single KPI could vary depending on the strategy adopted, as well as on the concrete goal (objective) planned to reach.



The presentations from external experts – Vivienne Lawlor from FoodCloud and John McGrath from IBM – were inspiring, especially in these first steps of the project.



Sharing a vision for a concrete goal

Vivienne Lawlor (Communication Manager at FoodCloud – Ireland)

A very clear and effective demonstration of this, was the example brought by Vivienne Lawlor (Communication Manager at FoodCloud – Ireland) about a hypothetical collaboration between FEBA and an automotive company. In that case, the KPI related to the number of vehicles in the fleet of FEBA was a primary KPI to the eyes of the automotive partner, when collaborating on green transportation in food delivery and distribution. The presentation made by Vivienne Lawlor on sharing a vision into a concrete goal was inspiring from the point of view of which indicators to choose and how to use them. It became evident how apparently secondary indicators, like the number of vehicles, can become key when bringing them back to a concrete goal and collaboration.

This inspiring case study allowed participants to learn that:

- It is necessary to adopt a strategic approach, even when considering single KPIs;
- Strategizing means: analyse the external environment and identify possible partners (together with their mission, values, core business, goals and KPIs); compare this information with the Food Bank's vision, strategy and values; set concrete goals (objectives); contact the right partners providing the information they are interested in and in the way they can appreciate (selection of data and KPIs); start a win-win collaboration;
- Data must be few, crystal clear, meaningful and impactful: few figures but of great effect are the right choice;
- Data need to be contextualised to be understood and impressive.



The project “BlockBia”

John McGrath from IBM (Senior Solution Architect & Team Leader IBM “TechForGood” Team - Watson Financial Services)

The presentation of John McGrath from IBM (Senior Solution Architect & Team Leader IBM “TechForGood” Team - Watson Financial Services) on the project “BlockBia” with FoodCloud was about a real time IT platform for the matching between offer (retailers) and demand (charities). The main goal is the optimization of food distribution. From this inspiring case study, participants learnt:

- How effective the geo-localisation of spots for food collection, warehouse and food distribution can be through a dynamic map;
- Reporting can include also key data for business intelligence;
- Blockchain technology and artificial intelligence are the future, as a verifiable tracing of processes is what the operators of any supply chain mainly look for.

Another important external expert who actively participated in workshop was **Agathe Ziegler from REWE (Penny Market International)**. She contributed in a significant way helping workshop's participants to understand some topics from the other side of the coin, especially the processes of food donation from a retailer side and the general topic of food waste through the whole supply chain.



3/ How can data look like? A platform's web frame proposal

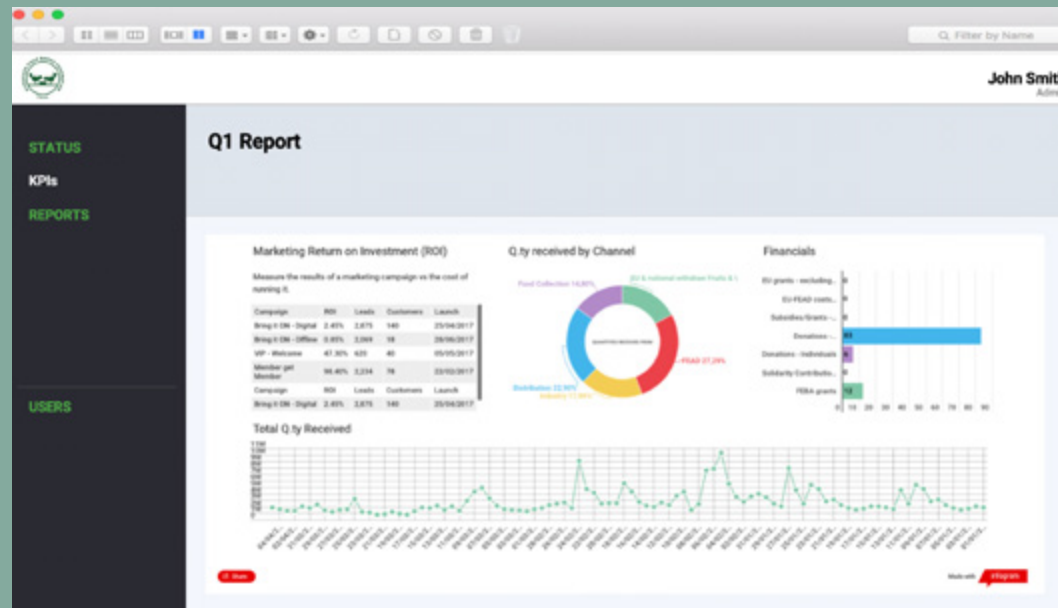


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**Fabio Fraticelli, COO
TechSoup Italy**

Fabio Fraticelli, COO of TechSoup Italy, presented to the participants of the online workshop an overview on the online platform's web proposal. It was underlined how there are several ways to upload data to the platform because - especially during the first part of the project - the main goal is to align the different needs of Food Banks.

Step by step, the platform will be upgraded also in its functionalities and method to input information. On the other hand, the outcome of this platform will help FEBA and different Food Banks of the network to download both aggregated and singular data in the easiest way possible with clear and modern layout (via a third-party software for data visualization).

Moreover, this tool will allow FEBA and Food Banks to create useful report with data especially for external communication (stakeholders, institutions etc.). In the process of building and improving the data entry platform, the frequency of data-entry will be essential to have reliable and homogeneous data.



Furthermore, another objective is to keep the control on who can have access to the platform and who can see and/or download data and infographics. In fact, some areas will be public, some other private with the possibility to access only with username and password (access restricted area).



Every Food Bank will have its area on the platform and at the same time there will be a global set of KPIs at FEBA level where both FEBA and Food Banks will be able to insert/download data. The platform will be built thanks to the common effort to identify KPIs for the primary goal of having a European platform where data from different Food Banks are collected and visualized.



Acknowledgement

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Last but not least, many thanks to all the participants who actively contributed to the success of the first FEBA virtual workshop.





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